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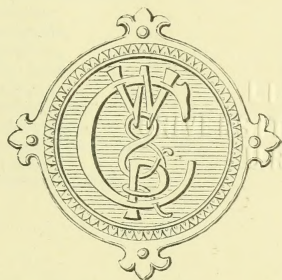
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JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,' 'RAINBOW GOLD,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Two schoolboys on a summer morning were marching along the road from Beacon-Hargate to Castle-Barfield, in the tranquil heart of mid-England. Each bore a satchel, in which he carried his books, and a provision of cold meat, bread and butter, and hard-boiled eggs, for dinner. They were each furnished also with a broad-mouthed, frayed, old, green baize bag, charged with round pebbles; and as they swung along, they cast searching glances about the road, as if they kept a keen lookout for something. Every now and then one or other would make a dart and a stoop, would take up and examine a pebble, and then would either throw it with rare precision at a mark, or would add it to the contents of the green baize bag.

These two were of the same age to a day, and nearly to an hour, and were cousins by the mother's side. One was swarthy of complexion and a trifle grim in aspect, a boy of the bulldog British pattern; and the other was fair-haired, fresh-coloured, and gray-eyed, with an amiable, dreamy look. They were rising twelve, the pair of them, and were uncommonly well built and well set up for their age.

'Uncas,' said the dreamy boy, 'we shall have a rare old scrimmage with the Mingoes this morning.'

'Wagh!' said the bulldog boy in answer. He was naturally a youth of few words, and the part of 'the sententious savage,' as dear old Cooper used to call the Indian, suited him to perfection.

They were under the dominion of Cooper, and were soaked and saturated with the lore of Beadle's Sixpenny American Library. They had and enjoyed a daily skirmish with a half-score

or so of the natural enemy of Castle-Barfield, and what would have been a mere undignified pecking-match without the glorious help of fancy, grew to an Indian battle by its aid.

There was no seminary for youth in Beacon-Hargate with the sole exception of a dame-school, presided over by an old woman of singularly forbidding aspect and limited learning; and when by her aid, or in spite of her hindrances, the lads had mastered words of two syllables, they were sent off to school to Castle-Barfield, whither they went daily afoot in all weathers, hail, rain, or shine, the whole year round, holiday-times and Sundays alone excepted. On their very first journey, one Sam Saunders, a Barfield boy, by profession a bird-scarer, had experienced a lively and natural resentment at the presence of boys from another parish on a high-road macadamised at the expense of Barfield ratepayers, and had hailed them with derisive epithets. Finding himself repaid in kind, he had fallen back on the argument of arms, and had stoned them from what seemed a safe distance. The youthful strangers, whether by skill or accident, had come victors out of this first fray; and Sam Saunders, afterwards elevated to the rank and dignity of a Mingo chieftain under the title of the Big Bear, fled weeping from the field. It took a week or two to make him understand that the enemy might be expected at a given hour upon the road; but when that fact at last penetrated his mind, he sent round the fiery cross among his tribe and lay in ambush. There was a great fray that morning, and the invaders of the soil were beaten back, and forced to make a detour, which resulted in their being late for school, and bore further fruit in chastisement at the hands of a

master who was none too unwilling to inflict it.

Then, in the bosom of William Gregg, the bulldog boy, awoke and flamed the fires of vengeance; and the milder soul of John Vale, the dreamy boy, took heat from his companion's fire, and they twain made a compact to live or die together; and they set up a cock-shy in the orchard of Gregg senior, and practised at the same assiduously in all spare moments, until they grew so accurate in aim and wide in range that the foe had fear of them. They began with a medicine-bottle at fifty boyish paces; but in a while they became so deadly that they could no longer afford so frail a target, and had to substitute an old shoe for the bottle, and this they battered daily and hourly to their hearts' great contentment, filling the exercise, as boys can and do, with a thousand warlike imaginings invisible to the eye of any adult watcher.

When they were on the war-path, they were Uncas and Pathfinder one to the other; and Uncas carried, as befitted his wild blood, a scalping-knife of lath. The gentler Pathfinder's instincts made him recoil from the use of such a weapon, but he tolerated his friend's possession of it. They got no end of bruises, and enjoyed themselves mightily, developing in this savage warfare all such virtues as war can breed—courage, endurance, resource, magnanimity, and the like, and were really at bottom less mischievously employed than the pessimist in boyhood might imagine.

They drew near that strip of the enemy's country where battle was most commonly offered, and looked to their arms; that is to say, they shook up the green baize bags and arranged the likeliest pebbles topmost. They attached a superstitious value to stones of a certain form; and a disc-shaped pebble of the size of an old-fashioned copper penny and the thickness of three or four was looked on as a precious find and reserved for moments of great emergency.

On the Beacon-Hargate road was what the country-people thereabouts call a Jacob's ladder, a stile with ten or a dozen steps to it, leading from the low-lying lane to fields on a higher level. The pathway to which this ladder led the traveller lay across a series of gently rolling fields which were called Scott's Hills; and in the middle of the fields was a fairy ring, which had so often been danced round by childish feet that the grass was worn altogether away from it and the circle tramped as hard as a board. The hundred acres of open space the fields afforded gave ample opportunity for advance and retreat, and the Mingoes had chosen it for their own country for years past.

The two boys climbed the Jacob's ladder warily and prospected for 'sign.' The eagle eye of Uncas detected a tousled head beyond the line of the first hill. Almost at the same moment the intrepid pair were observed by the enemy, and a wild cry of defiance was raised. Among

the other advantages of the war-country was a clear echo, which returned all noises with a sudden clap of sound like a vocal box on the ear. This redoubled the noise of warfare, and gave a sense of distance, numbers, and vastness inexpressibly delightful. The enemy appearing on the ridge of the hill in an irregular line, opened a harmless fire, to which the allies disdained reply. The distance was as yet too great for danger; but the Mingoes, with savage cunning, scattered with intent to form a wide circle and attack the advancing body from every side at once.

'Tis long odds, Uncas,' said the Pathfinder: 'nine to two.'

'Wagh!' said Uncas; and accustomed to every wile the foe might try, they separated, one working to the right and the other to the left, so that they might intercept the intended movement.

The precision of their fire made them dreaded, and the enemy was wary of displaying himself too freely. It was a barbarous form of relaxation, no doubt, but the schoolboys fought for their right of way, and men make war in deadlier earnest in assertion of rights and privileges no whit more sacred, and there is a great deal of human nature in boys.

The fight had varying fortunes, but the expedition forced its way at last; and its way out of the dangerous country seemed assured, when a stroke of treasonous vengeance put an end to the war for good and all, doing such serious execution, that the enemy, scared by its own act, fled into hiding-places and appeared no more. The two schoolboys joined each other at the end of the fray, breathed, flushed, and triumphant, and pursued their road with occasional turns to answer the cries from the defeated. This was all in order and in accord with the best traditions of Cooper and the Sixpenny Library; but the two lads fought honestly and loyally, and at the bottom of their hearts not only had no desire to hurt anybody, but had even a kind of camaraderie for the wild tribe they fought with. It was a roughish kind of game, to be sure; but it was no more than a game, after all, and there was not a shade of malice in it. But a certain hulking left-handed fellow, a new recruit on the Barfield side, had been hit a day or two before, and imported a murderous seriousness into the fun. He had taken no part in the affair of that day, but lay in wait with a stone the size of his fist until the boys went past him unsuspectingly at a distance of half-a-dozen yards. Then he launched his missile unseen, and dropped back into the ditch from which he had arisen. The stone struck the fair-haired lad above the ear, as he was laughing and sparkling over the combat just finished, and rolled him over as if it had been a musket bullet.

The bulldog boy his comrade, not as yet knowing what hurt had been done, but boiling into sudden rage at treachery, dashed in the direction from which the stone must have been hurled. The traitorous left-handed one rose to flee, but had no chance except to stay and give battle. The fight was brief and decisive, and the traitor being knocked down, refused to get up again. The avenger went back to his comrade, and the youthful coward in the smock-frock crawled through the hedge and ran. His late comrades drew a little nearer in scattered groups and stared

with frightened eyes, for the fair-haired boy lay where he had fallen and made no sign.

'Jack,' said his comrade, kneeling by him, 'are you hurt?' There was no answer. 'Jack! what's the matter? Speak to a fellow! I say, Jack! it isn't like you to sham. Jack! Jack!' He was crying by this time in a voice so wild and frightened, that his hearers stared with guilty and fear-stricken faces upon one another, and scattered, taking as many ways as there were boys. The wild frightened voice pursued them, and then quavered into tears and silence.

The road was unfrequented, and it might be hours before help came that way. John lay so still and silent that for all the other could tell he might be dead. An inexpressible pang of guilt and grief rived the bulldog heart, and the lad fell on the body of his prostrate friend and fawned upon it and kissed it and wept terrible tears. Men hardly know these extremities of grief and terror.

He had knelt for what seemed an age, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder and a voice spoke to him in a tongue he did not understand, and had never even heard before. He looked up with his tear-blurred face and eyes. 'Oh, please help me to carry him home,' he besought the stranger. 'They have killed him! They have killed him!'

The new-comer knelt upon the grass and rolled the unconscious body gently over. There was a little blood upon the cheek, flowing from a slight incision at the top of the right ear, and guided by this he removed the cap and exposed a great bump which showed with a purplish hue through the close-cut silky light hair.

'Oh, la, la!' said the stranger, and felt about the bump with cautious and gentle fingers. The bulldog boy knelt beside him, staring at him with a faint dawn of hope in his heart and giving now and then a gasping sob. The stranger was like no man he had ever seen before. His skin was of a coffee brown, and his beard and hair and eyes were as black as jet and very lustrous. He wore a shabby jacket of claret-coloured velveteen, and a gay pink-striped handkerchief tied in a loose and careless knot at his brown throat under the gay blue-striped collar of his shirt. A little billycock hat was stuck on the back of his curly tangled head, and in each ear he wore a gold ring, as fine as hair at top, and thickening at the bottom to the form of a crescent moon. He had no waistcoat, and his shabby trousers were bound about by a leather strap with a big buckle. He looked altogether strange and outlandish; but when he turned his dark eyes on the lad beside him, and his milk-white teeth flashed between his black beard and moustache in a sympathetic grimace of pity, there was something in his look which bred confidence at once.

'Water,' said the stranger, holding out the cap; 'get water.' He spoke the simple words slowly, and with an air of having to search for them in his mind before he found them.

The boy took the cap and ran with it to where a little runnel which had its source in a field drain-pipe babbled diamond clear. He filled it and ran back with it; but it leaked so fast that for all his haste he arrived with scarcely half a pint. The stranger threw it into the unconscious lad's face, and having fumbled awhile at his

collar, drew a great shining clasp-knife and slit the linen through. 'More,' he said then, and taking off his own hat, offered it. This, being made of a close-beaten felt, came back full, and the foreigner threw it by sharp handfuls into John's face until the gray eyes opened and looked about firmly with no recognition in them, and then closed again.

'His—name?' said the stranger questioningly.

'John Vale.'

'His—home? You—know?' With the same painful slowness and the same air of seeking the words beforehand.

'Yes. There it is. The house with the red roof among the trees, more than a mile away.'

'You spick—too quick,' said the stranger. 'Find—his—home. Come back. Quick.'

William Gregg threw down his bag and satchel and ran as hard as his legs could carry him, though every now and then a sob caught him at the throat and threatened either to choke him or to bring him to a stand-still. Meantime the stranger, walking to the hedge, cut a pair of stout slivers from a hawthorn, and planting one in the turf on either side his unconscious charge's head, took off his coat and suspended it above the boy's face to shade him from the sun, which was by this time growing powerful. When he had done this, he groped gently in the pockets of the coat, and having found tobacco and papers, rolled himself a cigarette, struck a lucifer match upon his trousers, nursed the light in his coffee-brown hands against a faint breeze that was blowing, and so sat puffing, bareheaded in the sun, with his hands about his knees. He was a well-knit, active-looking fellow of about thirty, and very small in stature. He sat like a statue of idleness for half an hour, only moving once or twice to moisten the boy's lips and temples from the water which still lingered in a crease of the felt hat, or to roll and light a new cigarette.

At length there rose a sound of hoofs and wheels, and this coming to a pause in the lane at the foot of the fields, a ponderous man in dusty gray heaved in sight, mounting the Jacob's ladder, and strode solidly towards him. He disappeared once by reason of the rolling formation of the land, but by-and-by showed again near at hand—a grave man, with outstanding eyebrows, honest, simple, steadfast eyes, and a beak like a good-tempered eagle's.

The foreigner rose and confronted him inquiringly. 'His—fazer?' he demanded.

The grave man answering 'Yes,' the stranger drew his coat away from the boy's face and slipped into it with a lounging grace. Then he picked up his hat, waved it twice or thrice to and fro, to shake the water from it, and dropped it anyhow on the top of his black curls, watching the new-comer seriously all the while.

'Poor little chap!' said the father, stooping to raise the boy in his arms. 'It's a nasty knock he's got.—Pick them things up and bring 'em along, will you?'

He spoke with a sidelong gesture of the head; and the foreigner, understanding the sign and the glance which went with it rather than the words, gathered up the satchel, the bag, and the two caps, and obediently followed in the other's ponderous footsteps.

A well-horsed dogcart stood at the bottom of

the ladder, and a man with a straw in his mouth and a general look of stables held the reins. The farmer having carefully descended the steps, held up the boy to him, as if the poor little figure had been no more than a feather's weight. Then he turned upon the foreigner, and holding out one hand for the things he carried, put the other to his pocket with a somewhat doubtful air. He looked with mild inquiry at the shabby jacket and the shabbier trousers and downward to the boots. These being dusty, unblacked, and broken, seemed to decide him, and he drew forth a little handful of silver and held it out.

'Merci!' said the stranger, repelling the offer with both hands. 'No, no, no! Sank you; but no!'

'Take it,' said the farmer, looking again at the broken boots.

The other followed his glance, and smiled with a flash of his white teeth. 'No, no, no!' he said again. 'Sank you, but no! I—have—done;' he paused there and thought for a second or two, and then found 'nossings—nossings.' He paused and thought again, and added, 'Good-luck!' lifting his hat as he spoke.

'Thank you kindly,' answered the farmer. 'There's not a-many of the gypsies as would take the trouble, and fewer as wouldn't take the money. Thank you kindly.'

'No, no!' said the foreigner lightly. 'No sanks. Nossing. Good-luck!'

The farmer, climbing into the dogcart, took the boy in his arms, and was driven away, turning a backward glance at the shabby wanderer who would take no money. The shabby wanderer waved his hat to him, and followed the track of the dogcart along the dusty road.

CHAPTER II.

The bulldog boy had been despatched to look for the doctor, and had started upon his search in an agony of self-accusation. He was a boy of the tenderest heart, under his dogged exterior, and as he ran panting and gasping along the road towards the doctor's house—which, by the way, lay a good three miles off—he exaggerated his own share in the feud with the young ragamuffins of Castle-Barfield, and minimised his companion's share in it, until at last he felt as guilty as a murderer. There was a swelling tide of remorse and terror in his heart, and if once he had allowed it to break beyond bounds, he would have had to sit down and cry helplessly and bitterly. So, being one of those determined fellows who will do what they once take to be their duty if they die for it, and seeing that his one present duty was to find the doctor with all possible speed, he choked down his fears and repentances as best he could, and ran as he had never run in his life before, in spite of his choking throat and swelling heart.

As good fortune had it, the doctor very nearly ran over him at a sudden turning of the road. The messenger could scarcely speak, but got his story out in breathless sobs somehow, and so was picked up and driven back to the farmhouse. The farmer and the injured lad had arrived but a minute or two before, and the dogcart was still standing at the gateway. The doctor jumped down, threw the reins to the boy, and entered.

Young Gregg sat in the doctor's trap and held the reins. The sun shone bright, and the trees rustled in the gay wind. Now and then a carter called to his team or cracked his whip, and there was a distant sound of jangling bells. The doctor's horse champed at his bit, and beat the roadway first with one forefoot and then with the other. Muffled voices spoke within the house, and sometimes the wretched listener heard the sound of hurrying feet upon the uncarpeted stairs. He was profoundly troubled, and felt as guilty as Cain, though there was a piteous exculpation of himself going on within doors all the while.

The hostler came and led off the farmer's horse; and the boy, though he longed to ask if the doctor had as yet said anything, was so weighed upon by his fears that he left the question unspoken, and watched the hostler go through the gate and away past the side of the house as miserably as though he knew that the man carried the last shred of hope with him. Then, when he had sat utterly desolate for a quarter of an hour or so, listening to all the sounds in the house with a strained and dreadful fear, he heard the sound of wheels and hoof-beats behind him, and turning his tear-stained face, saw a ponderous, grave, clean-shaven man in the act of pulling up a few yards away. This personage looked a great deal too big for the trap he rode in, and, indeed, had a way with him of looking too big for any place in which he might find himself. He was a man of huge physique, but he had a grave and ponderous way of magnifying himself, as it were, and seeming bigger than he was. He wore gray clothes of a severe and formal cut; his neckcloth was white; and his hat broad, low-crowned, and stiffly curled at the brim, so that he had something of a clerical or semi-clerical air. His gray eyes were keen, and had all their light upon the surface; his mouth, chin, and jaw gave unmistakable signs of an obstinate will. His face was a vulgarised copy of the great Napoleon's, and Mr Robert Snelling himself may be fairly described as a Napoleon minus the brains which made Napoleon remarkable. That is to say, that he saw his neighbour's side of things insect small, whilst his own side looked big as Behemoth; that he had a will of iron, an indomitable selfishness, and an unusual capacity for tyranny.

Robert Snelling was a seed and corn merchant, and a first-cousin of Farmer Vale's. He was immensely respectable, and greatly respected, and he had such a mastiff-way of going straight to any worldly or social bone he wanted, that people generally made a clear road for him. He was a very remarkable person for a rustic tradesman, and had done some reading and thinking in his time. Most people were a little afraid of him, and though he passed as the keenest trader in those parts of the world, he was also held to be a model of rectitude.

He got out of his trap with a solid slow dignity, and tied up the reins to a part of the trap itself with a deliberate action in which no motion seemed wasted or delayed. There was a weight of will in his walk, in his repose, in the way in which he carried his hands, in every heavy gesture.

'Well—ah—Willyum!' says Mr Snelling to the boy. His voice was of a deep drawling bass, and at the end of a phrase, short or long, it closed

on a high loud note delivered with a snap as quick as the sound of a pistol, and not much softer. In conversation, this method of his seemed to indicate at once a deliberate desire for justice and an irrevocable decision. The profound lingering basso meant choice, forethought, wariness. The loud snap at the end of it said, 'There you are! That's settled and done with.'

He saw that the boy was crying, and looked bitterly distressed; but then, boys cried pretty often, and looked bitterly distressed on grounds which, when a man gave himself the trouble of looking at them, were ludicrously small. It was probable, whatever was the matter, that the boy had done something to deserve it; or if he had not, then he would do later. That was the way with boys—to merit suffering, and to suffer.

He marched heavily into the house in that strong and wilful way of his, always as if he expected opposition and were prepared to bear it down, not swaggeringly or bullishly, but with a deep-seated bellicose strength. There was a longish garden, full of intertangled vegetables and flowers, between the gate and the farmhouse, and the pathway between them was brick-paved and smooth and lustrous with many years of constant scrubbing. The beans were in flower like an army of black and white butterflies waiting the signal to rise and flutter in the air, and the roses and wallflower loaded the light wind with odour. Mr Snelling gave a satisfied slow sniff as he went, and stalked into the half-gloom of the clean low-ceilinged kitchen, where pans and crocks caught stray gleams of reflected light, and dazzled in them, and a single big red rose pushed its head in at the open diamonded window.

'Hillo! House here!' cried Mr Snelling, smiting a bare deal table resoundingly with his whip as a signal to the inmates.

'Sh!' answered a voice from above, and a moment later there began a sound of cautious steps upon the stair. These came to an end with the appearance of the farmer, whose face looked pained and anxious. He closed the stair-door gingerly behind him and held out his hand to his cousin. 'Our John's met with a gravish mishap,' he said. 'The doctor's up-stairs with him now.'

'Oho!' said Mr Snelling.—'And how did that come to pass?'

'Not so loud, Robert—not so loud!' cried the farmer. 'That voice of thine sets the beams a-trembling overhead. Some young Rip seems to have thrown a stone at the lad. He's been knocked quite senseless, and he's been moaning on his mother, as has been dead this three years. Dr Haycock looks grave about it. I'm afraid the lad's sore hurt.'

'We'll hope not,' answered Snelling, moderating his voice somewhat, and looking as serious as he thought the case demanded. 'You was always a bit disposed to be tremorful and fearsome, John, and to say die before the time came.—Who was the lad that did it?'

'I've had no time to make proper inquiries yet,' the farmer responded. 'It was Will Gregg brought the news.'

'Ah!' cried Snelling, 'twas him, was it? You'll have to dust his jacket for him.'

The drawl and the snap together gave this almost an air of justice; but the farmer inter-

posed: 'I said 'twas young Gregg brought the news.'

'Yes, yes,' replied Snelling in his weighty way. 'We'll sift this.' He marched out of the kitchen into the sunlight, whip in hand, and sought the stables. There he found the hostler, who by this time had got the horse out of harness, and was hissing round him like a whole brood of snakes as he thumped and polished him with a plaited hay wisp. 'James,' said Mr Snelling in a magisterial manner, 'there's a young youth outside guarding the doctor's hoss. Send him in to me, and keep an eye on the trap yourself. That chestnut's a bit skittish.'

James, to whom any moment of leisure was tedious without tobacco, paused to take a short black pipe from his waistcoat pocket and to strike a match upon his corduroy trousers. Mr Snelling, having given his orders, had immediately retired. He returned to the kitchen, and there, planting an armchair in the middle of the floor, sat down in it and waited to deal out justice.

'Well—ah—Willyum,' he began, as the boy entered, 'how came you to do this damage to Mr Vale's little boy?'

'It wasn't me, Mr Snelling,' returned William.

'We'll see about that by-and-by,' said Mr Snelling, sternly ponderous and wise, a spectacle to strike a guilty boy with awe. A spectacle, perhaps, to strike an innocent boy with a sense of exasperation.

'Let the lad tell how it happened, Robert,' said the farmer.

Mr Snelling gave a wordless wave of his right arm, as if to say, 'Leave an open road for Justice and for Wisdom, and leave this boy to me.'

'How came you, sir, to do this act of wicked damage?' he asked.

'Mr Vale,' said the boy, turning to the farmer, 'I'll tell you all about how it happened'—

'And no lies, mind,' interrupted Mr Snelling. 'A lie's always found out, and it'll make it a great deal worse for you.—So now, go on.'

The bulldog boy looked at him rebelliously. Perhaps he may have thought on what altered lines he would conduct the conversation if he were as big as Snelling.

'Ever since we've gone to school to Barfield,' he began again, addressing himself naturally to Vale, and not to the brow-beating Injustice in the armchair, 'we've always had a fight in the morning with some of the Barfield boys on Scott's Hills. We couldn't pass without, and so we've always had a fight with 'em.'

'What do you mean,' Snelling demanded, 'by saying?'

'There was a new boy there last Thursday'—the lad went on; but Snelling stopped him with a sonorous 'Wait there.'

The boy waited, regarding him with a rebellious eye and a lowering face. He had begun to glow with his story, and would have made it all clear in a moment, and he had been full of honest and tender self-accusation.

'You're talking to your elders, you are,' said Snelling. 'You're not talking to a parcel of children as are ready to believe anything. What do you mean by saying that you couldn't pass to Barfield without having a fight in the morning?'

'We might have passed,' the boy answered, 'if we had taken the cowardly blow and gone round

by the church. But that's a mile out of the way, and we didn't mean to take the cowardly blow.'

'You mean,' said Mr Snelling, 'as you provoked the fight?'

'We didn't provoke the fight,' cried the boy in hot resentment.

'How dare you take that tone with your elders, sir?' asked Snelling. 'Is that the way your father brings you up?'

'Come, come, Robert,' said the mild farmer; 'have a bit of patience with the lad.—Tell your tale, William; and then if there's any questions to be asked, me and Mr Snelling'll put 'em afterwards.'

'John,' returned Mr Snelling, with almost as solemn an air of superior age and size as he employed to the boy himself, 'you're wanting in firmness. Leave him to me. I'll get the truth out of him, never fear.' He laid his hands upon his knees and leaned a little forward, as if he were just beginning to take trouble in the matter. —'Now, William Gregg, go on, and let us have no more prevarication.'

But William Gregg was not disposed to go on, having been brow-beaten beyond the necessary, according to his way of thinking. All the self-accusation and all the tender remorseful feeling had gone out of him, and in his own fashion he could be as obstinate as Snelling himself. There is no saying what might have come of the conflict, for just when the boy's silence was growing noticeable, the doctor came down-stairs, and caused a diversion.

'I hope the lad's come by no real mischief, doctor?' said Snelling, turning upon him.

The doctor was a pale man with puffy eyelids, and looked as if he spent his nights in tears. It was no part of his professional scheme to lessen the importance of his own services by making too light of a case, and he shook his head with so mournful and despondent an air that the farmer took fright at him.

'Come, come, Dr Haycock,' said Vale; 'it is to be hoped it isn't as bad as that comes to?'

The doctor did not say how bad it was, but he shook his head again and looked deeply serious. At this young Gregg was seized with new terrors, to which he hardly dared to give a name.

Snelling rose from his seat, and laying his two great hands on the topmost rail of the chair, bent above the doctor. 'Mr Vale,' he said, in his deliberate deep voice, with its note of swift decision here and there, 'is not a man as needs be trifled with, nor a man as fears to know the truth. You can tell us what to look for, doctor, and we are men as can endure it.'

'It's no part of my business,' answered the doctor, 'to cast down your spirits; and it is too early, gentlemen, to pronounce a decided opinion. But I am free to tell you that I don't like the look of things. We shall know more in a little while. I will drive over this evening.'

'You'll take a glass of ale afore you go, doctor?' asked Vale. He asked less out of his home-bred country hospitality than because he seemed to cling to the doctor in his own mind, and would fain have delayed him if he could, all day.

'Well,' said the doctor lingeringly—'yes; I will take a glass of ale.' He was as mournful over that as he was over the boy's condition, and he drank the ale when it came with a griev-

ing relish, as rustic mourners take their port or sherry at a funeral. 'I will drive over again this evening,' he said as he shook hands.

William Gregg had slipped away, and when Snelling looked round for him to renew his bullying catechism, the boy was not to be seen. He was very strong and undemonstrative by nature; but he had been already frightened into a storm of grief that morning, and the doctor's words and manner struck him with a new terror, so that he could not control his tears. He would rather any day have taken a flogging than have been caught crying, and so he stole away and hid himself in a barn, and there had his second burst of grief and fear all to himself.

Grief and fear were not all that filled his mind, for a bitter sense of injustice mingled with them. He knew he would have fought until he could fight no longer to save his chum from harm, and his heart so revolted at the cowardice and treachery which had done this mischief, that to find the mischief charged upon himself was a double wrong, and altogether insupportable. He hated Snelling with as much passion as his grief left room for; but he was helpless under the injustice put upon him.

There are some men, but not many, who take the trouble to realise for themselves what children think and feel. Mr Robert Snelling was certainly not one of them, and he would have cared very little, even if he had known of the tempest he had raised. If a creature as big as the side of a house had domineered over him, had jeered him, brow-beaten him, charged him without an atom of evidence with crimes impossible to his nature, and left him without the possibility of redress or vengeance, it would have been a different thing altogether. But a boy? What does it matter what you say to a boy? What does it matter what a boy thinks, or what he fancies himself to suffer? Things would have come to a pretty pass, surely, in his estimation, if a man of middle age might not say what he pleased to a boy.

Young Gregg had sobbed and fought himself into quiet, when the farmer, wandering uneasily hither and thither, strolled into the barn and found him. The lad stood up sullenly, prepared for fresh injustice, and steeling his heart against it. But the farmer, laying a kindly hand on his shoulder, simply asked him: 'Tell us how it happened, William.'

So William told the whole story straightforwardly and simply; and the farmer, ordering the mare to be harnessed anew, drove off with him to discover and identify the guilty author of the damage.

'You oughtn't to have had any truck with them rough lads, William,' he said, as they drove away.

'We couldn't help it, sir,' said William. 'They wouldn't let us go by without a fight.'

The farmer sighed; but he remembered his own boyhood. He was a very mild man indeed, and he had been mild as a boy; but he knew that he would have fought for his right of way, if it had been disputed.

'The proper way would have been for you to ha' told your father, and for John to ha' told me,' he answered. 'We should ha' put an end to it directly.—But now, you see what comes

of fighting and taking your own cause i' your own hands afore you're old enough to be wise, my lad.'

The extreme gentleness of this rebuke broke William Gregg anew, and he sobbed all the rest of the way.

TERM BEGINS AGAIN.

THE month of holiday, so eagerly longed for, has come and gone; the fellows return to-day. Newspapers and circulars have informed the world that 'the above College will resume its duties on January 21st;' or some more briefly make it known thus: 'The Spring Term commences Jan. 21st.' In fact, in these days of hurry, the latter style receives more general favour, and but few find time to add D.V., to catch the eye and heart of parents of a pious turn of mind.

This morning the College governor and chaplain came smiling into breakfast. 'Well, the vacation is over, and the day is fine for travelling.' His good lady, pouring out the steaming coffee, hopes the boys will take care of themselves, and not start the term with bad colds and require nursing directly they get back.

At the lodge gates, the same programme was gone through an hour since: the porter and 'general factotum' informs his 'missus' that 'the vacation is over,' and not very pleasantly either, as it means the unloading and hauling about of scores of boxes heavy with books, jam-pots, boots, skates, and other weighty material. The kitchen-maid informs the milkman that 'the boys is comin' in to-day, and cook says he must bring ten gallons to-morrow morning.' The butcher and baker receive similar announcements and enlarged orders; they in their turn fail not to tell their numerous acquaintances at the back-doors in every street in the town that 'the College young gentlemen come back to-day.'

However the world puts this important matter, the result is the same: by eleven o'clock to-night, two hundred and fifty beds that were empty last night will hold a tenant. There stand the beds in the moonlight—two long rows in No. 4, each bed with a dark knob at the head, and a figure extended therefrom or coiled up by the pillow. By this time every boy has dropped off to sleep; the loud breathing and occasional cough are the only sounds to be heard, except when that new boy in the corner turns over in his dream. Poor boy: he had a small 'weep' before he fell asleep. Last night he was in the little room at home, his box was packed and lying at the foot of the bed, but to-night his bed is empty and the box gone. The mother cannot pass his room to-night without going in to convince herself that he is not there. His bed is painfully empty. Sadly she passes out and closes the door behind her, not without a prayer and a tear. This small tragedy is being acted all over the country; untenanted beds strew the land, and fond mothers weep over them.

But we have brought the fellows back to College in somewhat of a hurry; we need hardly say that boys do not usually fly from the small bedroom at home to the big dormitory at College. A melancholy breakfast is followed by sad farewells; railway tickets, labels, porters, and cabmen

to be negotiated, and a dozen other matters must be attended to before nightfall.

In the matter of going home, boys are universally agreed that the earliest trains are infinitely the best. Although two hours of wearisome travelling might be spared by choosing a late fast train, he is no ordinary schoolboy who can calmly sit down and wait while his chums are starting at 6.45 A.M. In the matter of returning, on the contrary, there is considerable diversity of opinion.

The first arrival makes his appearance soon after breakfast. If he isn't a new boy—for new boys usually are in a hurry to see what College is like—it is easy to fix him down to be one of a certain half-dozen. There is a type of boy that always returns at this early period of the morning, either because he is very sick of home and holidays, or because he wishes to secure the most comfortable bed in No. 6 bedroom, and the best of everything else that others might particularly like to have. He is by no means a desirable character. When his early raids have terminated, his time is spent very enjoyably in quizzing the new boys as they arrive, and laughing boisterously at anything that doesn't suit his limited notions of propriety. He never fails to inquire after the grub-box, to ask the names of the new-comer's sisters and the amount of pocket-money he has brought.

There is another type of boy that invariably comes back several days late: nothing would induce him to come up to time. He is a jolly, careless, and foolish fellow, caring nothing for position in class or loss of time and knowledge. The fellows say that he tells his parents the wrong date in order to escape the examination in holiday-work which takes place on the first day; but it is more probable that the parents are as indifferent as the sons, and keep them at home merely because they wish it. Such parents become rarer year by year; not only do they send their sons on the right day, but even grumble because the holidays are so long.

The traffic on the College drive is greatest between three o'clock and seven. There they come. A huge 'bus-load slowly winds its way from the big gates up the grounds to the front of the building, its top covered with figures moving about under mortar boards. It is just a month since they passed through the same gateway shouting and hurraing, rousing the neighbourhood with *Dulce Domum* and *Auld Lang Syne*. The return is not so jubilant and noisy; yet there is plenty of excitement, and seemingly nothing of that melancholy which is supposed to seize upon the British schoolboy and play such havoc with him in the shape of homesickness. Anything that affects the feelings of a representative schoolboy ought to be hailed with delight; he is not over-tender; at least we mustn't expect to find any symptoms of it on the top of a 'bus. Possibly he gave way to it for a short while when he first started this morning. Having waved his hand to the figures on the platform until a signal-box intercepted the view, he sat down in a corner of the carriage quite still, and gazed into space as well as he could through a big bead which would insist on filling each eye. How long he would have remained in this thoughtful attitude it is useless to attempt to decide;

perhaps it is as well that Brooks and his brother interrupted the solemnity of the occasion by entering the carriage at the next station and shaking him vigorously by the hand, more commonly styled the paw or the flipper. The schoolboys' train is often like the river—it gathers volume at different junctions as it proceeds, and finally discharges its contents on the desired platform.

The well-known faces turn up one after the other, and no time is left for melancholy reflection. Matters of vital importance have to be discussed. Robinson isn't coming back, so that there will be another vacancy in the Football Fifteen. How many new masters are there? Is Dumps returning, or did the Doctor give him the sack? When there is an idle moment left, there is opportunity for a private cogitation on an all-important question—the pocket-money. Even when one is old enough to have forgotten that he ever wore knickerbockers, five shillings extra will cover any amount of doleful feelings. It had been a matter of speculation all the holidays as to 'how much the Pater would tip up,' so that to have one's highest anticipations beaten by five shillings left no room for other than feelings of congratulation. In fact, the homesick boy has become a *rara avis*. But when you do catch him shedding a quiet tear in a corner of the playground, he is an affectionate, sympathetic, little fellow of the right sort, lamenting the absence of something more lasting and satisfying than cake and jam.

The ordinary schoolboy, who gets infinite enjoyment out of kicking inflated leather about, and in the very 'feel' of a bat, has more real enjoyment at College than at home, because he always has at hand the necessary paraphernalia and companions, without having to hunt all over the town to raise a side; also, the restraints of home-life, which are often more irksome than those of school-life, are removed. Notwithstanding this, it is hardly necessary to say that holidays will always be appreciated, because they are a change from the routine of the Term. In the same way, many of us who are older and prefer the quiet of home-life, start off in July with light hearts for six weeks' more or less wearisome travelling, and often wish ourselves back again.

School can no longer be called a jail; the hours of confinement are made just long enough to cause the playtime to be appreciated; in fact, there is a feeling prevalent that school is made far too easy a matter for the better classes. 'A liberal diet' is also an actuality, and finds its place on every prospectus along with 'no corporal punishment.' Certainly, this is not prison life and fare.

Here comes the last load up the drive. No prison van this. Now they stop. Down the fellows tumble on to the College steps, and are lost to sight in the open doorway under the clock-tower, chatting and laughing all the time. In they go! The Rubicon is crossed, and Term has begun once more.

That open doorway, that hole under the clock at the foot of the tower, has a sort of fascination about it; it reminds one of the hole in front of a beehive where the bees pass in and out; or in some vague way of the hole in the hillside into which the 'Pied Piper' led the children of Hamelin. But first and foremost it brings before our eyes one's own particular portal, through

which we were wont to pass and repass during those years at College. Do we not still remember how, when standing in its shadow for the first time, we nearly broke our young neck in staring up the face of the tower as Father pulled the big bell-handle at its base to gain admittance. What a height it appeared—hundreds of feet! From that time it gradually got smaller and smaller as our youthful vision expanded, until we found out it was only ninety feet, and that the hands of the clock were not a quarter of a mile, as we at first supposed.

We had equally magnified notions of the learning of this august building, that were by no means lessened when we tried to decipher the Latin motto cut in the stone above the entrance. But we were admitted in spite of our fears and the grim monsters that glared down on us with stony eyes from every convenient corner of this Gothic pile. We cannot say that we wish for a return of those days; in the main we are well contented with our present lot. But it is possible that on one day in the three hundred and sixty-five, when we are dropping in for more kicks than halfpence, we might wish to stand once more in the College entrance-hall in big collar and knickers with two boxes containing all the necessary property of life—a clothes-box and a grub-box; blest also with an innocent mind and a strong digestion; in short, able to sit on one's boxes and have the satisfaction of knowing that under one's hat are all things necessary to command success and happiness for the next three months at least.

JEREMY YORK.

A STORY OF OLD DEAL.*

By W. CLARK RUSSELL,

Author of the *Wreck of the Grosvenor*, etc.

I.

A LIGHT westerly wind had crowded the spacious waters of the Downs with anchored vessels. The colour, the apparel, the quaint bravery of the ships and mariners of the last century, made a noble and sparkling show of the marine pageant. The hour was a little before sundown, and the gush of warm red glory past the giant headland went in a tincture of dark gold to the zenith, and thence pale as amber to the eastern sea-line, with a hot crimson head of cloud here and there vaguely defined upon the delicate radiance, whilst the horizon ran with a line as clear as though scored with the sweep of the leg of a pair of compasses.

It was an evening in the month of September. There were scarce fewer than three hundred sail of vessels gently straining at their hemp cables to the easterly set of the water. They had come together as if by magic, for that morning the historic tract of waters had steeped bare to the white terraces of the Forelands; whilst now the

* The tradition upon which the following narrative is founded, although above a hundred and thirty years old, is still current in the South Foreland district. It is briefly referred to in several of the local guide-books and histories.

multitudinous shipping showed like a forest upon the sea, gay with fluttering pennons, delicate as a bit of pencilling with the wondrous intricacies of the rigging, brilliant with the red sheen of the waning luminary upon glass and brass; upon the writhing of gilt-work upon quarter-galleries and castellated sterns; upon innumerable figure-heads of fantastic device; upon yellow spars where the expiring flames in the west trembled in veins of burnished brass.

An old-world scene of this kind is not to be matched nowadays. The iron craft has entered the soul of the marine, and all is dull, flat, prosaic. Ships of fifty fashions filled the Downs that evening. There was the towering three-decker, grand as a palace abaft, with handsome galleries and spacious windows trembling to the lustre that rose to them from off the running water, the red coats of marines dotting the white lines that crowned her adamantine defences, shrouds as thick as cables soaring to huge round tops, from which, higher and higher yet, rose topmast and topgallant-mast and royal-mast into miracles of airy delicacy, from whose central spire languidly floated the pennon of the ship of the state. There was the East Indiaman outward bound, newly brought up, scarcely less regal in her way than the first-rate, with John Company's house-flag at the main under the dog-vane that glanced like a streak of fire to the raining of the splendour beyond the line of coast, the red flag at her peak, the grinning lips of cannon along her sides, the glitter of uniforms upon her quarter-deck, and rows of lively hearties aloft upon her topsail yards snugging the spaces of white cloths into lines of snow. There were the little bilander bound to the Mediterranean, rigged with a long lateen yard upon her mainmast; the high-sterned pink; the round-bowed sturdy snow; the galley of a hundred and fifty tons, whose long low hull, with ports for sweeps, gave her a most piratical look, with a malignant fancy to follow on of a breathless calm and a stagnated vessel, towards which this same galley is impelled by her huge oars, as though she were some vast deadly marine insect subtly though swiftly stirring to the impulse of its antennæ.

The scene was full of light and life. Standing on Deal beach, so quiet was everything ashore, so still this hour of sundown, you would have heard a blending of innumerable sounds softened into music by distance—the strains of fiddles in the nearer craft, the voices of men singing, the pleasant noise of bells, the clank and rattle of winches and capstans and windlasses, the chorusing of lungs of leather stowing the canvas, the shrill chirpings of boatswains' whistles. Then on a sudden broke the sudden harsh thunder of a gun from the line-of-battle ship. It was instantly followed by the graceful drooping of the many-coloured bunting to right and left, denoting the hour of sunset; and now masthead and gaff-end showed bare of the bunting that had but a little before made the mass of shipping appear like a floating city of banners; and high above the congregation of masts the towering fabric of the three-decker loomed grim and forbidding upon the darkness of the evening stealthily creeping like some dark curl of breeze out of the east.

II.

Whilst the sullen explosion of the gun was echoing along the Sandwich plains, a large, exceedingly handsome brig, that had been quietly pushing her way into the heart of the shipping, helped rather by the tide than by the faint fannings aloft, hauled up her courses and let go all halliards; and a minute after, her anchor fell from the cathead and she swung quietly to the drag of her cable. She was from down Channel, a homeward-bounder: but those were the ambling days of trade; no fuss was made over what we now call prompt despatch. It was merely a question of how the wind sat; and a six weeks' detention in the Downs was accepted as a commonplace incident in a voyage from the Thames to foreign parts.

A few minutes after the brig's anchor had been let go, a signal was made to the shore for a boat. The twilight was yet abroad; the line of the land dark against the rusty crimson of the west; the flag was to be readily descried, and there was a fluttering of air still to make a conspicuous thing of the bunting amid the congregation of colourless spars and masts, amid which, here and there, you already saw the twinkling of a cabin-lamp or of a lantern swinging pendulum-like from the fore-stay.

A tall young fellow of some three or four and twenty years of age stood in the gangway of the brig, impatiently gazing shorewards. He was distinctly handsome, spite of a certain haggardness and hollowiness that seemed to betoken a considerable spell of illness. His eyes were large, dark, and lustrous, full of intelligence, and, as one should say, of softness also. He stood a little above six feet, but with the stoop of a man who had not yet been able to stiffen himself out of a long term of prostrating sickness. His hair was long and abundant and curled plentifully upon his shoulders and back: an oddity in him, to engage at least a shore-going eye, accustomed to the perukes and bags and 'tyes' of the streets. He was habited plainly in a coat with vast cuffs and pockets and metal buttons, crimson breeches, coarse gray stockings, and shovel-shaped shoes heavy with large plate buckles. His hat was a three-cornered affair, and from time to time he fanned his face with it, whilst he continued to watch steadfastly and anxiously the approach of a boat from Deal beach.

'Here comes something that looks like a punt, at last, Mr York,' exclaimed the skipper of the brig, approaching him—a broad-beamed, bullet-headed bit of a man, standing on oval shanks and carrying a face as red as the flag he sailed under. 'Hope you'll pick up ashore, I do. Remember my words—if you feel able to ship along with me by the time I am ready to sail, and that's giving you from now to December, why, all that I can say is, there's a berth ready for you.'

'I am heartily obliged to you, sir, for the offer,' said the other; 'and I thank you from the depths of my soul for the kindness you've done me.—Indeed, Captain Settle, I shall never forget you; and if I am equal to going a-sailing again by December, you may reckon me already, sir, as upon the ship's articles.'

They continued exchanging compliments after this pattern whilst the boat approached; presently

it was alongside, and the tall young fellow whom the captain had addressed as Mr York prepared to descend.

'I shall endeavour to be in London the week after next,' he exclaimed as he swung a moment by the man-ropes; 'and I trust, captain, you'll not forget to put in a good word for me with the owners of the *Colia*. It will be a matter of twenty-eight pounds to me, who am now in a condition to view even a sixpence as a very serious thing.'

'Trust me, trust me, Mr York,' the captain exclaimed with a cheery wave of his hand.

The tall young fellow, named Jeremy York, lowered himself into the boat; a small bundle—apparently all the luggage he had—was handed down to him by the skipper; he flourished his hat; the crew of the brig, some of whom were at work upon the fore-castle and some aloft, gave him a cheer; and in a moment or two he was being swept shorewards by the vigorous arms of a brace of Deal boatmen.

It was now dark; the western hectic was gone, the stars floated in a showering of brilliant points to the liquid dusk, that hung glimmerless above the horizon, with here and there a round-browed cloud with a sheen upon it like the head of a snow-clad rise to obscure a narrow space of the sparkling dome. The Foreland soared wan and massive from the white wash of the water at its base, then swept darkly to the flat land upon which were grouped the houses of the town of Deal, whose foreshore at this moment winked with its row of oil lamps, or a dim illumination in places of small lozenge-paved windows, and a brighter streak of light striking through an open door. High and dry upon the shingle rested groups of boats; and at intervals, as York approached the beach, he would catch a noise like to a rush of water upon shingle, and mark some little fabric newly launched, swiftly making off on a small buccaneering cruise of its own amongst the shipping, or maybe to intercept some shadow hovering past the Goodwins with her hold full of silks, tobacco, tea, and spirits, to be 'run' before the morning, and under the noses, too, of the lookout aboard the first-rate, and the revenue people, trudging, solitary and austere, along the tall cliffs' edge or the long low line of beach.

'Many people in Deal just now?' York inquired of one of the boatmen.

'Town choke full, oi allow,' was the answer. 'Take them there ships,' with a nod in the star-light towards the phantasmal huddle over the stern of the boat: 'one person from each craft 'ud be more'n enough to overflow us, and you'd say that one-third of every ship's company out yonder had come ashore.'

'A bother!' cried the young fellow, a little petulantly; 'small prospect of my hiring a bed, if it be as you say.—D'ye think there's a chance of my getting a night's rest in your town?'

'Whoy not?' answered the other boatman gruffly. 'Ye're a seafaring man beloike, and there ought to be more'n one soft plank proper for sailor's bones to be found vacant at Deal.'

'No planking it for me, not if there's a mattress to be hired!' cried York. 'Suffer such a fever as has kept me wasting for six months in Valparaiso, and you'll wish your skeleton marrowless, that it might give over aching.'

'There are inns enough, anyway,' said one of the men. 'Troy Mother Puddell's first. She keeps the sign of the *Cat o' Nine Tails*, Sandown way. There should be a chance there; and oi'll tell ye whoy: her liquor's cust bad. She's bekknown for *that*, 'soides high tarms. 'Tain't that I name her 'cause I love her; but when a sick gent wants a bed, he ain't going to be hindered by a shilling too much, let alone a quality o' liquor there's no call for him to drink.'

As the man spoke, the boat's keel grounded on the shingle, and the little craft swept broadside to the beach. York, picking up his bundle, stepped out, and inquired the fare. The boatmen demanded six shillings.

'See here,' said he, pulling out a half-guinea piece, 'this is all the money I possess, and I shall have no more until I can beg, borrow, or steal it. If I deduct six shillings from this, what does it leave me?'

'Give us foive,' said the men.

'Three,' he answered; 'for God's sake, don't take advantage of a sick sailor!'

An altercation followed; York was resolved, the boatmen importunate and clamorous, and presently offensive. Other boatmen were attracted by the noise, and soon there was a crowd of Deal men listening to the shouts of their two brethren and the cold determined remonstrances of Mr Jeremy York.

At last the tall young fellow cried out, 'Make it four shillings, then, and you shall be paid.' The others agreed; the half-guinea was changed into silver; and York walked away, followed curiously by the eyes of the group of men who had assembled.

'Tall enough for a Maypole,' said one of them.

'What's his sect?' exclaimed another. 'Looks as if his hair grewed from a woman's head.'

'Smite me,' cried one of the two boatmen who had pulled the young fellow ashore, 'if ever I takes a job again without first agreeing with the party as to tarms. A dirty four shillin'! But what's a man to dew? He outs with his half-guinea piece, and says 'tis all the money he's got in the world; and who's to know that it ain't a forged bit tew? But that's Billy Tucker's consarn, who's got the coin.' He spat with disgust and lurched off, on which the group broke up, and made in several detachments for the various public-houses or inns in Beach Street.

'SPOT' AND 'FUTURES.'

THE extent to which speculative business is carried on in the modern world of commerce is vastly greater than most people are aware of. It is not only that there is speculation in every business, but speculation has become a business of itself—fully organised, equipped, and certificated. In this country, of course, we are apt to imagine that the great centre of speculation is the Stock Exchange. Doubtless it is the greatest centre; but there are other arenas in which speculation at times is greater than that in stocks. Of course it is erroneous to attempt to measure the extent of speculation in public securities by the amount of the turn-over in the Stock Exchange Clearing-house, because a very large proportion of the transactions there recorded are *bonâ-fide* exchanges—that is, sales and purchases—of investments. But the

Stock Exchange nevertheless remains in this country the most striking—example of a place where a man may buy what he does not want, and sell what he has not got, on the chance of something turning up in his favour.

There are other departments of traffic in this country where men do the same thing, but in which, nevertheless, some tangible evidence of the article dealt in is called for. There are, for instance, in the pig-iron and petroleum markets a great many turnings-over of 'warrants' before settling-day arrives; but at last the 'warrants' must be produced by somebody, and taken by somebody else—the intermediaries merely taking or paying the differences on their respective operations. This is because in these trades the speculation is chiefly in that which is actually existing in public stores, for which the store-keepers grant receipts or warrants. These documents are, in ordinary circumstances, as readily convertible into cash as bank-notes, although at a discount, and are used as securities in obtaining money on loan.

In petroleum, as also in cotton and some other commodities, the speculation is often in 'forward' rather than in 'prompt' deliveries, or, to use the trade terms, 'Futures' and 'Spot.'

But to illustrate the operation of 'Future' and 'Spot' dealings in speculative circles, we need to take wheat. This is, next to stocks and shares, probably the object of the largest amount of speculation in the United States; and we are not sure that the operations in the wheat 'pits' are not sometimes larger than those in Wall Street in respect of the total amount of money involved. The whole annual crop of wheat in the United States averages over four hundred millions of bushels; but when speculation is brisk, more than that quantity will be bought and sold in a single market in one week.

There are three great markets for wheat in the United States—New York, Chicago, and Duluth (Minnesota). The last named is the youngest of the three, but is growing so rapidly in importance, that it is said to do as much business now as Chicago. In each of these places there is a Corn Exchange, managed by a 'Board of Trade,' and in each is a 'pit,' or amphitheatre, in which speculators gather for their peculiar operations. If a man wants to buy 'Spot' wheat—that is to say, wheat for immediate delivery for shipment, or for other purposes of legitimate trade—he goes to the Exchange, where the stands of the dealers are arranged in much the same way as in our own corn-markets. There he 'makes his deal;' and on obtaining an order on the 'elevator' for the quantity he requires, must be prepared to hand over cash in return. It is a maxim in America that 'Corn is cash;' and this maxim is supposed to be adhered to both in ordinary and in speculative dealing. Again, a man who has grain stored in the 'elevator,' merely takes his store-receipt or warrant to a dealer or broker, and obtains for it cash on the basis of the 'Spot' price of the day. He may, of course, give a limit to his broker below which he is not to sell; and if so, must wait until the 'Spot' price reaches his figure.

An elevator, it must be explained, is a public warehouse in which is stored all the grain as it comes in from the country. All wheat in America is 'graded'—that is, classified according

to quality, such as Nos. 1, 2, and 3, Spring or Winter, in Chicago; or Nos. 1 or 2, Hard Spring, or Hard Northern, in Duluth. There are many different grades; but for purposes of speculation, 'No. 2 Spring' is used chiefly in Chicago, 'No. 1 Hard Spring' in Duluth, and 'No. 2 Spring or Winter,' in seller's option, in New York.

When a farmer or dealer sends grain to an elevator, it is inspected by duly appointed officials, declared of such and such a grade, and a receipt is granted for the ascertained quantity of the declared grade. The wheat is then stored, not by itself, but in a mass with thousands of other consignments, all duly graded, so that a man never gets his own wheat out again. He merely gets the same quantity as he delivered of the particular grade.

Such a system of grading is not possible in any other country in the world but America—unless, perhaps, to a certain extent in Russia—for this reason: in America there are vast tracts of land all producing the same quality of grain. There is the 'Spring Wheat belt,' and the 'Winter Wheat belt,' and so on, phrases which indicate certain areas of country all producing the same quality. Now in this country, from climatic differences and varying mixtures of soil, there may not be two farms in one parish yielding exactly the same quality of grain; nay, on a single farm, each field may be different. A Scotch or an English farmer simply could not understand the process by which wheat is graded in America, because it is so entirely contrary to his own experience. But it is this peculiarity of American grain-growing that has enabled the business to be reduced to such a perfect system. 'No. 1 Spring Wheat,' or any other official designation, represents a fixed definite quality, which every one in the trade understands. Therefore, people buy and sell not by sample, but by grades; and all that a buyer has to do is to see that the seller gives him an order on the elevator for the particular grade he has bought.

It is this perfect system of inspection and classification that has really created the enormous speculative business in American wheat. There could not be this speculation without official recognised standards; and such standards, as we have said, are attainable in America. The grading, it must be explained, depends on the district. 'Chicago Wheat,' of whatever number, means the wheat grown in the neighbourhood of Chicago. 'Duluth' or 'Northern' wheat means the wheat grown north of a certain line; and so on. But we do not need to go into all the intricacies of grades, so long as the reader thoroughly grasps the principle of grading upon which all speculation is based.

As a matter of fact, only a small minority of those who frequent the 'pits' in Chicago and New York know anything whatever about actual quality. They have all the grades in their market relations at their finger-ends; but if put to the test, many of them would hardly be able to distinguish a sample of wheat from one of barley. They do not really trade in the grain; they neither want it nor have it to give; all they do is to buy or sell certain market chances based upon possible contingencies or probable eventualities.

Wheat speculation is confined to 'Futures' or, to use the American term, 'Options;' and to simplify our explanations we will suppose Chicago to be the scene of operations. There are other 'pits' in Chicago besides the wheat-pit, where analogous speculations are carried on; but wheat is probably the biggest medium for gambling. The form is in 'Futures' or 'Options,' and the nominal material 'No. 2 Spring Chicago.'

Let us assume, for the moment, that you want to have a speculation in Chicago wheat. You take up an official list—all prices for the day are finally 'called' at three o'clock in the afternoon by the 'Board of Trade,' and marked on the call-board, as the authoritative and inevitable bases of settlements—and you there find quotations such as these, which we take from an actual list in November 1888, prefixing first a market report:

'Wheat commenced weak at a fall of $\frac{3}{8}$ c., but afterwards rallied smartly, and developed decided strength on vigorous operations for a reaction, and "bears" buying to cover. Values [prices?] thereupon considerably improved, and after a heavy business, the close is firm at an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ c. to $\frac{3}{8}$ c. Sales 10,800,000 bushels. Nothing doing in "Spot."

Then follow the official closing quotations for the day—these figures being cents per bushel of 60 lbs.:

November.....	105 $\frac{1}{2}$	February.....	109 $\frac{1}{2}$
December.....	105 $\frac{1}{2}$	March.....	110 $\frac{1}{2}$
January.....	107 $\frac{1}{2}$	May.....	113 $\frac{1}{2}$

Perhaps you are struck with the remarkable disparity between November-December and May prices, and you think that the latter are in the circumstances too high. In that case, you may go to a broker and say: 'Sell for me in the morning 5000 bushels' (which is a moderate 'deal') 'of May wheat at 113 $\frac{1}{2}$,' or any other figure you like to place as a limit. In the morning the broker goes to 'the pit' and calls out: 'I sell 5 May 113 $\frac{1}{2}$;' and another broker holds up his hand and says: 'I buy.' Each notes the transaction on his card, and sends it in to the managing Board. Your broker then sends you intimation of what he has done, and the bargain is completed. If you do this in November, you have five intervening months in which to take the chance of the market. During these months, 'May wheat' may never come near the price at which you sold; if not, you have still all May, upon any one day in which month you may buy to cover yourself and tender to your buyer. But you will not do anything of the sort in reality; for you will simply on some suitable day arrange to close the transaction at the official closing quotation for 'May wheat' and pocket or pay the difference. You will never see any wheat, and you will not pay a cent for real wheat, but merely pay or receive the difference between the price at which you sold an imaginary article and at which you are supposed to buy another imaginary article.

This is a simple operation in 'Futures' or 'Options;' but other dealings are more complicated. Suppose, for instance, you think that 'December' wheat seems quoted too cheap in comparison with 'January,' and that the former ought to rise to something like the level of the latter. You give an order, in November, to buy, say, 5000

bushels 'December wheat' at quoted rate. But if on the very first day of that month the seller chooses to tender what you have bought, you must either pay him cash for the quantity of wheat, and receive an elevator receipt for it—thus turning your speculation in 'Futures' to one in 'Spot'—or else pay him the difference between your purchase price and the official price at three o'clock. If you have not done one of these two things by three o'clock, you are treated as a defaulter. It is noteworthy that while a seller is not supposed to compel a buyer to take the actual goods, a buyer can always demand the goods rather than the difference. In practice, however, dealers in 'the pit' neither want to give nor to take the actual wheat, and, in fact, there is not available wheat in existence sometimes to represent the transactions of a single day.

To return to your 'December' operation, however. If your calculations are upset in the manner suggested, you pay your difference and buy another lot, and so on as long as you choose, or as your purse can hold out, until the turn comes in your favour. For dealings in 'Futures,' it will thus be seen that the further you can operate ahead the more scope you have to 'make a spoon or spoil a horn.' Of course, the actual price of wheat in May, when the month arrives, may be very different from the price at which 'Futures' for that month are dealt in to-day. Again, a man of capital who sells 'Futures' at long prices may, rather than stand the racket of the market, buy 'Spot' to an equivalent extent, lock up the warrants in his safe, and keep them until he can tender them in implement of his sales. His costs in this case are the interest on his money and the elevator charges for storing.

It sometimes happens that the price of 'Futures' is lower in New York than it is in Chicago, although to bring to the former place means something like a thousand miles of railway carriage. This condition is, of course, abnormal and purely due to the momentary course of speculation. On the date of the quotations given above, New York was from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cent cheaper than Chicago; while west of Chicago, in the smaller towns, the price was as much dearer. This meant that the farmers were 'strong,' and were speculating for a further advance. It is when these differences in the markets occur that 'straddling' begins. A 'straddler' is a man who buys in one market and sells in another. Thus, if the price of New York 'Januaries' is lower than in Chicago, he buys in the one place and sells in the other at the same moment. He cannot, of course, deliver New York wheat to his Chicago buyer; but he continues to manipulate his transactions in both 'pits' until he can work out a project—or the reverse; for 'straddlers' often come to grief, as a very big specimen of the tribe did just before these lines were penned.

There is another kind of dealing in 'Futures'—that by the Western farmers. A farmer has his crop ready for market, say, in the month of December; but he sees then that December wheat is quoted in Chicago only 105 or 106 cents, while 'May' is quoted 113 or 114. So, instead of sending forward his wheat, he puts it in his barns, and sends an order to a broker to sell for him so much such a grade for 'May' at

113½, or whatever limit he chooses to place. When this is done, he really has obtained seven or eight cents per bushel more for his crop than if he sold it at once; but he will not get the money till May, when he sends forward the wheat to the elevator and tenders delivery. It does not matter if the original buyer does not want it, and cannot pay for it; somebody else will buy the 'Spot' wheat, and the first buyer will pay the farmer the difference.

This mode of doing business is attended with this objection, that it offers too much temptation to the farmer to speculate. He may sell his 'Futures,' and still send forward his wheat to be converted into cash as 'Spot.' In this case he has no cover for his 'Future' sale, and stands just in the position of an outside speculator, while the money in hand may lead him into many extravagances. It is said that many of the Western farmers are extensive speculators in this way.

A curious case of sellers of 'Futures' or 'Options' being 'cornered'* occurred in Chicago recently, and as one example is worth pages of explanation, we will give the story.

Mr H—— was long known as the 'Champion Scalper and Speculator' in the 'Board of Trade;' but outside Chicago his fame had not spread until he successfully 'ran' the 'closest and best managed corner' ever made in the United States. This gentleman had by 'scalping'—that is, manipulating the market for small profits—amassed a large amount of ready cash, always by 'operating against the crowd,' on the theory that 'the crowd' is always wrong. But in September, Mr H——, guided by some knowledge or instinct, took a novel course for him. He quietly bought all the wheat that was offered for that month, and ran the price of 'Septembers' to a premium above the succeeding months. 'The crowd,' tempted by this premium, kept on selling 'Septembers' freely, in the belief that by 'selling down' they would frighten him out and force him 'to part.' But 'old H——' went on buying all they offered until he had almost every dealer in the 'pit' on his books. Then one fine day near the end of the month he called in some of the sanguine sellers to his sanctum and showed that not only did he hold 7,000,000 bushels of 'September,' but that he had acquired the entire stock of 'No. 2' in Chicago—'Spot;' while the wheat that was coming forward was not of that grade, and would not be accepted in fulfilment of September sales.

This was his 'corner,' and very snug it was, although the speculators laughed at his offer to let them off at ten or fifteen cents difference. There was still a week to run—plenty of time to get wheat forward from the West, and otherwise to work the market. Express trains were put on to bring wheat from St Louis and other places, and bold speculators went on selling in the confidence of a final crash. H—— bought it all; and then the New York 'straddlers' came in, tempted by the premium over their market, and sold more still. To stimulate them a little, Mr H—— let the price fall away a cent or two, so as to give the impression that he had reached the end of his tether. But he bought back his own stuff through other brokers, and everything that was

offered, until—to make a long story short—on the last day of September he had the whole 'crowd' on their knees; and men who had scornfully rejected his former easy terms, had to pay him in the end something like a dollar per bushel of 'difference.' It is said that Mr H—— cleared over two millions of dollars by this 'corner.' At anyrate, the incident illustrates the dangers which attend those who sell 'Options.'

On the other hand, speculators who have bought 'Options' to a large amount in order to make similar 'corners,' have been more often caught themselves, by either being unable to control the 'Spot' wheat, or by miscalculating the supplies to come forward, or through some other error or weakness. In short, the majority of speculations in wheat, as in everything else, turn out failures; and we remember once hearing it said by one who knows the place well, that in Chicago you cannot throw your boot out of a window without hitting a 'busted millionaire!'

Of course, this kind of speculative business is highly demoralising, and economically as well as ethically wrong. But whether the speculations of New York, Chicago, and Duluth really affect the price of wheat to the consumer in the long run, is very doubtful. At times they run up the price artificially; but there is always a corresponding relapse. 'Corners' can never be maintained for long, and when they are swept out, it is generally at a heavy sacrifice.

All the speculation of this kind in wheat, however, is not confined to residents in New York, Chicago, and Duluth. A great many Germans and French join in it by cable, as do also many Britons. Indeed, there are feeble copies in this country of the Chicago system. Liverpool has now a 'Futures' wheat market in which the standard for speculation is 'Californian No. 1 White Wheat.' The transactions in this are very large, but nothing like those of the American 'pits.' London has also formed a 'Futures' market, and has fixed a standard called 'London Wheat,' a term which is defined to mean 'Red Winter,' 'White Californian No. 1,' or 'Oregon Amber No. 1' (with the option of two or three other qualities at fixed differences). But the standard is too nondescript; and speculators will not go in freely to buy when they are not sure that they can sell in the open market that which they may be compelled to take in the 'Futures' market. Both Liverpool and London, in short, lack the perfect system of inspection and grading which is the very foundation and support of wheat speculation in America.

CURIOUS WAGERS.

It has been remarked that 'a collection of foolish wagers would make a voluminous work;' and so odd are some of these 'fools' arguments,' as Butler pithily terms them in his *Hudibras*, that a selection of some of the most curious may prove not uninteresting.

During the last century, when, particularly in club-life, the least difference of opinion frequently ended in a bet, many remarkable and eccentric wagers were made. From Mrs Crackenthorpe, the Female Tatler of 1709, we learn that the fashionable young men of her day were quite as much at a loss how to kill time as are their modern compeers. Ridiculous wagers, generally

* For explanation of 'Corners' see *Chambers's Journal*, No. 19, vol. 1, Fifth Series.

governed by whim and extreme folly, were frequent. She tells us: 'Four worthy senators lately threw their hats into a river, laid a crown whose hat should swim first to the mill, and ran hallooing after them; and he that won the prize was in a greater rapture than if he had carried the most dangerous point in parliament.'

One Sunday in June 1765, a wager of one thousand guineas was decided between two noblemen, one of whom had constructed a machine which was to propel a boat at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour. A canal was prepared near the banks of the Thames for that purpose; but, by some fatality, the tackle breaking, the wager was lost.

Men of note, however, not content with representatives, have been known to wager upon their own individual prowess in the water. It is recorded of Sir John Pakington, called 'Trusty Pakington' (Queen Elizabeth called him 'her Temperance'), that 'he entered into articles to swim against three noble courtiers for three thousand pounds, from the bridge at Westminster to the bridge at Greenwich; but the queen, by her special command, prevented the putting it into execution.'

In 1729, a poulterer of Leadenhall Market betted fifty pounds he would walk two hundred and two times round the area of Upper Moorfields in twenty-seven hours; and accordingly proceeded at the rate of five miles an hour on the amusing pursuit, 'to the infinite improvement of his business, and great edification of hundreds of spectators.'

To characterise the follies of the day, it will be necessary to add to the account of the walking man another of a hopping man who engaged, in December 1731, to hop five hundred yards in fifty hops in St James's Park. He performed the feat in forty-six.

In February 1770, a bet was laid by a noble earl, that he should find a man who would ride to Edinburgh and back again to London in less time than another noble earl should make a million dots in the most expeditious manner that he could contrive.

In September 1789, a Colonel Ross set out from London for York, on a wager with a Mr Pigot of eight hundred guineas that he reached his destination in forty-eight hours on the same horse. He performed the journey three hours within the time.

On the 17th of May 1817, a respectable farmer of Kirton-Lindsey, for a wager of a few pounds, undertook to ride a pony up two pair of stairs into a chamber of the *George Inn*, and down again; which feat he actually performed before a numerous company, whose astonishment was heightened by the rider being upwards of eleven-stone weight, and his horse less than thirty stones. They were weighed after the feat, to decide another wager.

Southey makes mention in his *Commonplace Book* of a Norfolk gentleman-farmer, who rode his own boar for a wager from his own house to the next town, four and a quarter miles distant, twenty guineas the wager, the time allowed being an hour. 'Porco' performed it in fifty minutes.

In the *Annual Register* for 1788 we find the fol-

lowing: 'A young Irish gentleman, for a very considerable wager, set out on Monday, September 22, to walk to Constantinople and back again in one year. It is said that the young gentleman has twenty thousand pounds depending on the performance of the exploit.'

It was during the same year that 'Jerusalem' Whalley made the journey which earned him his name. Being asked on one occasion where he was going, he answered in jest, to Jerusalem. The company present offered to wager any sum that he did not go there; and he took bets to the amount of between fifteen and twenty thousand pounds. The journey was to be performed on foot, except so far as it was necessary to cross the sea; and the exploit was to be finished by playing ball against the walls of that celebrated city. In the *Annual Register* for 1789 it is stated that 'Mr Whalley arrived about June, in Dublin, from his journey to the Holy Land, considerably within the limited time of twelve months.'

The above wagers, however whimsical, were not without a precedent. Some years before, a baronet of some fortune in the north of England (Sir G. Liddel) laid a considerable wager that he would go to Lapland, bring home two females of that country and two reindeer in a given time. He performed the journey, and effected his purpose in every respect. The Lapland women remained in this country for about twelve months; but having a wish to go back to their own country, the baronet furnished them with means and money.

One of the Corbets of Sundorne Castle, near Shrewsbury, made a bet that his leg was the handsomest in the county or kingdom, and staked on his part his magnificent estates. He won. There is a picture in Sundorne Castle representing the measuring of sundry legs.

Popular tradition has long associated the assumption of the Ulster badge—the bloody hand—by the Holte family of Aston, with a barbarous murder committed by Sir Thomas Holte upon his cook, whom he killed with a cleaver. This was about the commencement of the seventeenth century. It need not be said that the assumption of the badge has no connection whatever with this circumstance, which may or may not have occurred. 'The most probable tradition,' says Mr Davidson, the historian of the family, 'of the cause of the commission of the crime, is that Sir Thomas, when riding from hunting, in the course of conversation laid a wager to some amount as to the punctuality of his cook, who, most unfortunately, for once was behind time. Enraged at the jeers of his companions, he hastened into the kitchen, and seizing the first article at hand, avenged himself on the domestic.'

In 1771, a strange trial took place before Lord Mansfield in the court of King's Bench, with the object of recovering the sum of five hundred guineas, laid by the Duke of Queensberry (then Lord March) with a Mr Pigot, whether Sir William Codrington or old Mr Pigot should die first. It had singularly happened that Mr Pigot died suddenly the same morning of the gout in his head, but before either of the parties could by any possibility have been made acquainted with the fact. By the counsel for the

defendant it was urged that (as in the case of a horse dying before the day on which it was to run) the wager was invalid and annulled. Lord Mansfield, however, was of a different opinion; and after a brief charge from that great lawyer, the jury brought in a verdict for the plaintiff of five hundred guineas, and sentenced the defendant to pay the costs of the suit.

At the York assizes in March 1812, a trial came on in which the Rev. B. Gilbert was plaintiff, and Sir Mark Sykes, Baronet, defendant. It appeared that the Baronet, at his own table during a dinner party, in the course of a conversation respecting the hazard to which the life of Bonaparte was exposed, had offered, upon the receipt of one hundred guineas, to pay one guinea a day as long as he (Bonaparte) should remain alive. Mr Gilbert suddenly took up the offer; but finding that the sense of the company was against making a serious matter of a bet proposed at a moment of conviviality, he said: 'If you will submit, Sir Mark, to ask it as a favour, you may be off.' This the Baronet refused to do. The hundred guineas were sent by Mr Gilbert, of which Sir Mark acknowledged the receipt, and he had continued paying the guinea a day for nearly three years. At length he declined further payment, and this action was for recovery of the sum still due upon the contract.

The Earl of March above mentioned, on laying a bet that he would cause a message to be despatched a certain distance quicker than any horse could convey it, won his wager by enclosing the message in a cricket ball, which was thrown from hand to hand by relays of professional cricketers. As Duke of Queensberry, he betted one thousand guineas that he would produce a man who would eat more at a meal than any one whom Sir John Lade could find. The Duke was informed of his success—not being present at the achievement—by the following bulletin from the field of battle: 'My Lord, I have not time to state particulars, but merely to acquaint your Grace that your man beat his antagonist by an apple pie.'

At White's Coffee-house, where, during the last century, gaming was carried on to heavy amounts, a book was always laid upon the table for entering wagers, and in these betting-books, some of which still exist, may be found bets on all conceivable subjects: on marriages, births, deaths; on the duration of a ministry, on the chance of an election, on a rascal's risk of the halter, or the shock of an earthquake. Bets were made that Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, would outlive the old Duchess of Cleveland; that Sir William Burdett, a member of the club, and 'a man of infamous character,' would be the first Baronet to be hanged; and Lord Mountford laid a wager of twenty guineas with Sir John Bland, that Beau Nash outlived Colley Cibber. Lord Mountford and Sir John Bland both blew their brains out in 1755; Cibber died two years later; and Nash survived till 1761.

Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann, September 1, 1750, says: 'They have put into the papers a good story made at White's. A man dropped down dead at the door, and was carried in. The club immediately made bets whether he was dead or not; and when they were going

to bleed him, the wagers for his death interposed, and said it would affect the fairness of the bet.'

Certain it is that during this period no subject appears to have been too serious for a bet; and that nothing was considered too trivial a medium, the following lines, founded on fact, bear witness:

The Bucks had dined, and deep in council sat;
Their wine was brilliant, but their wit grew flat.
Up starts his lordship—to the window flies,
And lo! 'A race! a race!' in rapture cries,
'Where?' quoth Sir John.—'Why, see two drops of rain

Start from the summit of the crystal pane:
A thousand pounds which drop, with nimblest force,
Performs its current down the slippery course.'
The bets were made: in dire suspense they wait
For victory, pendent on the nod of Fate.
Now down the sash, unconscious of the prize,
The bubbles roll, like pearls from Chloe's eyes.
But, ah! the glittering joys of life are short;
How oft two jostling steeds have spoiled the sport!
So, thus attraction, by coercive laws,
Th' approaching drops into one bubble draws.
Each cursed his fate that thus their project crossed:
How hard their lot, who neither won nor lost!

AN OLD CHAPTER RARELY READ.

'WHO is the first king mentioned in the Bible?' is a question frequently asked by some ingenuous youth 'seeking occasion' against his elders. Of course the elderly persons so entrapped think of every one but James I. of England. They are indeed pretty sure to betray a lamentable ignorance of a chapter which for two hundred and seventy-eight years has been printed at the beginning of everybody's English Bible—namely, the solemn dedication of the authorised version of the Scriptures to the 'most dread sovereign' who had set the translators to work. But nobody ever looks at it nowadays, which is a pity, as it well repays the trouble of perusal.

The first thought of any casual reader of this old and, in a sense, forgotten chapter, written in 1611, would be a feeling of surprise that such a delightful bit of 'the antique' should be in everybody's hands and yet almost entirely unknown. It comes from a period not so very remote from our own; but its contents read like a story from the depths of the middle ages. Events have moved so fast, and the whole character of English society has been so completely changed, that we hold our breath in amazement at the cringing subservience and fulsome adulation of this address. It seems scarcely credible that within three hundred years of our own day such a spirit and posture should have been found in sturdy Englishmen, still less in the ripest scholars of the time. But so it was; and though the compliments were probably intended to be taken *cum grano salis*, their laboured affectation of sincerity manifests a temper entirely alien to the spirit of independence we like to ascribe to our ancestors.

But this dedication is worthy of attention for other reasons. It is said to have been written by the Bishop of Gloucester, and is distinguished by great picturesqueness of style and much elegance and force of language. It begins with a graphic sketch of the Reformed Church of England as 'our Sion,' encompassed by evil-wishers whose expectation it was that 'thick and palpable clouds of dark-

ness' would overshadow it, at the critical moment which they describe as 'the setting of that bright Occidental Star, Queen Elizabeth.' 'Occidental Star' is good! It sounds well, and it gives 'the wise men' of the West a luminary of their own to follow. But a star after all is not the brightest object in the firmament, however beautiful it may be in evening's twilight. And our good translators hit a weakness of 'the Most High and Mighty Prince' when they reserved a bolder figure for himself, and hailed 'the appearance of his majesty as of the *Sun* in his strength'! The king could not complain of the inevitable compliment to good Queen Bess, whom the people had taken to their hearts; but it may be doubted whether he held her altogether in 'happy memory.' Time had doubtless brought round its revenge; but he could scarcely have forgiven or forgotten the tragedy at Fotheringay. Cleverly, therefore, is the flattery turned which overpowers the radiance of the 'Occidental Star' with the rising glory of the '*Sun* in his strength.'

And there was something in it. For most certainly the accession of James raised legitimate hopes of a long period of stable prosperity to the land and throne. Had that monarch been less of a Solomon in his own esteem, and endowed with common-sense instead of learning, it is probable that the whole course of events would have been different. The development of England's liberties might have been accomplished without the violence of revolution, and the king's children's children seated on the throne securely. But for want of *savoir-faire*, the sunshine of His Majesty's early years was speedily overclouded: 'the supposed and surmised mists' were dispelled only for a space; thunder was in the air, and presently a storm burst forth which wrecked both the altar and the throne.

It is touching to read the allusion to His Majesty's 'hopeful Seed,' when we recollect their misfortunes. They were now only two boys and a girl. The eldest, Prince Henry, died the very next year after the issue of this version of the Scriptures; the other boy became Charles I.; and the girl, Elizabeth, afterwards wedded to a German prince, unfortunate in war, speedily became a widow, and in her sons a very Niobe of tears. It makes such a difference *which* end of the telescope of time you look through! Who could have foreseen that errors of judgment and want of statecraft could so soon have ruined these sanguine hopes of His Majesty's scholars! They appeared to have reason on their side, for in their sovereign had they not, in place of a capricious woman, 'the confidence and resolution of a Man?' Was he not a 'sanctified Person,' whose 'very name is precious' to his people? Yet how soon was their forecast of events overthrown! The royal house of Stuart is now practically extinct.

But we may easily forgive the scholars of King James for building their hopes on 'so learned and judicious a Prince.' Relying on such a patron of their important task, they securely bid defiance to 'self-conceited brethren.' It was the fashion in those days to ascribe a difference of opinion to some moral defect; and the criticisms of opponents are discounted beforehand by our translators as 'calumniations and hard interpretations.' They quite expect to receive 'the censures of ill-meaning and discontented persons, who are sure to like

nothing which is not hammered on their anvil.' But the translators are not afraid, though they may be 'traduced and maligned,' being 'supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience,' and sustained 'without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour.' Nobody in these days would dream of giving either of these reasons in supporting the goodness of a translation! They had, however, sounder reasons, which they are too modest to mention, for their self-confidence; for their scholarship and mastery of their mother-tongue have made their work 'the wonder of the world.' This they hope and pray the king himself may be, by reason of his being 'enriched with singular and extraordinary graces.' The result destroys any claim they may have had to prophecy, but has established the excellence of their translation. It has laid hold on the affections of Englishmen through the generations of three centuries: it has enriched and settled the language, as Luther's Bible did for German; and with all its faults, it still holds its ground, and can give long odds to all the revised and re-revised versions of the present day. The dedication itself is written in graceful and telling English; and there is not a word in it which has become obsolete or even antiquated. It is a good specimen of the version itself, which is indeed 'a well of English undefiled.' We may smile at its stilted panegyric of a Prince whom later historians have described as 'a learned fool,' and may wonder at the spirit of bondage in its expressions of loyalty. But still these side-lights on a former age are full of interest and instruction, and the dedication may be profitably read as a telling chapter in the history of England, and a striking sketch of men and manners in that critical period of the British nation.

RESURGAM.

THE Winter morn of cheerless gray
Dawns slowly up the sky;
And in the cold, bleak light of day,
The drifting snow-wreaths lie.

And all green things are lost to sight
Beneath a weight of snow,
And down into the cold, dark night
The Winter day doth go.

But 'mid the gloom of wintry skies,
I see a vision fair
Of fresh Spring morns that brightly rise
With sweet and balmy air.

Even thus, most gracious Lord, amid
The gloom of death, we see
Life everlasting, safely hid
And garnered, Lord, in Thee.

The dreary grave is but the field
Where lies the hopeful grain,
And what with many a tear we yield,
Shall be our own again.

J. C. HOWDEN.

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CURIOUS COURT CUSTOMS IN AUSTRIA.

THE Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, is a faithful observer of ancient customs. His reign has witnessed many political changes; but the etiquette of court, its ceremonials and pageants, have scarcely undergone a change since he came to the throne forty years ago. Every Maundy-Thurs day His Majesty publicly washes—or pretends to wash—the feet of twelve old men. On Easter Eve he walks in the Procession of the Holy Sepulchre. On Easter Sunday he holds his Chapter of the Golden Fleece. On Corpus Christi Day he walks, wax taper in hand, through the principal streets of Vienna, accompanied by his entire court, his ministers, great officers of state, and knights of the imperial orders. Once a year he gives a ball, to which only the *Hoffihig* or persons with sixteen quarterings of nobility are invited; and once a year he places the state apartments of his palace at the disposal of a Committee of bankers, manufacturers, and merchants, who give an Industrial Charity Ball, managed by themselves. For the rest, the arrangements of the imperial household as regards the employment and pay of servants proceed on a system which must be three centuries old, and a system which is based largely on perquisites. An idea of it will be conveyed by the fact that nothing which is served at the imperial tables ever appears a second time; meat, confectionery, bonbons, fruit, flowers, wines, wax-candles, all become the perquisites of various butlers and footmen.

The Maundy-Thurs day function of the *Fusswaschung* (feet-washing) was instituted in the sixteenth century by Charles V., but much earlier in Hungary by King Stephen, and it was intended as a lesson in humility for the sovereign and his consort. On the appointed day, all the great dignitaries of the empire, with members of both houses of parliament, officers on court service, and members of the nobility in gala uniforms, assemble in the Throne Room of the Hofburg shortly before ten in the morning. Tiers of seats have been erected all round the room for the

diplomatic body, the press, and guests admitted by ticket—all the ladies invited being expected to appear in black without bonnets. Presently, a couple of folding-doors are thrown open, and through them enter, in single file, twelve old men and twelve old women, each escorted by two or three friends. They have been selected from the most aged among the poorest class in Vienna, and they are all dressed in sixteenth-century costumes: the men wearing black tunics with broad white collars, knickerbockers, and shoes; and the women, black dresses, with close-fitting starched caps.

These poor people take their seats at two long tables set on opposite sides of the room; and punctually at ten the Emperor and Empress arrive, attended by the Archdukes and Archduchesses, a throng of court officials, and the clergy of the metropolitan chapter, headed by the Archbishop of Vienna. A priest ascends to a lectern and intones a prayer; after which the serving of a sumptuous meal to the almsfolk is at once proceeded with. Four-and-twenty stalwart life-guardsmen, in gold-laced scarlet coats and plumed helmets, march in, carrying trays, on which stand a tureen of soup and two plentiful dishes of fish. The trays are cleared at the men's table by the Emperor and eleven Archdukes or Princes; and at the women's table by the Empress and as many Archduchesses or Princesses. This ceremony is repeated three times more; for a tray with three entrées follows the first; then comes a tray with three sorts of roast and vegetables; and lastly, a tray with sweets and fruit. The almsfolk, however, do not touch these dainties. The Emperor and Empress ask them if they desire to eat, and, on a negative sign being made, the tables are cleared in the same order as the serving—that is, the life-guardsmen come in and go out four times with their trays. After this they enter once more, to remove the jug of wine, silver goblet, plate, knife, fork, spoon, and napkin which form each 'cover.' All these articles, along with the dishes of food, are carried to an anteroom and there packed in large white boxes emblazoned with the

imperial arms; and an hour later these boxes are delivered at the houses of the different almsmen and almswomen, and become their property. The wine-jugs are of a peculiar pattern, coloured green, with the imperial escutcheon highly gilt, and the date of the year on a white scroll. They are much prized by collectors, as only twenty-four are made yearly, and these can only be purchased from the actual recipients.

Once the meal has been carried out, the tables are removed and the foot-washing begins. A number of pages kneel and pull off each almsman's right-leg stocking and shoe. The same office is performed for the women by maids of honour. Another prayer is then intoned; and the Emperor and Empress, drawing off their gloves, kneel, and proceed respectively to pour over the foot of each man and woman a little water out of a golden ewer. This ewer is handed by a chamberlain, another chamberlain holds a golden basin, and a third a lawn towel. The towel serves for the drying of the feet, this being also done by the Emperor and Empress. When the function is over, pages and maids of honour advance again to replace the shoes and stockings; and the last act of the ceremony consists in the bestowal of twenty-four purses, containing each fifty florins in gold coins fresh minted. These purses are hung round the necks of the recipients. The whole service lasts about half an hour, and is conducted with the most impressive order and gravity. Of late years it has been shorn of half its attractions because the Empress has been debarred by ill health from performing her own part in it; but in all except the actual foot-washing, twelve almswomen have been annually favoured as though Her Majesty were present.

The Easter Eve Holy Sepulchre Procession, which takes place within the courtyards of the palace, and the Easter Sunday Chapter of the Golden Fleece, which is held in the private chapel of the Hofburg, call for no particular description. The Golden Fleece is the 'Garment' of Austria-Hungary.* The insignia are a golden sheepskin hung round the neck with a scarlet ribbon. But on Chapter Day the knights wear their velvet mantles and golden collars. The ceremonial of the Chapter consists only in a roll-call, a mass, and the administration of the holy communion to every knight; but as the Court Chapel is very small the spectators are few. The Corpus Christi Procession, on the other hand, is witnessed by tens of thousands, and is a very gorgeous pageant indeed. Like all ceremonies in which the Emperor takes part, it is held very early in the morning, for His Majesty has no notion of spending the best hours of the day in bed. By six A.M. the principal streets of Vienna over a circuit of about a mile are crowded with a multitude of sightseers, and every window is thronged. In front of every church which the procession is to pass there stands an open air shrine or altar covered with flowers. Punctually at seven o'clock a long line of gala court chariots, drawn by eight, six, or four horses, drives up to the west door of St Stephen's Cathedral. The Emperor is always dressed for these occasions in the uniform of an Austrian field-

marshal—white tunic, scarlet trousers, and cocked-hat with green plumes. The square in front of the cathedral is kept clear by the Austrian life-guards in scarlet and riding black horses, and by the Hungarian Guards on dapple grays. These splendid troops, which are always on duty within the palace, are very seldom seen on horseback except on this one day of the year. The Hungarian Guards wear red hussar tunics embroidered with white lace, leopard skins over their shoulders, yellow boots, and gray bearskin busbies with plumes.

A service is solemnised in the cathedral, and then the procession streams forth. The Hungarian Guards ride first with blaring silver trumpets; then come surpliced choristers, swinging censers and chanting; monks black, white, brown, and gray, also chanting and carrying banners; deputations of the clergy from the various city churches with parochial banners; the Knights of the Teutonic Order with long black gauntlets, breast-plates, and white mantles; the Knights of Malta with white tunics and scarlet crosses; and officers of every grade with civil functionaries in uniform. After these, there are more choristers and monks, and then the Cardinal-Archbishop of Vienna, walking under a canopy and holding the eucharist. Close behind the canopy walks the Emperor bare-headed, and holding a long lighted wax-taper of three pounds weight. His Majesty is followed by a host of archdukes, princes, generals, cabinet ministers, and knights of the imperial orders with their collars—all bareheaded too, and most of them carrying tapers. The procession moves along a gangway of boards laid down in the streets and strewn with rushes; and as it advances, the soldiers, who line the pavement on both sides, present arms; the men in the crowd take off their hats, and some of the women fall on their knees. Meanwhile, loud peals are being rung from the cathedral tower and all other church steeples; and this ringing of bells blending with the flourishes of trumpets, the canticles of the monks, and the admiring murmurs of the vast multitude, forms a very stirring harmony. The procession stops several times on its way, for at every one of the open-air altars the Emperor pauses to offer up a prayer. Finally, the pageant wends its way back to the cathedral, where a benediction is delivered from the high-altar; then all is over. From first to last the Corpus Christi service and procession occupy about three hours.

From such a religious ceremonial to a court ball, the transition is abrupt; but the annual ball of the *Hofball* deserves notice because of the extraordinarily minute and severe rules which regulate admission to it. The dispenser of these invitations is the Grandmaster of the imperial household, Prince Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst; but his discretion is strictly limited. Noblemen and noblewomen who can boast sixteen quarterings of nobility—which means eight pairs of ancestors noble in the male and female lines—may claim invitations as a matter of right; but if any one among a man's eight direct forefathers has married out of the aristocracy, his escutcheon is 'barred'; and even if his family boasted ever so many quarterings before this *mésalliance*, they do not count. Last year, a rule was made admitting the wives of cabinet ministers to the same privileges

* There is a Spanish branch to the order. All the members both in Austria and Spain must be Roman Catholics. No exception to this rule is ever allowed.

as ladies of the diplomatic body, whose genealogies are of course not inquired into; but this was considered a great innovation, and it was strictly provided that the ministers' wives should only have admission to the court balls while their husbands were in office. This year again another innovation was made by the admission of Baron and Baroness Alfred de Rothschild to the ranks of the *Hoffühig*. No person of the Jewish religion had ever before been admitted to the court ball; and purists in the matter of heraldry shook their heads over this concession, wondering where 'the line would be drawn' in the future. It is one of the peculiarities of the court ball that a particular kind of soup is always served at supper. This soup is a *consommé* or strong broth served cold, and of which the stock has been boiled from fifteen different kinds of meat, fowl, and game. The recipe of this broth has been used in the imperial kitchens for more than three centuries.

Talking of the imperial kitchens brings one to the extravagant waste which is suffered in the Emperor's household. As already said, nothing except the linen, plate, china, and glass is ever served twice at the court tables; but the full meaning of this cannot well be grasped by anybody who has not seen the system at work. Some of the servants have as their perquisites the bottles which have come up to the dining-room but have not been uncorked; others, the uncorked bottles; and others, again, the wine that remains in the glasses. Therefore it is the interest of one set of servants to keep the glasses full; of another set to draw as many corks as possible, while parting with as little wine as they can; and of a third set to draw corks sparingly. The result is that often a great deal of unseemly whispering and nudging goes on at the sideboards. As regards the food, too, there are different orders of claimants for perquisites: one man having a vested interest in the joints, another in the poultry, a third in the sweet dishes, and so on. Then there are the men to whom the wax-candles belong, and these naturally make a rush to blow out the candles the moment the last guest has walked out of the room. Altogether, this system of perquisites causes the imperial banquets to be served in double-quick time, so that the longest of them seldom lasts beyond three-quarters of an hour. The Emperor's dining hour is five o'clock; but it is etiquette for the guests to arrive a clear half-hour beforehand. After dinner, coffee and cigars are served in a smoking-room; the Emperor lingers about a quarter of an hour, and the guests separate soon after half-past six.

But another curious result of the perquisite system is this—that the court servants make open traffic of the imperial leavings. Incredible as it may sound, there is a basement corridor in the Palace which is like a bazaar full of shops. Here not only the keepers of small hotels and restaurants, but the cooks of many ladies belonging to the second-class official world, come to buy cold meats, pastry, sweetmeats, wines, and candles. There is one sort of Tokay which can only be bought from the court servants, as none is made except for the Emperor: it is to be presumed, however, that the uncorked bottles of champagne and other fine wines are generally sold by the dozen, and they must form a very substantial perquisite.

Why this prodigal system has never been reformed, it would be difficult to say, unless it be that the Emperor is too good-natured to disturb vested interests. Perhaps, too, no really economical system of reform has ever been submitted to His Majesty. Formerly, the same waste went on in the households of the archdukes; but the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of Archduke Charles Louis, the Emperor's brother, determined at length to put a stop to it in her own house, and so entered into a contract with her chief cook for the supply of so many meals a day at so much per head. It is to be feared, however, that the illustrious lady had not acquired her own notions of housekeeping in a very frugal school; for the sum allowed to the cook for the early breakfast of tea or coffee with rolls and butter and either two eggs, a couple of sardines, or a slice of ham (but not all three), was fixed at two florins, or about four shillings a head!

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM found the time hang on his hands in a very desolate fashion, though, in spite of grief and anxiety, he slept through his nine hours in bed that night without so much as a turn or a dream, having that blessed faculty as a result of youth and perfect health. But the next morning's walk to school, and the evening walk home again, were lonely and wretched enough, with no John to run with and loiter with and chatter with. Even the savages were gone, frightened out of the field by the damage they had done, and life in general became for William as dull as ditch-water. If the dullness had been all, he could have borne it better; but his small world took occasion so to preach at him, and to show him into what danger he had led a quiet and inoffensive companion by his turbulent ways, and everybody so girded at him, and so prophesied evil, that at times he was half beside himself with his fears for John, and that writhing against injustice which children feel, though they get so rarely credited with it by grown-up people.

What with low fever and high fever, and delirium, and paroxysms of headache, poor John had a bad time of it. But the worst of all was that he came out of his illness a changed creature, dazed and timid, and for a time he seemed 'too simple-minded to be altogether himself,' as his father owned. That unlucky blow put the mental clock back a year or two, and deranged the works somewhat into the bargain. If he tried to think too hard, his head would begin to ache and swim; and if people were too severe with him, as they pretty often were, it would seem to throw him off his mental balance altogether.

Vale was a busy man, being nothing less than farmer, miller, and maltster all at once, and with the best will in the world could give but little time to the boy. It was out of the question to send John to school again, for any little attempt to study brought on one of his headaches and quite disabled him. His bulldog companion, with that soft and repentant heart

under his tough exterior, stuck to him with the fidelity of his tribe, and evening after evening, on his coming home from school, would drain his mug of milk standing, and then race off with his provender in his hands, munching it by the way, to give his injured chum society. But except for Wednesdays and Saturdays, each of which brought young Gregg a half-holiday, John's mornings and afternoons were solitary, and he used to moon about the fields and crawl into quiet corners out of the sun, and would sit there alone and unoccupied for hours, with his own dim thoughts and fancies for his sole companions.

Nearly all the folks thereabouts were farmers or farm-labourers; and about half a mile from John Vale's house lived a farmer of the name of Day, a fat comfortable man of middle age, who had a single child, a daughter, called Lydia. She was at this time a wonderfully pretty little creature, with jet black hair and eyes, and cheeks like twin roses; and a little figure so light and airy that she might have risen at any moment and gone hovering like a butterfly, without seeming to give anybody reason to be surprised at it. She was one of those laughing and dancing little spirits who are not expected to go sedately, unless she happens to be bred amongst the surliest and unhappiest kind of people. She had a wonderful ear for music and a pretty little voice; and after once hearing any tune that took her fancy, she would go shrilling about with it more like a bird than a child, and every note as clear and true as the song of a thrush.

It happened one day that whilst poor John sat in a retired place watching the tadpoles in a pool, this fairy pipe came tuning down the lane, and the owner of it drew up alongside with a certain fearless way she had, and set her hand on John's shoulder, the better to steady herself to look where he was looking. John put an arm about her waist and drew her towards him, and in a little while the child sat down and sang musingly. John said nothing, but he drew her a little closer and kissed her. She kissed him back frankly, and having stayed as long as she felt inclined to stay, released herself, and went rummaging amid the hedges, returning by-and-by with a bouquet which she pressed hot from her own chubby little hand into his. John took it gravely, and looked kindly at her, but still he said nothing.

'You's very twiet,' said Miss Lydia, surveying him with an elderly air—'very twiet.'

'Yes,' said John; 'I'm very quiet.—Will you sing again?'

She stooped to smooth her tiny apron, and then folding her plump small hands behind her, and looking over John's head, she sang a wordless tune, her face mighty serious and business-like, but not in the least shy or bold, her rosy mouth open, and her little milk-teeth gleaming behind them, and her body swaying to the tune. When she had finished, she took the two corners of her apron firmly between the tips of the thumb and finger of either hand and made a courtesy, with her grave gaze diverted from the distance, and set full on John's mild gray eyes. A minute later she was fluttering along the lane again, hovering hither and thither, and singing till her voice died away on the quiet of the fields.

This was their first encounter, though each knew well enough who the other was; but their acquaintance ripened fast, and they became great friends. Many a time that autumn the young Gregg beating about to discover his companion and munching his rations as he went, was guided to him by the sound of the clear little beautiful voice piping in the fields and lanes. In the evenings especially, through August and early September, when the air was warm and the autumn stillness was on everything, he could hear for quite a long distance, and allowing himself to be guided by the sound, he would always find the raven curls somewhere in the neighbourhood of the tow-coloured head of young John, she pretty generally making a breeze about her for the curls to dance in, and he, sitting still and solemn, watching her.

Now the bulldog Gregg was at an age when it comes natural to boys to look upon girls with an extreme and deep-rooted disdain; and if he had made Lydia's acquaintance under other circumstances, he would no doubt have dropped it without loss of time. But seeing that John took pleasure in her society, he condescended from his height of years and sex, and before he knew it, had become the child's bond-slave. She ordered him about as if she had been a little duchess, and he did unquestioningly what she told him, though he was by no means one of the most naturally obedient boys in the world. She on her side waited upon John, and obeyed him as if she had been his spaniel.

John lived in a kind of mental twilight, in which he was happy enough, save when his elders troubled him. Things that came before him naturally, he observed clearly and remembered clearly; but when once he knew that he was expected to master anything, it was all over with his chances of grasping it. The one thing that could quiet little Lydia down from her restless high spirits was a tale; and it was a pretty sight to see when she and John sat side by side, she nestling up to him with her bright eyes wide open and full of wonder, and he with his arm round her like a father or a sweetheart, spinning her some yarn of his own invention, or thrilling her young soul with the adventures of Uncas and Pathfinder, or making her laugh and clap her hands together with the story of how the old woman got home that night.

William also could spin a yarn; but if he were allowed to tell his story once, it was as much as the imperious Miss Lydia would accord to him. If ever she wanted a second hearing, it was John who was the chosen narrator. Sometimes he would wander from the track, or would bungle the story altogether, and she would set him right again. He had no shyness with these two companions, and the exercises they shared with him did him as much good, perhaps, as he was likely or able to get anywhere just then.

Things went so prosperously with him, that but for the interference of Robert Snelling, his uncle, John might possibly have come round again in a month or two. That interference, which led to grave and even tragic consequences, came about in this way.

The days were beginning to draw in and the nights to grow cold, and John and his repentant

chum spent most of their evenings indoors. On a certain Saturday they were playing draughts together, when the farmer, who had been into town for the market, came home with a brown-paper parcel under his arm. 'Clear away now, lads,' he said, when he had watched the game to a finish. 'Here's something better than checkers for you.'

They both looked on with interest whilst he laid the brown-paper parcel on the table and unfolded it, with his deliberate heavy fingers fumbling at the string which bound it round, and his kind eyes smiling as he gazed from one eager face to the other. The parcel turned out a splendid puzzle-map of Europe, half as large as the kitchen table, such a toy as no boy of that district had seen the like of till that glorious evening. The two fell upon it with tumultuous joy, and got the Hebrides into the Grecian Archipelago, and fitted bits of the Mediterranean into the Baltic, and corrected one another's errors, and squabbled lovingly over his new treasure, until John grew tired.

The farmer sat in the corner with his pipe and his pewter tankard of home-brewed ale, and looked on well pleased, when on a sudden Uncle Robert walked ponderously in, and nodding a salutation to him, moved over to the table to see what the boys were doing. Vale sat in the firelight with his slipped feet reposing on the steel fender, and the two candles which illuminated the room were on the table at which the lads were seated. The puzzle puzzled Mr Snelling for a while, and he stood silent to examine it. When he had made up his mind about it, he stooped over the table and examined a piece of it by the candlelight, having put on his gold-rimmed spectacles for the purpose. 'Now, John,' he said, drawing magisterially, and straightening himself to his great height, 'where is Calabria?' He had never known the place until that moment, but he looked familiar with it, and the boys thought him learned and terrible. 'Come, come, my lad'—with a pompous and offensive pity. 'Where is Calabria? What is Calabria? Is it a country, a city, a river, a mountain?' Then seeing that neither of the youngsters could answer him, he grew learnedly jocose: 'Is it anything in the inside of a pig, John? Come, come! Calabria?'

John began to turn pale and to fidget with his hands and his jacket buttons. He had been excited, and was easily tired and overwrought. The patronising Snelling frightened him, with his drawl and snap, his ponderous voice and prodigious stature.

'Don't bother the lad, Robert,' said the farmer from his chimney corner. 'It might be the French for a firegrate, for aught I know. Leave the lad alone.'

'Come now,' said Snelling, enlarging himself, though he was big enough in all conscience already. 'Calabria, my lad? Calabria? Where is it? What is it? Town, city, river, sea, mountain, country? What?'

John burst into helpless tears. Young Gregg hated the Colossus already, and his heart was so hot with pity that for a second or two he had wild thoughts of hurling himself against him and going for him tooth and nail. The farmer rose from his chair, and interposed himself

between John and Uncle Robert. 'Leave the lad alone, Robert. He's weakly and tired. He's not fit to be troubled.'

'Weakly?' said Snelling. 'That's no wonder.' He bent a disapproving glance on young Gregg. 'That's what comes of evil companionship; that's what it is to have a roysterer for a companion.'

'Robert,' the farmer interrupted mildly, 'you're too hard upon the lads—too hard on both of 'em.' He bent over John and kissed him with a whispered, 'Be a brave lad, John,' and then stood stroking his hair for a time.—'It was a cruel blow. But never thee cry for it, Will, my lad. 'Twas no fault of thine, any more than mine. It's a sore affliction, but I reckon we can be honest with it.'

'O John, John!' said Snelling, allowing for him in his superior way, 'you're a bit too soft yourself, John.'

'Like enough,' the farmer answered in his gentle way. 'None of us is perfect.'

The truism was mildly advanced, but Snelling seemed to find a personal affront in it. 'Theer's none of us perfect, to be sure,' he said. 'But theer's some of us as is less imperfect than others—thanks be to goodness. I should like to see you stronger, John—resoluter.'

'It's as like as not I might be the better for it,' the farmer replied.—'Will, my lad, John's tired, and had better go to bed. You can run away home now, my lad; and thank you kindly for coming so often. You can come up again o' Monday and have a new play with the map, if you feel that way.'

Snelling had found his way to a cupboard, and from one of its shelves had taken down a box full of long-stemmed clay pipes. He snapped a stem in two at the end of this speech of his cousin's, and threw the useless fragment into the grate with an emphasis which young Gregg felt to be directed injuriously at himself. He disregarded it, however, though he gave himself a combative second or two to think that one of these days he would be grown up and a match for anybody. The boys whispered together for a minute or two, and then William stole out; and John having packed up his puzzle made as if he would go to bed; but his father, stretching out his hand, drew him between his knees and held him there for a time, patting his shoulder now and then.

'I'm—ah—afraid—ah—John,' said Snelling, stooping forward from the chair he had taken, and turning the boy's timid face towards himself with a powerful thumb and finger applied to his chin.—'I'm afraid I put you about a bit just now. I didn't mean it, lad—I didn't mean it.' His manner was unusually hearty and sincere, and John believed in him at once. 'Theer's a bit o' colour coming back,' cried Snelling, pinching lightly the side of John's face which was the nearest to the fire and reflected its clear glow.—'a bit o' colour coming back. Eh? That's right.—And when do you think o' going to school again? Eh? We musn't pass all our young days in idleness, John. We must use up the golden hours. Eh? Youth's the time when learning comes easiest, you know, John.'

'I doubt if he's altogether fit for school as yet,' said the farmer.—'What do you say, lad?'

John said nothing; but a kind word had so

much force with him, that he had already obeyed Snelling's hand, and was nestling up to the big waistcoat in a manner altogether confiding and affectionate.

'It's a pity,' Snelling went on, 'as theer's no nearer school than Barfield. It's a big trudge from here to theer, for a lad as happens to be a bit out of sorts.—You'd find the walk too tiring, wouldn't you, John?'

'I should like the walk,' said John; 'but the lessons make my head ache.'

'Ah!' replied Snelling. 'Do they, now? We must tackle 'em bit by bit, John. Here a little and theer a little.' He was very kindly and considerate now, and John was altogether reconciled to him. Snelling sat staring at the fire with his big hand still on John's shoulder, when a knock came to the door.

'That'll be Isaiah,' said the Colossus, turning round. 'I told him if he'd call here I'd give him a lift home.'

The farmer cried, 'Come in;' and the man who had knocked, entered, and taking off his hat with both hands, as if it were a great weight, lowered it slowly and held it before him. 'Shut the door, and take a seat, Isaiah,' said the farmer. 'How are you?'

'I'm pretty middling, gaffer,' responded Isaiah, seating himself in a comfortless fashion, and placing his hat between his feet. 'Nothing to complain about in particular, but nothing to brag about neither.'

Isaiah was a man of a hard and shiny complexion like that of a wax-apple. He was bald to the nape of the neck, and a stubbly collar of gray beard ran round his throat from one ear to the other.

'You'll take a glass of ale, Isaiah?' asked the farmer.

'Well, gaffer,' Isaiah answered in a non-committal manner, 'I won't say I won't.'

This being accepted as an affirmative, the newcomer was supplied. He accepted the tumbler, and throwing back his head, poured the ale into his mouth with as much sign of satisfaction as if he had poured it into a cask.

'I'll tell you how it might be managed, John,' said Snelling, renewing the conversation. 'He might come and stay a time with me. Then he'd be nice and handy to the school, and he might work half-tides there. Mrs Winter 'ud take good care of him, and he might go to school of a morning. It's a pity to see a bright lad wasting the best hours of his youth.'

John Vale the elder looked at John Vale the younger, as if to ask his mind about the matter. Uncle Snelling drew the boy a little closer to his enormous waistcoat and made much of him.

'What do you think, John?' asked the father. 'Would you like to go and stay at your uncle's for a bit?'

'He'd get no harm theer,' said Snelling. 'Isaiah is a God-fearing man, and very proper in his walk and conversation.'

'I shan't do the boy any harm,' said Isaiah, who seemed to have followed the drift of the speakers.

'No, no, Isaiah,' the farmer answered; 'I'm not afraid of that. I shall find it a bit lonesome myself, I reckon.—I take it kindly, Robert; but you've got no children of your own, and a lad about the house might put you about.' He

sighed, and tapped the ashes from his pipe on one of the topmost coals of the fire. 'We'll think it over,' he said then, 'me and John together.'

Snelling seemed to think this equal to a refusal. 'It's theer,' he said, 'to take it or leave it, as you and John see fit.'

'Father,' said the boy.

'Well, my lad?'

'I think I should like to go to Barfield.'

'That's a lad!' cried Uncle Snelling.

IRON IN ITS RELATION TO LIFE.

It is not generally known that iron has such an important and indispensable function to fulfil in the maintenance of animal life that no work of the body, voluntary or involuntary, muscular or mental, can be performed but by its agency. And still less is it known that iron is equally as necessary to the support of plant-life and to plant-growth. And yet these are facts—two of the many unexpected ones revealed to us, in these days of scientific research, by the combined aid of the microscope and chemistry; and which illustrate to us how the commonest materials of the mineral world are laid under contribution for our very existence as living beings, as well as for our daily uses in the various arts of social life.

In order to understand the relationship of iron to animal vitality and energy, it will be necessary briefly to consider how the work of the body, internal and external, is performed. First of all, then, we get an idea of the total work done by the body by simply remembering the fact that an average man engaged in labour, in the course of twenty-four hours does work equivalent to lifting a ton to the height of four hundred and fifty feet; and of the internal work, by considering that the heart alone in pumping the blood to all parts of the body performs in the same time work equivalent to raising a ton one hundred and twenty feet high, to say nothing of the work of respiration, &c. Now, the source of all this energy—a great part of which is actually necessary in order that the body may simply live from moment to moment—is *heat*. Yes, heat is the mechanical force in the animal as much as it is in the steam-engine; and this bodily heat is generated by the combustion of the carbonaceous matter of which our food and bodies mainly consist, just as the heat of the steam-engine is derived from the burning of the coal. This slower burning going on constantly in the animal body, is taking place in every minute corner of the system to which the blood flows, and imparts to the blood its well-known heat (about one hundred degrees Fahrenheit). This combustion is known in chemistry as oxidation, because it is really the union of the oxygen gas inhaled from the atmosphere in breathing, atom to atom with the carbon and hydrogen of the food and worn-out particles of the body. Here again our illustration of the steam-engine

holds good; for the combustion that takes place in its furnace is similarly the combining of the carbon and hydrogen of the coal with the oxygen of the air. Whenever oxidation occurs, heat is produced by the violence of the impact of the atoms of the uniting substances in their attraction for each other; or, as the chemists say, by the force of chemical affinity. Oxidation may be so slow that the evolved heat, as produced little by little, may be insensibly small; or it may be so rapid as to generate at once sufficient heat to produce ignition.

At each inspiration, the lungs are filled with air, a portion of which consists of the life-sustaining gas, oxygen. Then through the membranous walls of the air-cells, which are surrounded with minute blood-vessels, an interchange of gases takes place, oxygen from the air-cells going through into the blood, while water-vapour and the poisonous carbonic acid gas pass from the blood into the air-cells, and are discharged into the outer air in the process of expiration. These latter—water-vapour and carbonic acid—are respectively the products of the chemical combination of oxygen with hydrogen and carbon previously stated as taking place in all parts of the body. But now comes the question: how is it that oxygen gas, which is only soluble in water or the watery portion of the blood to an inappreciable small extent, is actually absorbed into the blood in considerable quantity for this work of oxidation?

If a drop of blood be viewed under the microscope, it is at once seen to consist of a colourless serum, in which are floating a multitude of coloured, round, flattened bodies. These are the red corpuscles, which give to blood its redness, and whose special work it is to absorb the oxygen and carry it to all parts of the body in the course of its circulation. If blood be streaked on a white surface, it will be seen that the colour of these corpuscles is deep orange rather than crimson; and it has been computed that there would be several millions of them contained in a thin film of blood sufficient to cover a square inch of glass. The colouring matter of the corpuscles can be separated from the other portion, and when burned, is remarkable for yielding the extraordinarily large proportion of twelve per cent. of peroxide of iron (iron rust). In fact it may be said that all the iron in the blood is contained in the red corpuscles. Now it is well known that peroxide of iron not only gives to many soils their characteristic redness or brownish redness, but also their great absorptive power for such fertilising gases as ammonia; and also that it is much used in the arts specially as an absorbent, as, for instance, in the manufacture of coal-gas, where it has almost superseded the use of slaked lime for the purpose of absorbing the sulphuretted hydrogen gas and other impurities. And for this particular purpose it may be used over and over again, as it readily parts

with the absorbed gases on exposure in thin layers to the air.

Here, then, we get a clue to the special function of iron in the red corpuscles of the blood; it enables them to readily absorb oxygen as they pass along the minute blood-vessels of the lungs, and to act as carriers of this all-important gas to all parts of the body, parting with it freely for the work of oxidation as required. Little wonder, also, that iron is found to be a valuable tonic medicine in cases of debility arising from poorness of blood, for exercise in the fresh air—which of course implies rapid inspiration of oxygen—can only be of greatest benefit when the supply of iron in the corpuscles is at its maximum.

Again, the blood as it comes to the lungs from the heart for aëration is dark, but the absorption of oxygen restores its brightness, and it returns to the heart in all its proverbial redness. Similarly, if a drop of dark blood from the vein of an animal be exposed to the air, it at once becomes scarlet; and reddish brown is characteristic of that class of iron compounds which are related to the peroxide of iron. Further, although the deadly carbonic acid gas which is exhaled from the lungs, unlike oxygen, is very soluble in the watery portion of the blood, yet it is probable that as fast as the absorptive iron of the corpuscles parts with its oxygen in the minutest blood-vessels of the body, it absorbs an equivalent portion of the waste carbonic acid gas, and that this is the carbonic acid which is discharged from the lungs in the process of respiration; for if blood be alternately shaken up with oxygen and carbonic acid, it alternately becomes crimson and dark. If this, then, be the function of iron in the blood, it is impossible to exaggerate its importance; for it is nothing less than the ingredient which enables the corpuscles to absorb and carry the oxygen to all parts of the animal system, to support the combustion that generates the heat, which is the force initiating breathing, blood-circulation, and all forms of vital action.

In the next place, we have to consider iron as an essential element in plant-life and growth; and in order to come to a clear conclusion concerning it, it will be necessary to notice some of the vital processes in the development of a plant, and more especially as to the office of its leaves. At the outset we shall see some analogy between the lungs of an animal and the leaves of a plant; for as the lung is the organ for taking in from the air and expelling from the body certain gases for the maintenance of the animal's life, so the leaf absorbs from the air and gives off from the plant certain gases for the support and development of the plant. But here our analogy ends, the inhaled gases being totally different, and the purposes for which they are inhaled being totally different also. For while the animal takes in oxygen to generate internal animal heat, the plant, under the influence of the external heat and light of the sun, absorbs through its leaves the poisonous carbonic acid exhaled by the animal, not for internal food-burning, but for *actual* food; for the charcoal (carbon) of which about half the dry weight of a plant consists is the carbon constituent of the carbonic acid gas absorbed by the leaves; the oxygen constituent being at the same time set free again

for animal use. And here, in passing, one is struck with one of those transcendently beautiful arrangements in nature which meet its students at every turn—namely, animal refuse and poison becoming plant-food; the plant the purifier and replenisher of the air for the animal; the plant again organising the poison into wholesome food for the animal; and the plant utilising external solar heat to produce carbonaceous food or fuel for the future generation of the internal heat of the animal.

The chief gas exuded from the leaf-pores is water-vapour, and the amount given off, especially in hot weather, is very large; and this is the main cause of the rise, by capillary attraction, of the sap, just as lamp-oil rises up the wick to supply the place of that which is being burned away at the top. And the chief gas absorbed by the leaves through their pores is the carbonic acid already mentioned; but this absorption can only go on under the influence of sunlight and in the presence of the green colouring matter of the leaves. This green colouring matter, or chlorophyll as it is called, exists in minute grains in certain of the minute leaf-cells. Here in these cells the carbon and oxygen of the absorbed carbonic acid are made, in some way or other, through the agency of these chlorophyll grains, to part company; the carbon at once combining with the elements of the water brought up from the soil to form at first sugar, and ultimately, by further chemical changes and combinations with the substances brought up from the soil, starch, woody-fibre, acids, salts, oils, and the flesh-forming substances of which plants consist.

Now maize, oats, and many other plants have been very successfully grown and brought to perfection in bottles containing water in which have been dissolved all the substances that plants are known to require from the soil, one of which is iron. But if a solution be made absolutely free from iron, but containing all the other essential substances, a curious occurrence ensues—the leaves begin to lose their greenness, and at length become white, growth ceases, and after lingering for a time, the plant dies of starvation, not being able to assimilate its air-food—carbon. If, however, before this climax is reached, one single drop of solution of an iron salt be added to the bottle, the greenness reappears in something like twenty-four hours and growth proceeds as usual. Hence it is clear that the slightest trace of iron is sufficient, but at the same time *some* is absolutely essential for the formation of chlorophyll. It is as if the chemist (chlorophyll) were absent from his laboratory (the leaf), though all the chemicals are there as usual; and consequently work there is at a standstill, and will remain so until his friend (iron) stimulate him to fresh exertions. Curiously enough, chlorophyll is not known to contain iron, though it may be present in too infinitesimal a quantity to be easily detected; but that it is necessary to the production of chlorophyll there can be no doubt. It is also curious that just as there is a class of iron compounds of a reddish brown colour, so there is also another class of a green colour, a well-known member of which is green vitriol (protosulphate of iron).

It is at least an interesting coincidence that iron should be the active agent in both animal and vegetable life for the assimilation of the air sub-

stances required for their existence; and that at the same time it should be intimately connected with the production of the distinctive colour of the blood and of the foliage of plants.

JEREMY YORK.

III.

BEACH STREET was in those days much as it is now, the quaintest, saltiest, imaginable thoroughfare on the coast of Great Britain; littered with anchors of all sizes, with huge coils of hemp cable, with odd fantastic capstans for the winding-up of boats, with tall poles for the spreading of nets, lines from window to window for the easy drying of linen, queer dusky alleys leading at night-time into a true smuggling blackness of atmosphere; beerhouse after beerhouse in friendly juxtaposition, with a perpetual seething and hissing of surf upon the steep shingle, as a regale to the ear, and miles of sand plains beyond billowing to Sandwich, and sweet and musical into late autumn daytime, with wild-flowers of fifty different sorts and birds of all kinds.

It was now about nine o'clock in the evening; there was no moon, the starlight made no sheen, and the sea brimmed in tremorless ebony to its confines. The few oil lamps in Beach Street threw a feeble gleam upon the shingly road; but how full of people Deal was on this particular night, York might have gathered from the groups of men showing through every tavern window he passed; drinking, arguing, singing, caper-cutting, as Jack will when newly come ashore, amid motionless fogs of tobacco-smoke. The first sign his eye caught was that of the *Kentish Sickle*. He entered the place, and found it crowded with boatmen and seamen. The landlord, a purple-faced man, who had removed his wig for air, and yet looked half dead with heat, stood behind a little bar or counter drawing ale out of a cask, the top of which was on a level with his hand. York inquired if he could have a bed; the landlord shook his head, with a glance at the tall youth, as though he suspected a kind of impertinence in such a question in the face of the crowd of people smoking and drinking beyond.

'Can you name me a house in which I'm likely to obtain a bed for the night?' said York.

'No,' said the purple-faced man, continuing to draw ale into thick glass, one-legged tumblers, which, as fast as he filled them, he pushed to a couple of fellows, who carried them to the tables. 'It'll be odd if ye gits a bed to loie in to-night, mate, in Deal. Whoy, it'll be ending in the boatmen having to turn their boats' keel up for lodgings;' at which observation a large heavy man, in a round hat and a great belt round his waist, fit for the snugging of a horse-pistol or two, burst into a loud laugh.

York walked out, and entered another tavern hard by. This, too, was full, its five bedrooms crammed, the state-bed of the place to be occupied by no fewer than four men, to lie heel to heel, whenever it should suit them to withdraw to it; as the perspiring, dried-up little landlord informed York with a grin of exquisite satisfaction.

He tried a third, a fourth; tramped on to the *Cat o' Nine Tails* alehouse; but to no purpose. Had every house had its forty beds to let, they

would not have apparently met the demand that night for accommodation from the captains, mates, passengers, sailors who had come ashore on special business, or who had deserted, or who had to take the coach next day to London or wherever they might live, counting (as passengers) upon days and perhaps weeks of detention if they stuck to the craft lying out in the Downs yonder.

York had now reached the Sandown extremity of Deal; he retraced his steps, and passing the houses he had visited, he arrived at much such another one as they, called the *Lonely Star*, into which he walked. At the end of a tolerably long narrow passage was an open door, out of which floated clouds of tobacco-smoke along with the incense of the punch-bowl. A little on this side the door was a staircase, and nearer yet to the entrance a recess, in which sat a plump woman of fifty, with sloe-black eyes and red cheeks and treble chins. Over her head hung an old-fashioned lantern, the light of which was comfortably reflected in rows of bottles on shelves behind her filled with liquors of various dyes.

'Can I have a bed in this house?' asked York of this plump, good-humoured woman, who at his approach let fall some knitting she was at work upon.

She ran her bright black eyes over him with an expression as though she found pleasure in the sight of his long womanly hair and pale handsome face and manliness of stature, and answered after a minute's thinking: 'I'm afraid not, sir. Every bed in the house is taken. I never remember Deal so full of strangers.'

'I shall have to return to the ship, then,' he exclaimed. 'Yet I would rather not. Plying betwixt the Downs and the shore is costly work to a poor man—at least your boatmen make it so. A spare sofa would serve me. I have been ill in South America, and am not yet well, and durst not lie in the open. A pillow and a roof for my head would suffice. I must be up by daybreak, perhaps before. My sweetheart's mother, Mrs Bax, lives t' other side of Sandwich, more Minster-way than that town.—D'ye know her, ma'am?'

'By name, sir: a very decent good lady, I'm sure.'

'There's a bed for me there; but it's too far to reach it on foot to-night. Besides, my sweetheart, Jenny, will not expect me till to-morrow by noon, or thereabouts. Now, what am I to do for a bed? There will be other houses of entertainment in this town besides those I have visited in this street?'

'There's a gentleman,' said the landlady, after a short spell of thought, 'lying up-stairs who has used my house for some years running. 'Tis but a bit of a room he's in, sir; but he rests in a great big bed, broad enough to house a large family. If you wouldn't mind sharing it with him, he'd accommodate you at my request, I don't doubt. What do you say?'

'You are very good, ma'am; 'twould be a god-send, I assure you. I could not feel more weary had I been tramping Deal all day.'

'Step into the end room, then,' said she, 'and call for what you will whilst I find out if the gentleman will receive you.'

He entered, and found himself in the company of some score and a half of seamen of all denominations, with a sprinkling of soldiers and a few

women. The room was unpleasantly full; the height of it was no taller than a small ship's 'tween-decks, and it had something of the look of a 'tween-decks, with its substantial joists or rafters, its small porthole-like windows, and walls resembling bulkheads. A few of the nearer folks stared at him on his entrance, and a couple of the women giggled a bit at his hair; but the company were on the whole rather too drunk to give him much heed. It was an old-world scene that, for its utterly vanished qualities of colour, atmosphere, attire, is scarcely imaginable in these days; unsnuffed rushlights flaring on the tall, narrow chimney-piece and on the tables; men mahogany-cheeked with weather, some wearing their own hair in tails, some with wigs, with here a three-cornered hat cocked over its owner's nose, there a round tarpaulin perched on nine hairs, with a fathom of ribbon down the back; most of the people smoking long clay pipes, and arguing with drunken animation, with now and again the added hullabaloo of one who would set up his throat for a song; the women in colours which made one think of a crockery shepherdess; and visions of copper-nosed salts looming out in postures of wrangling at the tables in smoke-obscured corners.

York took a chair near the door and called to the drawer for a glass of spirits. After a little the landlady came to him and said that she had knocked at Mr Worksop's door and asked if he would object to a bedfellow; and that his answer was the gentleman was welcome if so be he would contrive to ride with an up-and-down cable; by which she understood Mr Worksop to mean that he expected the gentleman to keep to his side of the bed. York thanked her, and said he should be glad to go to rest at once.

'I shall be quitting your house before you're up,' said he, 'and will pay you for the bed now, if you please.'

'As you will, sir,' said she: 'it will be a shilling.'

He gave her the money.

'There will be no difficulty,' he exclaimed, 'in letting myself out in the morning? I do not wish to disturb the house by a stiff wrestle with harsh bolts and difficult locks.'

'That'll be your door, sir,' said she, pointing to the street entrance at the end of the passage. 'There is but one bolt, and it shoots easily. We fear nothing but the foreign invader at Deal, sir. The latch will fall when you pull the door after you.'

He thanked her, took his bundle, and followed her up-stairs. She knocked at a little door painted stone-colour, leaning as with age in its frame. A voice answered, 'Come in,' in a muffled hurricane note.

'It's the gent, Mr Worksop, as is to lie with you,' responded the landlady; and then, putting the rushlight into York's hand, she bid him good-night with a pleasant wish that he would find his sweetheart happy and in gay health next morning.

The latch of the door appeared to be jammed; York struggled with it for some time, but could not succeed in lifting it. Meanwhile, he heard Mr Worksop, who was manifestly a seafaring man, calling from the bed several varieties of sea-blessings upon the eyes and limbs of his

disturber, until, losing all patience, he bawled out in the tones of a gale of wind: 'Put your shoulder to the latch and heave it up! Thunder and blood! ain't it plain that prising's your only tack?'

York did as he was told, and by so doing lifted the crazy old door off its latch, and entered.

He found himself in a little room, with the ceiling but a very few inches above his head. The apartment was almost entirely filled by a large, black, funereal four-poster, undraped, and furnished with a perfect Atlantic Ocean of blanket, mattress, and coverlet. On the left side of this immense bed lay a man, of whom nothing more was visible than a curiously elongated face, as though his countenance had been stretched, lengthening the lineaments out of all proportion to their breadth. This odd face was crowned with a large red handkerchief, so twisted over the head as to serve as a nightcap. The clothes of a nautical man of that age lay heaped upon a chair under the very little window which gave light and ventilation to the room.

'Sorry to break in upon your rest, Mr Worksop,' exclaimed York; 'but needs must, you know.—But for your kindness, my bed to-night might have been on the cold ground, I fear.—Deal's amazingly full, certainly.'

'Very welcome, very welcome,' growled Mr Worksop in a somewhat softened voice, staring over the edge of the bedclothes with small, windy, deep-set eyes at the long hair and tall figure of the young fellow. 'There's room enough; only be so good as to bear a hand and tumble aboard, for I don't feel up to the knocker to-night, and there's been row enough going on down-stairs since I've lain here to make a dead man get up and shoulder his coffin for a cruise arter peace.'

York fell to undressing as expeditiously as possible.

'What's your calling, may I ask?' inquired Mr Worksop, rumbling out the question with his mouth half covered with the bedclothes.

'A sailor,' was the answer.

'What ship, sir?'

'Well, I was second-mate of the *Cælia*, but sickened at Valparaiso of some pestilence there, and was left behind by the master. I was down six months with the malady, and nearly a dead man. Then the captain of the brig *Jane* offered to carry me home on condition of my helping him in the navigation of the vessel—I mean, taking observations and keeping the reckoning and the like; for he had lost his chief-mate; and his second, who was the ship's carpenter, couldn't read or write. We brought up in the Downs this evening; and as my sweetheart lives within a few hours' walk of this place, I came ashore, meaning to start for her home at dawn to-morrow. Small chance of my disturbing you, Mr Worksop; you'll find me cat-like, and won't know I'm gone till you turn to look.'

'Right you are, sir; right you are,' rumbled the other: 'there's room enough here. Why, boil me alive, oh! but this must have been a royal bed of state in its day.'

'I'll blow out this light,' said York.—'But have you a tinder-box handy, Mr Worksop? I'm without that convenience—without a good deal that should have been mine but for Valparaiso. It's

well to be able to strike a light; one never knows what may happen.'

'There's my jacket on that cheer,' answered Mr Worksop; 'you'll find what you want in the left-hand pocket.'

York felt, and found the things, placed them near the rushlight, extinguished it, and got into bed.

They lay talking for a while. Mr Worksop, it seems, had been boatswain of a West Indianman for three voyages. He had been paid off in London a week or two before; and having been born at Deal, had run down to spend a few days at the old spot and to take a short cruise about the district. He was too sleepy to talk much; but it was plain, from the little he let fall, that he was a man who had used the ocean for many years, and had much that was moving and interesting to tell, whenever he should feel disposed to deliver himself of his experiences. Presently he began to wander, then to snore. York lay awake for some time, listening to the hum and roll of the voices of the drinkers in the room below. There was an oil lamp just outside the window, which threw a dim illumination sufficiently clear to render faintly visible the outlines of objects. The young fellow rested, lost in thought, with his mind going to his sweetheart, from whom he had been parted fourteen months; then to his prospects in life; the offer made him by the captain of the *Jane*, his chances of getting the money due to him from the owners of the *Cælia*, and the like; and then the noises below quieting with the departure one by one of the revellers, he closed his eyes and was presently asleep.

He was awakened by a sense of suffocation, and found himself bathed in perspiration and panting for breath under the weight of the bedclothes. The boatswain was snoring heavily. All was silent out of doors, saving at intervals the moan of a gentle gust of wind, like a long human sigh, running through the stealthy seething sound of the midnight waters pouring upon the shingle. He sat upright for the relief of the posture; but whether it was that the Valparaiso fever was not yet out of him, or that his condition rendered him particularly sensitive to atmospheric conditions, he found the temperature of the room insupportable. Indeed, the little compartment was nearly all bedstead. The lungs of the boatswain, to judge by his breathing, seemed to require the air of the open ocean to fill them. There was an odour of flue, too, along with a tepid flavour of bedclothes, that was as stifling in its way as the atmosphere of a bakehouse.

The young fellow quietly got out of bed with the design of opening the window, but found the casement, as the door had been, a sort of fixture, whose dislocation must result in the waking of the whole house. He pined for a drink of water; but there was no jug or washing apparatus in the room, and it was manifest that gentlemen who put up at the *Lonely Star* were to expect no better convenience than an outdoor pump for their ablutions. Now, the *Lonely Star* was sure to have a pump of its own as well as a backyard; and the fancy of a drink of cold water coupled with a short spell of breathing the dewy night-air worked so irresistibly in the feverish young man, that he resolved at all hazards to explore for the

relief he panted for. He put before his fancy a figure of the house, and kept in his mind the bearings of the staircase and the public room he had entered. He could recall that, whilst seated in that room, he had taken notice of a glass door screened with red curtains at the extremity of it, with a white step between it and the floor. This he made sure led into the back-yard, where, though he should not meet with a pump, he was certain to obtain fresh air.

He partially clothed himself; but, on trying the door, found he could not lift the latch with his fingers. He felt in his pockets, but was without anything to enable him to prise open the jammed and rusty arrangement. The boatswain snored heavily in the soundest sleep. York, dreading the fellow's temper should he awaken him, walked softly to the man's clothes, and, by the feeble light that shone upon the little window, groped in the pockets for any contrivance that should serve him as a lever. The jacket pockets contained nothing but a tobacco-case, a pipe, and some papers. He felt in the left-hand breeches' pocket, and touched a quantity of pieces of money, the weight of which proved them to be gold, apparently guineas and half-guineas. In the other pocket was a large clasp-knife such as sailors carry, with a ring through the end of the haft for a lanyard.

York took his knife, went to the door, and succeeded in lifting the latch; and this done, he stole forth, leaving the door ajar; then putting the knife in his pocket, he groped his way downstairs all very quietly, as he did not wish to disturb the house. The street lamp that had helped him in the bedroom served him below wherever there was a seaward-facing window, and he made his way without difficulty through the long, low-ceiled public room, reeking and sickening with the lingering fumes of tobacco and rum punch; and pulling back the single bolt of the glass door he had taken notice of, he found himself in a little back-yard with, sure enough, the outline of a pump in the corner faintly touched by the starlight.

He drank and bathed his hands and face, and felt himself greatly refreshed. There was an inverted tub close to the pump, upon which he rested himself, and here he continued to linger for some time, reluctant to quit the sweetness and freshness of the cool air that was breathing direct from the sea for the oven-like oppressiveness of the little bedroom. Maybe he dozed, for he was suddenly startled by the near drowsy voice of a watchman calling the hour, two o'clock. On hearing this, he arose, re-entered the house, quietly bolted the glass door after him and returned to his bedroom.

IV.

The name of the landlady with the apple-red cheeks and array of white chins was Mrs Mate, and this good woman had received instructions from Mr Worksop the boatswain, from the first day on which he had arrived, to call him every morning whilst he slept at her house at seven o'clock, neither sooner nor later; and to have his breakfast of small-beer, rashers of ham, cheese, red herrings, and brown bread ready for him in the little front parlour down-stairs punctually by

a quarter to eight. Mrs Mate was always careful to humour such sailors as stayed at her house with money in their pockets. Mr Worksop had now used the *Lonely Star* for five days continuously, not to speak of his being a regular customer whenever in those parts; and in those five days he had spent his money handsomely, begrudging himself nothing, tipping with a quarter-deck rather than a fore-castle taste, and there was good prospect of his remaining in the house until the following Wednesday.

When next morning came, then, exactly at the hour of seven, Mrs Mate went up the somewhat darksome staircase that led to the chamber in which Mr York and Mr Worksop had slept, and knocked at the door. She received no answer. She was not surprised, for Mr Worksop was a stout sleeper, apart from his trick of going to bed with his skinfull. She knocked again, and yet again, accompanying her blows by a vigorous kicking; and failing to receive any sort of reply, she lifted the latch of the door—understanding, of course, as the landlady of the house, the trick of opening it—and walked in.

It was broad sunny daylight outside, but the little window set close under the ceiling admitted but a pitiful light. However, at one glance Mrs Mate was able to see that the bed was empty. She was prepared to find the boatswain alone, knowing, as we have seen, that Mr York meant to start for his sweetheart at daybreak; but on glancing around she observed that not only was Mr Worksop gone but his clothes likewise. This was unusual. She stepped to the bed, and more through habit, perhaps, than with design, she pulled down the bedclothes, which lay somewhat in a huddle on the side the boatswain had occupied, and instantly uttered a loud squeal of fear and horror.

There was a great stain of blood upon the sheet, with smaller stains round about it, that seemed to be sifting out even as she watched them like a newly dropped blob of ink upon blotting-paper. Mrs Mate squealed out a second time even more loudly than before, following the outcry by an hysterical shriek of 'Murder! murder!' meanwhile noting, with eyes enlarged to twice their circumference by fright, that there was a pool of blood on the floor on the side where the boatswain had lain, with other marks which vanished at the door.

So shrill-voiced a woman as Mrs Mate could not squeal twice at the top of her pipes and yell 'Murder! murder!' also without exciting alarm. The first to rush up-stairs was her husband, an old man in a white nightcap, an aged frill-shirt, and a pair of plum-coloured breeches. He was followed by the drawer, by a couple of wenches who had been busy cleaning rooms down-stairs, and by five or six sailors, who came running out of the adjacent bedrooms on hearing Mrs Mate's cries. Grasping her husband by the back of his neck, the landlady pointed to the bed, and exclaimed: 'Mr Worksop has been murdered! murdered, Joe, I tell you! Blood in our house! Murder done in the *Lonely Star*!'—uttering which, she fell upon the floor in a swoon, but contrived to rally before her husband seemed able to grasp the meaning of what she had said.

One of the two wenches instantly slipped away to give the news. A cold-blooded murder was no

common occurrence in Deal. A Customs' man found dead with a slug through his heart, the body of a smuggler washing ashore with a ghastly cutlass-wound upon his head, the corpse of a gagged 'blockader' at the foot of the Foreland Height, were mere business details, necessary items of a programme that was full of death, hard weather, miraculous escapes, murderous conflicts; but a cool midnight assassination was a genuine novelty in its way, and in a very few minutes, thanks to the serving-maid, the pavements outside the inn, the passage, the staircase, the tragic bedroom itself, were crowded with hustling men and women, eagerly talking, the hinder ones bawling to those ahead for news, and the whole rickety place threatening to topple down with the weight of so many people.

The story soon gathered a collected form. It was known that about nine o'clock on the previous evening a tall young fellow with his hair curling upon his back had applied at the *Lonely Star* for a bedroom, and was admitted by consent of Mr Worksop to a share of the great bed in which that worthy lay. It got to be known, too, in a wonderfully short space of time that Mr Worksop carried in his breeches' or other pockets some thirty or forty guineas and half-guineas loose, a handful of which he had exhibited with uncommon satisfaction on several occasions when overtaken in liquor. It also got to be known in an also equally incredibly short space of time, thanks to one of the watermen who had rowed Mr York ashore from the brig *Jane*, that the tall young man with the long hair had owned himself worth only half a guinea, of which he had given four shillings to the boatmen after a tedious dispute, one to the landlady for his bed, and a six-penny bit for liquor, leaving him with five shillings—all the money he had in the world, according to his own admission; 'and quite enough,' exclaimed a deep voice amidst the jostle of men on the staircase, 'to account for this here murder.'

Presently, there was a cry of 'Room for Mr Jawker!' The crowd made a lane, and there entered a round, fat, fussy little justice of the peace, with the only constable that Deal possessed—a tall, gaunt, powerfully built though knock-kneed man, in a rusty three-cornered hat, and a long stick—following close at his heels. Little Mr Jawker approached the side of the bed, and after taking a long look, full of knowingness, at the blood-stains, he ordered the constable, giving him the name of Budd, to clear the room of all save those who could throw light upon this matter. This being done, Mr Jawker fell to questioning the assembled folks, and bit by bit gathered as much of the story as they could relate. The landlady, Mrs Mate, was ignorant of the name of the tall young man with the long hair; but he told her, she informed his Worship, that he meant to leave her-house before daybreak that morning, to be in time to breakfast with his sweetheart, who lived Sandwich way, and who was none other, as she supposed, than pretty little Jenny Bax, for 'twas the widow Bax's name he mentioned when he spoke of walking over to his love at dawn.

At this point there was a disturbance outside. Budd the constable looked out, and presently looked in again to inform Mr Jawker that fresh

prints of bloodstains had been discovered on the pavement, and could be traced some distance.

'They must be followed! They must be followed!' cried little Mr Jawker; 'they may lead us to this discovery of the body of the murdered man.—Follow me, Budd!' with which he went down-stairs, the gaunt immense constable close behind him, and the people shouldering one another in pursuit of both.

There was a great crowd outside. Deal was but a little place in those days; indeed, it is but a little place now, and the news of the murder—if murder it were—had spread with something of the rapidity of the sound of a gun. It was a sparkling morning, a small westerly draught rippling the sea into the flashing of diamonds under the soaring sun, the Downs filled with ships as on the previous day, the white front of the Foreland gleaming like silk upon the soft liquid azure past it, with, noblest sight of all, the line-of-battle ship, the central feature of the mass of craft, in the act of tripping her anchor and flashing into a broad surface of canvas with her long bowsprit and jib-booms to head to the north and east presently for a cruise as far as Heligoland.

The instant the little justice of the peace made his appearance there arose a stormy hubbub of voices of men eager to point out the bloodstains. It was a tragedy that went too deep for merriment, yet one might have laughed at the eager postures of square-sterned boatmen bending in all directions in search of new links of the crimson chain of crime, as though a vessel full of treasure had gone to pieces close aboard the land on top of a furious inshore gale, and there were ducats and doubloons and pieces-of-eight in plenty to be found at the cost of a hunt amongst the shingle. So many inquiring eyes were sure to discover what was wanted. Stains unmistakably of blood could be followed at varying intervals from the pavement in front of the *Lonely Star*; then into the middle of Beach Street; then an ugly patch, as though the burden of the body had proved too heavy, and the bearer had paused to rest; afterwards, for a hundred paces, no sign; then half a score more of stains, that conducted the explorers to the timber extension that projected a little distance into the sea, and there of course the trail ended. Nothing could be more damning in the theory they suggested than these links of blood, starting from the bedside, and terminating, so to speak, at the very wash of the water. It was universally concluded that the tall young man with the long hair, name unknown, who had slept with Mr Worksop, had murdered that unfortunate boatswain for the sake of the guineas in his pocket; and under cover of the darkness of the night, had stealthily borne the corpse to the timber extension and cast it into the sea.

Mr Jawker started off at a rapid pace, followed by the constable, to make out a warrant for the apprehension of the tall young man with the long hair for wilful murder; whilst a number of boatmen went to work with creeps or drags to search for the body in the vicinity of the beach; but though they persevered in their efforts till noon, watched by hundreds of people ashore as well as by the innumerable ships' crews who crowded the shrouds and tops to observe the

result of this patient dredging, nothing more than a very old anchor, which was supposed to have belonged to one of Tromp's ships, was brought to light.

OUR SPIRES AND SPIRELETS.

THE closer we look at our ancient churches the more ready we shall be to admit our predecessors did their best, in most instances, to hand down to us work that should be worth looking at. As we examine them, too, we must own much obligation to Time and Weather: for those inscrutable artists, following in the wake of the old Norman and Plantagenet masons, have softened the edges of the stonework, endued it with dove-like tones, enriching it besides with countless discs of sea-white, sea-green, and tawny-amber lichens no other craftsmen could design. The merit of these legacies from the past is perhaps most apparent when we look up to the lovely spires and spirelets left us in such abundance. These lift up their heads with a dignity and appealing earnestness which only good work suggests, and have charms that only centuries and sunshine can bestow.

Our most beautiful spire is that of Salisbury Cathedral. It rises to a height of four hundred feet from the pavement within the building. Midway in the splendid vista of clustered columns and graceful arches and shadowy aisles of the interior rise four mighty piers, over which is a stone-vaulted roof. On this open substructure is built a slender square tower of three tall stages, very light, yet rich with arcadings; and from the topmost of these rises the octagonal tapering spire with its capstone, and its banner-like vane, dated 1675, above it, and its metal cross above all. At each edge of the slanting stonework is a line of bead-like enrichment, and three times in the course of its height a wide band of quatrefoiled ornament encircles the spire. At its base on the top of the highest stage of the tower is a richly wrought open-work parapet, with a spirelet at each angle. It is, of course, hollow, except for a stalwart framework of timber in twelve diminishing stages on which the stonework is laid. When we realise the extent of the labour required to raise all the stones to their high places, of the skill for their adjustment, and of the necessary precautions in the way of supports, bandages, and braces to receive and sustain the vast weight at its enormous height, we may indeed agree that it is a wonderful work. Sir Christopher Wren was called in as an expert to examine its condition in 1668. He mentions with admiration the circumstance that its height corresponds with the length of the edifice, and adds that, though it is a hundred and fifty feet high in itself, without counting the height of the tall tower on which it is raised, it is but nine inches thick. His impression was that the original architect intended to 'conclude' the tower without a spire, and that it must have been a successor who tied the walls together with the immense iron braces and straps

now to be seen in them, and ventured to add the marvellous needle.

It is not unusual for spires to be after-thoughts. The spire of Shakespeare's church, or, more exactly, of Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon, is a case in point. This church is a very ancient edifice, probably dating from Saxon times, and certainly containing fragments of Norman work. It is cruciform in plan, and from the intersection of the transepts with the nave and chancel rises a strong tower, which was evidently originally 'concluded' without a spire. In the course of centuries, various portions of the fabric have been rebuilt, and the work of the first builders taken down. There remains to us a large edifice chiefly of Perpendicular architecture with spacious mullioned windows and battle-mented parapets. Tapering up from the centre of the top of the tower in the last century was a short stout spire on a timber framework covered with lead. This was eventually considered of inadequate importance, and was replaced in 1763 by the very tall, thin, unbroached 'extinguisher' we now see. The grave old tower is eighty feet high, and this addition is eighty-three feet high. If the object of its erection was to ensure that the situation of the sacred shrine that contains the remains and the tomb of our greatest poet should be seen by all comers from as great a distance as possible, it has answered its purpose, for, from the windings of the river, which flows past the churchyard, over the lime-trees that form the interlaced green avenue to the church door, over the prosaic chimney-stacks of the houses in the pleasant town, and from all the low-lying meadows around in which Shakespeare wandered, it is a conspicuous object.

The spires on Warkworth and Newbiggen churches in Northumberland are also after-thoughts—though very antique and hoary after-thoughts. The towers of both structures were finished without them, probably that they might be used for observation, if not for defence, like some of the other church towers on the same Border; and it was not till a century, or longer, had elapsed that they were capped with spires. Both are at the west end of their respective edifices, but that at Warkworth is nearly twice the size of the other, and besides being broached, or sloped from the square of its base into its octagonal taper, has three stages of small gables. We may see the need for them both; for Warkworth Church is situated on the Coquet, on a site so low that it would be quite undiscernible from the adjacent country but for the spire; and Newbiggen is on a rocky coast where a lofty landmark is of the greatest value to mariners.

For the most part, however, preparations for a spire are made from the foundations. To take Kettering Church, in Northamptonshire, as a fine example, we may notice that the tower and spire are treated so independently of the rest of the structure that they might have been intended to be isolated from it. The tower from the floor of the nave to its summit measures eighty-eight feet high; and the spire measures eighty-eight feet high without including the vane. Although the ancient architect was aware of the effect of distance in diminishing the appearance of size, and gave his beautifully ornamented string-courses uniformity by arranging they should get larger

and larger as they approached the summit, he made the tapering lines of his spire perfectly straight, thus placing his practice against the theory that to produce the effect of straight lines at a great height they must be slightly curved outwards. He chose the same stone for his structure that the builders of Peterborough Cathedral and the churches at Stamford chose for theirs. Then he began to build his tower before he built the nave, about twenty-five feet square, with a grand arched doorway enclosed within a square head on the western side of it, and a staircase winding up in one angle of it. He made a floor for the bell-ringers within, and another floor above that, and then a third floor for the belfry, and placed mighty corbels at the base of the spire, on which it is supposed he intended the bells should be suspended for repairs. And then he commenced his geometrically perfect spire with stonework that was fourteen inches thick at first, but diminished to six inches by the time it was nine feet high. At each angle of the base he placed loop-holed turrets, and round it a battlemented parapet, also loop-holed, and provided with gargoyles to carry off the rain. He gave it three tiers of dormers of graduated dimensions, the lowermost being divided into three lights, the second into two lights, and the third having one light only; and up each ascending line of the octagon to its neck he placed rows of crockets. He finished the capstone with ornamental iron-work surmounted by a cock, which has since been superseded by a banner-vane. Veritably, a noble piece of the old English architecture of an old English country town!

Grantham spire, the summit of which is two hundred and seventy-three feet high, and Boston 'stump' are two remarkable examples in Lincolnshire; and the 'three tall spires' of Coventry, all lately restored or rebuilt, are as well known as the compassionate Lady Godiva. The twisted spire of Chesterfield, in Derbyshire, is also of considerable interest. The three spires of Lichfield Cathedral are of superb beauty. Norwich Cathedral and St Mary Redcliff, Bristol, have also fine spires; and Chichester spire has experienced the rare fate of falling down and being rebuilt. Stoke-Pogis Church, the centre of the scene of Gray's *Elegy*, has a spire comparatively lowly and quite rustic in its homeliness by the side of these; but still, by virtue of its associations, very pleasing, if not alluring. Indeed, look in what direction we may, these monuments of the prowess of our builders in 'the merry days of old' are to be met with. Glasgow has a graceful example in the grand Cathedral, rising with the tower two hundred and twenty-five feet into the air. Edinburgh also has a fine specimen in the spire of the General Assembly Hall.

As the very earliest churches had no bells, and therefore no belfries, there were no spires. When bells were first used to summon worshippers they were small, and were suspended in small bell-turrets, or bell-cots. After large bells were made, high and rich and imposing steeples were erected for their reception. Communities vied with each other to make them as magnificent as possible and in the number of bells they placed in them. They seem in early instances to have been placed at the west end of churches, probably in continuation of the custom in vogue before they were

required of placing strong towers there for the purpose of defence. Eventually, central towers were adopted, in cruciform buildings especially. These combined the purpose of a belfry with the addition of a vast open space in the interior, which gave light and grandeur to it. Small edifices may have been content with low conical spires or spire-lets in these remote times; but as years passed, succeeding builders made them more and more pointed, or needle-like, and generally of the same height as the towers on which they were placed. Every church tower was either finished with a spire or intended to be so finished at a future time. London when seen from a distance is said to have presented the aspect of a forest of spires. There were particular laws of construction always carried out, which need not be described except to mention that much of the sober, soaring, light and picturesque effect of their outlines is the result of the clever treatment of the transition from the square of the tower to the form of the pyramidal octagon. Recorded particulars concerning their erection are extremely rare; but more frequently in old churchwardens' accounts there are entries in which mention is made of them. For instance, the churchwardens of Ludlow recorded in 1545: 'In primis payd for a key to the dore that goothe up into the stiple ijd.' And again, in 1550: 'To Thomas Season for gowinge up into the stiple ij. wyndy nyghtes to save the glase ther in the wyndowis, xd.' The materials used differed according to the locality of their erection. Besides stone and timber covered with lead, we have examples covered with slates, and others with oaken shingles. This last covering is seen only on the spires of village churches in our southernmost counties.

The Great Fire of London caused the downfall of many noble spires in the metropolis; and the rebuilding that succeeded it, which included the reconstruction of fifty churches, inaugurated a new style of steeple. A preference for classic architecture had become the order of the day. On the classic temple-like structure that took the place of the old mediæval building that had stood for five or six hundred years, adapting itself by additions to the needs of its succeeding centuries, the architects of the period placed *loggia* upon *loggia*, often formed of columns arranged in circles, or in octagons, or in squares with the angles cut off or canted, one above the other, which were surmounted by cupolas or obeliscal spirelets, with a ball and cross above all. The details and outlines were varied in each case, with columns, caps, cornices, consoles, pediments, vases, urns, lunettes, festoons of flowers, and rusticated work; but the general character of them all is that which we identify as the style of St Paul's, with its colonnades, dome, cupola, and gilded ball. Walpole called one of these new steeples a 'masterpiece of absurdity.' Some of them have double bases and double columns; and all of them were much admired, generally, by the art patrons of the day, who described them as chaste, elegant, and majestically simple.

Removed by two centuries from the battle of the styles, we can see the beauties of both dispassionately. And whether we look at our wealth of spires of the old Plantagenet times, or of this Renaissance of the manner of building in the days of the Cæsars, we must echo the sentiment of

Carlyle, who, alluding to the trade of his father, wrote: 'A noble craft it is, that of a mason. O Time! O Time! wondrous and fearful art thou, yet there is in man what is above thee.'

A BEGGING LETTER.

It was the breakfast hour at the Leys, a small country-house near the country town of Harsdale, in Greeneshire. The owner of the house, Hilton Juler, Esq., was seated with his wife and children at the breakfast table, alternately using his knife and fork and fingering a little heap of letters which he had taken out of the postbag before sitting down. One of these, being directed in a strange handwriting, fixed his attention for a moment; but he left it and all the others unopened until breakfast was over. He then passed one or two of them to his wife, and with a merry face tossed one over to his eldest daughter with 'There he is again; thicker than ever.' Presently, he came again to the unfamiliar handwriting, and opening the envelope, read the contents carefully.

'Just look at that, Mary,' said he, as he handed the letter to his wife. Taking it, she read as follows:

SHEPPERTON-ON-THAMES.

DEAR SIR—I venture, though personally a stranger to you, to solicit your kindest attention to the following circumstances. The respected vicar of our parish, the Rev. James Barforth, has so often spoken to me of you and of your close friendship in your university days, that I feel sure you would wish to know of his difficulties. Three months ago he was seized with rheumatic fever, and incapacitated for the performance of any duty. The medical man has urged that Mr Barforth must not spend the spring in England, but at Mentone or in Algeria. We have started a subscription in the parish to enable him to follow this salutary advice, and we hope to raise at least one hundred pounds for this most worthy object. I have myself out of my own very slender means contributed ten pounds, though in order to do this I shall be compelled to forego my own summer vacation. I write to ask if you would be disposed to help a poor parish in a work of benevolence towards a very deserving man of God? I need not say, sir, that my present action is unknown to our dear vicar, and it is only because I happen to have heard that you were fellow-collegians at Oxford that I venture to trespass on your kindness. You will see from the enclosed list of subscribers that the movement commands the sympathy of all classes of persons, some of the poorest having gladly contributed their mite.—Awaiting the honour of a reply, and trusting it will be favourable, I am, your obedient servant,

HENRY TWIDALE, vicar's churchwarden.

'What a nice letter! How kind of them!' exclaimed Mrs Juler as she handed the epistle back. 'Of course, dear, you will send them something.'

'Well, yes; it seems a deserving case,' he replied. 'I remember Barforth well as a man of quite unusual ability. How he has managed to vegetate in such a spot as Shepperton I can't

imagine. A man of good family too.—Well, I'll send him a couple of guineas.'

Gathering up his letters, Mr Juler retired to his private room; and amongst the letters sent off that evening was one directed to Henry Twidale, Esq., with a cheque for two guineas enclosed, and a promise of a similar amount if it should be found needful. By return of post came a brief acknowledgment and thanks for the promise of further help, which, however, should not be claimed without absolute necessity. Mr Juler thereupon ceased to think of the matter. But a few weeks afterwards another letter came from the benevolent churchwarden, saying that the poverty of the parish must be his excuse for asking for the fulfilment of the promise of further help, especially as their dear vicar's health was improving so slowly. Now, this second letter arrived just as Mr Juler was starting for London, and he had only time to thrust his unopened letters into his pocket before he and his wife drove to the country station, two miles away.

On arriving at King's Cross, he drove to his hotel, where he left Mrs Juler. He then proceeded to keep an appointment in the City. This detained him until, as he walked up Ludgate Hill, he saw that the clock of St Paul's pointed to five minutes to four. Wishing to attend evening prayer in the cathedral, he mounted the steps, and secured a place just in time to rise with the rest of the congregation as the clergy and choristers took their places. During the singing of the anthem he happened to catch sight of a clergyman standing a short distance from him whose face seemed familiar. At the close of the service he looked more carefully, and recognised his old college friend. Making his way to him, he said: 'How are you, Barforth? I'm glad to see you are able to get about. I suppose you'll soon be off to Mentone? But really you haven't much of the delicate invalid in your looks.'

The clergyman, with a smiling rosy face and a firm grip of the hand, said: 'Why, whatever do you mean? Mentone? That's about the last place I should think of. Time enough to go there when I'm used up.'

'Well, but you *are* used up, are you not?' said Mr Juler. 'Haven't you just recovered from rheumatic fever?'

'No, indeed.—Where have you heard that tale?'

They had by this time arrived at the door of the north transept, and as they passed out Mr Juler said: 'Why, I've just sent something towards your expenses to a warmer climate. I was told you had been ill, and a change was imperative.'

'You astonish me,' was the reply. 'I was never better in my life, nor in better spirits. Here have I just been offered a large London incumbency, and I'm up now to settle matters before coming to reside here.'

'But haven't you a churchwarden named Twidale?'

'No,' was the decisive answer. 'One of my wardens is named Jones, the other is very properly named Church. I know nothing of a Twidale.'

Upon this Mr Juler felt sure he had been duped. Producing the letter he had received that morning, he gave his friend the history of

it. Mr Barforth at once pronounced the whole thing a fraud. The next step obviously was to put the matter in the hands of the police, who advised that Mr Juler should send some reply to the last letter, and they would watch the post-office at Shepperton with the hope of capturing the delinquent.

Now, Shepperton is a village about twenty miles out of London, and is composed of one street, three lanes, a church, and two shops. At one of these the post-office is kept. The day after the rencounter at St Paul's, a middle-aged man dressed in respectable gray entered the shop and accosted the proprietor, telling him that he was a detective from London and should need his help in certain matters.

'I suppose,' he said, 'you've no one in the place named Twidale?'

'No,' said the postmaster. 'But three weeks ago a strange gent come in and said as how his name were Twidale, and he expected a letter in a day or two, and would I keep it till he called for it, as he were only a-visiting here at present. So the letter come, and I gave it him.'

'Ah!' said the other. 'I thought so.—Well, he's coming again, and I shall want you to help to identify him. And if you can quarter me in your house, I shall be glad.'

As this could be arranged, he took up his abode there, and instructed the postmaster to give him a signal when Mr Twidale came on the scene. This happened the very next day. That morning, Mr Juler's letter had arrived, and upon being inquired for, it was, after a little delay, handed to Henry Twidale, Esq. At that moment a middle-aged gentleman entered the shop with a mild 'How do you do?' and quietly asked for a postage stamp. Mr Twidale had opened his letter and read it hurriedly; then saying, 'I shall call again early next week,' he left the shop, being followed by the gentleman in gray, who had stayed to affix his stamp to a letter, and who never lost sight of his prey till he saw him enter a respectable house in a quiet street in Bloomsbury. Having run his fox to earth, the detective hurried to the nearest police court and procured a warrant for the apprehension of Henry Twidale, Esq.

Meanwhile, behind the doors of the quiet house in Bloomsbury Mr Twidale had been welcomed by a pleasant lady and two children, and was soon seated with them at the tea-table. All the while Black Care and Nemesis were approaching rapidly; and before a full hour had passed, Nemesis in very unclassical gray tweed uncereemoniously pushed past the servant who had answered his knock, and entered the sitting-room unannounced.

'Excuse me,' said the detective; 'I'm sorry to disturb you; but I've some very particular business with you, Mr Twidale. Will you step into the passage a moment?'

'Twidale!' said the other. 'What do you mean? You certainly use no ceremony. You'd better leave this room at once, if you don't want to be kicked out.'

'Now look here, Mister; this won't do with me. I don't like to put a lady about; but if you won't come outside, I must tell my business here.'

'Confound your impudence! You've come to the wrong house, evidently. My name is Johnson.'

'Yes,' said the detective; 'I know that. But you were Twidale this afternoon at Shepperton post-office.'

The brazen front of Mr Johnson shook a little at this home-thrust. His wife, who stood looking at each in turns, here said: 'Whatever does this mean? My husband has been in his office in the City all day, and has not been near Shepperton.—I must request you, sir, to leave this house.'

'Now, don't you trouble yourself, ma'am. My business is with this man here; and if you don't know where he's been to-day, there's no call for you to know at present.'

Mr Johnson still continuing obdurate, the detective said at last: 'Well, I'm a police-officer, and I've got a warrant to arrest you on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences; and there's a cab at the door if you like to come quietly.'

The poor wife, unable to credit her hearing, and unspeakably shocked and terrified, fell fainting into a chair, and recovered consciousness only to find her husband gone, her children weeping for they knew not what, and her home shadowed and desolate. 'Women must weep,' sang Kingsley; but there is a sadder weeping than that of wives who find their husbands' corpses 'out on the shining sand.' As the Nemesis in gray rode along with Henry Twidale, Esq., by his side, he remembered the stricken home he had left, and the thought curiously connected itself with a brief sentence he had learned when a schoolboy, and the din of London streets could not prevent these words from passing again and again through his mind, 'The way of transgressors is hard, is hard.'

Mr Twidale at his trial found the evidence altogether too much for him. It came out that he had for years been a professional beggar, with numberless aliases, with an extraordinary skill in the combination of circumstances, and with a facile pen which had been his chief instrument in wheedling contributions from a benevolent and gullible public. He met with a richly deserved punishment; but when Mr Juler and Mr Barforth learned how the man's wife had lived in ignorance of his profession, they did what they could to soften for her the heavy blow, and procured for her employment and a home.

MUSING.

WHEN o'er the soul the twilight of sweet musing
Comes stealing, and the day of Thought is done,
And Action lies—the fiery circuit run—
Its restless heat in restful languor losing,
There floating pass, the outward sense abusing,
Fair dreams of hopes fulfilled and joy begun,
Refracted glories of some hidden sun,
That lure the spirit onward to its choosing:
Then comes again the sound of happy laughter,
Then comes again the sight of glistening tears,
To mock the dusty labour of the years,
Which strive to bar the Past from the Hereafter.
So lights and shadows, ever mingling, roll
In tender twilight musings o'er the soul.

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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TRUSTS AND SYNDICATES.

IN writing about 'Corners' some time ago we also referred to 'Syndicates' as combinations of individuals in certain operations connected with trade. But, since then, the word 'Syndicate' has come both into larger use and into somewhat different application on this side the Atlantic. In effect, a Syndicate may be a corporation analogous to a Joint-stock Company, either registered as such or not.

A notable example of an unregistered Syndicate is that which has created such a revolution in the copper market within the last year or two. The Copper Syndicate was of French origin, and is under French management, although some of the capital employed in it is supposed to be contributed by Englishmen. The true history of this remarkable adventure has yet to be revealed; but what is known is that the manager of a French Company in the metal trade, and largely interested in copper, became so impressed at the unprecedentedly low price to which that metal had fallen, that he conceived the idea of forming a combination of capitalists to buy up all the available stocks. His scheme met with ready acceptance in the financial quarters to which he applied, and it also received the support of some of the French banks. Thus armed, the Syndicate set to work to buy all the copper that was then offered—the price at the time being considerably under forty pounds per ton—and also the shares of the large Copper Companies which were selling at very low prices. As the Syndicate bought copper, copper rose; and as copper rose, the shares rose still more quickly, so that an astounding success followed the first operations. But they could not be confined there, as the higher price now obtainable for the metal was stimulating the production of all the mines in the world. Therefore, to obtain complete control of the market, the Syndicate had to enter into contracts with all the large producing Companies to take either all or a fixed proportion of their product for a given number of years. What these terms were it is not necessary for us to explain;

suffice it that in result the Syndicate did obtain, and still hold, complete control of the copper market of the world; and are credited with having netted fabulous profits on their operations up to this time. One source of their profits has been the speculative energy with which opponents sought to force down the price of copper by 'selling forward' at prices considerably below current rates. The Syndicate allowed these sales to go on; but as the time approached to implement them, they ran up the price suddenly ten, fifteen, or twenty pounds per ton for the time being, and compelled the unfortunate 'bears' to settle upon these differences, while they kept the price to consumers on a moderate basis.

At the time of writing, the price of copper is about seventy-eight pounds per ton—that is to say, about double what it was when the combination was founded. The consumer, therefore, suffers to this extent; but it is proper to observe that the former low price was so unremunerative that it could not have long continued, as many of the mines would have been compelled to shut down. It is contended for the Syndicate that they have only brought about in a rapid way that which would have happened in a more disastrous manner, and that, while raising copper to a level fair to producers and not unjust to consumers, they have benefited everybody all round—especially the shareholders in Copper Companies.

This Copper Syndicate is worked like a regular commercial Company, the profits being divided periodically among the participants, after laying aside large sums for reserve.

To come nearer home. The success of the Copper Syndicate impressed some people in the salt-trade with the idea that the principle might be applied with advantage to that great industry. As everybody knows, the chief centre of production of salt in this country is in Cheshire. There it is found in two forms—rock-salt and brine-wells. The common practice was for a manufacturer of salt to lease a brine-well from the proprietor of the land, paying usually a fixed rental for his works, and a royalty either upon the brine pumped

or the salt manufactured. Not a great deal of capital was needed to work the trade, and as a consequence, there were a very large number of small manufacturers in the district, as well as a goodly number of large firms with capital. The conditions of the industry have been such that competition frequently reduced prices to an unremunerative level—in fact, salt is said to have been of late years more often sold below the cost of production than above it.

Be that as it may, the trade was in a most unsatisfactory state when the idea of a Salt Trust was broached. It was adopted eagerly by the small men, and was not rejected by the large men. In fine, a Company was registered on the joint-stock basis with a capital of some three millions. To this Company each manufacturer agreed to sell his works, plant, and stock at a valuation, and to take payment thereof partly in shares and partly in cash, most of the vendors, however, becoming the managers of their own works under the Company. Extending operations to the other salt districts, the Company has now obtained a virtual monopoly of the salt production of Great Britain. Of course there are other deposits of salt which can be, and which report says are about to be, developed; and there is always the sea around us, from which we can obtain supplies, as did our fathers before us. Moreover, there are abundant deposits in Russia, Germany, Spain, &c., which can always be marketed here at a price. These are the restraining influences upon the Salt Union; nevertheless, the practical effect of the combination up to the month of November last was this: the price of common salt for home consumption had been advanced from two shillings and sixpence to nine shillings per ton, being an increase of six shillings and sixpence per ton; and the price of lump-salt for export had been advanced from eight to fifteen shillings per ton, or an increase of seven shillings per ton. As salt is an article consumed by every man, woman, and child in the country, as well as the basis from which many chemicals for manufacturing and medicinal purposes are made, it will be seen that this Salt Union is really a concern which affects the pocket of everybody.

So successful has been the Salt Union from a producer's and capitalist's point of view, that various projects are in the air for other enterprises of a similar character. There has been talk of a Coal Union, or syndicate of colliery-owners; a Flour Union, or syndicate of all the millers between the Humber and the Tweed; and even of a Match Union, to comprise all the match-makers in this country as well as their competitors in Norway and Sweden. It is no part of our business to discuss the prospects of such projects; we merely mention them as evidence of the rapidity with which the craze for this modern system of trading is spreading.

We owe it to America. A Salt Union has

been in existence there, in Michigan, for some twenty years. Its constitution is somewhat different from that of the English Union. In the American concern each manufacturer sells his salt—which must be of a fixed standard of quality and passed by inspectors—to the Union, which then resells through its agents in all parts of the country, and periodically divides the profits among its members. These members can always obtain cash advances upon their product from the Union; but they may not sell a ton to any outsider without paying a heavy fine into the joint coffer. In effect, the result is the same as here; competition is removed, monopoly established, and the prices regulated on as high a level as prudence will allow. For of course to overdo the thing by raising prices extravagantly is simply to invite competition from all parts and from other combinations of capitalists.

The Michigan Salt Association is a small 'Trust'—a word which is now preferred in some quarters to syndicate—compared to the Standard Oil Company, which practically monopolises the mineral oil (petroleum) trade of the United States. This great Oil Company is one of the marvels of commerce, and it is said to be the most powerful combination of private individuals ever effected. Its capital is practically unlimited, and its sway is absolute. Certainly, a man who 'strikes ile' nowadays has very little chance of securing his fortune unless he allies himself with the Trust. It is said to be ruthless in crushing opposition and competition, and to be not above starting a grocery store in a country village with the sole object of 'running off' a man who presumes, in defiance of warnings, to sell the kerosene of some opponent of the Company's.

On the other hand, it is claimed that by concentration of capital in the oil-trade, the Standard Company has reduced the cost of production to a point not possible under the former system: that by the immense scale on which its operations are conducted, such materials as barrels, &c., are provided far below the price at which individual producers could get them; and that, by their immense resources, the system of conveying the oil from the wells to the ports over hundreds of miles of country by 'pipe-lines' worked by a splendid method of pumping, has alone been possible. And had it not been for the enormous economy in transport which has thus been effected, American petroleum could not have stood the competition of other illuminants, and would have been 'played out' of Europe long ago. Nevertheless, the Standard Oil Company makes enormous profits, and is reputedly the richest and most paying trading corporation in the world.

There are other Trusts in America of the same general character, differing only slightly in their respective constitutions and methods of working. There is a Sugar Trust, a Cotton-seed Trust, a Glass Trust, a Milk Trust, an Oil-cloth Trust, a Sandstone Trust, a Coal-tar Trust, and a

great number of others of greater or less importance.

In fact, the development of this so-called Trust system has very properly created an uneasy feeling in the public mind of America. Mr Hugh McCulloch, one of the oldest statesmen in the Republic, recently addressed a solemn warning to his fellow-countrymen on the subject. Some of his words are worth quoting in illustration of what we have been saying: 'We claim that the United States is the freest country in the world, the only country, except Switzerland, in which the people have equal rights. Equal rights before the law are indeed possessed by everybody here; but are there not combinations of interests which prevent the full play of natural rights, which hold in check, if they do not destroy, individual enterprise? In what other country can be found such Companies as have been organised in the United States for the purpose of controlling the manufacture, the transportation, and the price of goods? Where can be found an organisation like the Standard Oil Company, which absolutely controls the market of an article for which there is an immense and constant demand, and stamps out competition; or even such Companies as have been formed to regulate the production of iron and steel and coal? In what other country in the world do manufacturers who are protected by tariffs against foreign competition, combine by Trusts and other agencies to advance or sustain prices and prevent domestic competition? We have yet to learn that there may be as little personal freedom under republican institutions as under monarchies, and that the best efforts of all good citizens should be to prevent the great Republic from being a free country in name only.'

We present this extract as reflecting one section of public opinion against these combinations. That section has become so strong as to attempt legislative measures to check the formation and limit the operation of Trusts; but it has not yet been strong enough to carry such measures.

Meanwhile, we in this country seem to be imbibing a taste for the very thing which America seems to be turning against. It is a curious position; but to enter upon the ethical aspects of Trusts would lead us into controversy hardly suited for these pages. The economic aspects, however, may fairly enough be looked at briefly. Those who are utterly opposed to the principle of these combinations maintain: That they must tend to create monopolies, and to drive small capitalists out of the businesses on which they encroach: That they endeavour to, and practically do, destroy competition, which is the 'soul of business,' and the great equaliser of prices and of profits: That they enable a comparatively few individuals to amass fortunes at the expense of the community; and that they are building up a form of power which may come to have dangerous influences upon both the social and the political fabric.

Those who defend Trusts, on the other hand, contend that the effect of them is really to cheapen commodities ultimately to the community by first cheapening production, owing to the concentration of capital and energy. It is usual in this connection to quote the Standard Oil Com-

pany, and to show that in the first ten years of the Company's operations the price of crude petroleum at the wells fell from ten and a half cents to about two cents per gallon. It is difficult to see, however, how the price of the raw material was only affected by the operations of the Trust, and not by increase of production both in America and elsewhere. The argument, indeed, hardly holds here, although it may be admitted that, in bringing the goods to market, the economies effected by the capital and influence of the Trust have been beneficial. On the other hand, however, it is possible that these economies might have been effected by the energy and ingenuity of individuals assisted by the competition of the great carrying Companies.

Further, the defenders of Trusts deny that the concentration of capital tends to destroy competition, but affirm that it only transfers the competition from small manufacturers to great associated corporations. As the handloom weavers were driven out by the factory, so the small manufacturers with limited means will be driven out by the Trusts. The competition of the future, in short, is to be between Trusts and Trusts, instead of between individual and individual, or Company and Company. This is what is called 'raising the level of competition.'

In effect, it is claimed that the Trust system is merely an extensive and legitimate application of the Joint-stock Limited Liability system. If it be economically right to enable a number of individuals to subscribe limited amounts in order to form a capital with which to conduct a special business under nominees, it is urged that it is equally right to unite a number of such enterprises under one head for the common benefit. Unfortunately, we are not all impressed with the virtues of the limited liability system as at present conducted, and it is rather 'a large order' to ask that the principle should be allowed to be applied without limitation. If there is to be no limit at all to its application, then it is possible to conceive of one vast incorporated Company swallowing up all the industrial concerns in the kingdom.

The driving-out of the small capitalists, moreover, is the most serious objection to the principle of these Trusts. It may be that these small capitalists would be better off, financially, as servants than as masters; but the bread of independence is sweet, and the greatness of England has been built up by individual effort and skill. Can we be content to see the individual wither while Trusts grow more and more, even if we were certain—which we are far from being—that we shall, as consumers, get our commodities cheaper and better in the future than in the past?

No doubt, 'Union is strength' in the employment of capital as in all other human operations. But there are higher things than mere money considerations to move the impulses of a thoughtful people. The essence of monopoly is antagonistic to an Englishman's love of individual liberty; the destruction of individual competition is opposed to his belief in 'a fair field and no favour.' Till within fifty years ago, 'forestalling' and 'regrating' were penal offences. They are not so now, and we do not stop here to inquire into the legal aspects of Trusts and Syndicates. But the public feeling which condemned forestalling and regrating still

exists; and on the whole it may be assumed, that whether economically sound or unsound, ethically just or unjust, the 'Trust' system will not find very congenial soil in this country.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE night was dark, cold, and clouded, when Snelling climbed into his trap, and Isaiah following, took his place alongside. The lamps on either side threw a broad light upon the roadway, and the horse dashed off confidently at the retreating wall of darkness which lay before him.

'It's a pleasant sight, gaffer,' said Isaiah, 'to see relatives living together in unity and doing kindnesses one to another. Ain't it?'

The big man turned his head on his shoulders and tried to study Isaiah's countenance; but the night was too dark for him to see more than a pale blur. 'What do you mean by that?' he asked.

'It is a pleasant sight, ain't it?' Isaiah answered. 'I suppose there's hardly a warmer man to be found anywhere for ten miles around than Mr Vale.'

'And what do you mean by *that*?' demanded Snelling.

'You're fifty?' said Isaiah. 'Then he's sixty-five.—Ah! it's a pleasant sight relatives living together in unity and being friendly towards one another. You're a very hale and hearty man, gaffer; and it's amongst the likelier that you'll make old bones. It's struck me lately that Mr Vale looks frailish.'

'It has, has it?' demanded the Colossus gruffly.

'Yes, gaffer, it has,' replied Isaiah.

'Then I'd advise you,' said Snelling, with a deliberately vicious cut at the horse, 'to keep your tongue betwixt your teeth, mind your own business, and think about them things that concern you.—Do you hear?'

'Nicely, thank you, master,' Isaiah answered.

'Then, obey,' said Snelling with weighty authority; and for a time they rode in silence. When they had travelled two or three hundred yards, Snelling gathered the reins in his left hand, as a preparative measure, and then slashed the horse savagely with his whip.

'Hit him again,' said Isaiah; 'he won't tell anybody.'

Snelling, who had flogged the horse into a pace so wild as to be dangerous, pulled him to a moderate speed.

'Riled at me,' pursued Isaiah, 'for seeing through him, like a pane of glass. That's what he flogs the hoss for.'

'You can take a month's warning, Isaiah,' said Snelling.

'Right you are, gaffer,' replied Isaiah.—'So I can. But you might say that once too often. I might do it one o' these days.'

'Do it now,' cried his employer.

'I should sleep on that, if I was you,' the man answered, with an exasperating tranquillity. 'Come now. Do you mean it? A month from this here 21st October? Say the word.'

'Can't you keep that foolish tongue from wagging?' Snelling asked him sullenly.

'Why, you ought to know that, gaffer, as well

as most men,' said Isaiah. 'You ought to know, if anybody does. You and your month's warning! Offer me that again, and I'll take it.'

'You're a born aggravater,' Snelling declared; 'that's what you are—an aggravater born and bred.'

'A month from this here 21st October,' Isaiah reiterated. 'Is that the bargain? Am I to take it?'

'Take it or leave it,' Snelling growled.

'No, no, gaffer,' said Isaiah. 'It wasn't me as put it there. Take it or leave it yourself.'

'Very well, then,' his master answered. 'You've got a pretty good berth, haven't you?'

'Did I ever say anything again it?' asked Isaiah. 'But I'll take that month next time it's offered to me, as sure as I'm alive.'

Affairs being thus adjusted, they rode in silence for the remainder of the journey. As they reached the gas-lit high street of Castle-Barfield, Snelling turned upon Isaiah and sulkily scanned his face. The man looked before him as if he were unconscious of the scrutiny; and the master flogged the horse anew, restraining him the while, as if he found some relief for his own feelings in that contradictory proceeding. In front of his own house he pulled up with a jerk and ordered Isaiah to get down.

'You didn't think I was going to sit here all night, did you, gaffer?' the irritator asked as he descended with a purposed and laborious slowness.

Snelling returned no answer, but dismounting in turn, strode to the shop-door, and thrusting it open, started a jangling bell. Half-way into the shop he turned, as if he had meant to say something, but restraining himself, he disappeared, slamming the door behind him so violently that the bell struck the woodwork and cracked, as the sudden harshness of its tone declared. Isaiah chuckled without the disturbance of a single feature of his face, and led the horse in at a gateway beside the shop. Then, having closed and barred the gates, he left the horse in the dark whilst he went to the stables for a lantern, and returning, released the poor brute from the shafts, led him to the stable, and there groomed him.

A single gas jet burned dimly above the counter, and by its light Snelling walked into the sitting-room, which lay immediately behind the shop, and commanded a view of it through a glazed door. There a small but cheerful fire was burning, and supper was laid out upon a snow-white cloth upon the table. The big man sat down to unlace his boots by the firelight; and a woman entering with a taper in one hand and a jug in the other, set the jug upon the table and lit the gas. She was a pale-faced, timid-looking creature of about fifty years of age, dressed with scrupulous neatness in a black stuff gown and a white apron. Her gray hair, which had not a sign of a curl, was brushed close to her forehead and gathered in a neat knot at the back of her head; and a white kerchief was pinned about her shoulders by a silver brooch no larger than a sixpenny piece. She lingered for a minute, touching the things about the table, and once or twice glancing at Snelling, as if she expected him to address her, but observing that he kept his eyes studiously turned away from her, she made a movement towards the door.

'Wait there,' said the master of the house suddenly. The woman paused. 'You can tell your husband, Mrs Winter,' Snelling began in a bullying and angry voice; but when he had got so far, he stopped short and threw his boots towards her. 'Take them away,' he said, thrusting his feet into his slippers.—'Never mind Isaiah to-night. I'll have it out with him in the morning.'

The woman stooped to pick up the boots, and left the room submissively. Snelling, with a wrathful face, thrust a chair up to the table and took his seat there. He attacked the cold meat with a lively appetite, and seasoned it with angry grumblings; but growing more composed by-and-by, lit his after-supper pipe, drew his armchair to the fire and rang for a glass of brandy-and-water. Under the soothing influences of this beverage and the pipe and the fire, he grew more and more composed. At length he felt himself in a mood for relaxation, and so, walking into the shop, he unlocked a safe there, and taking from it a bulky ledger, applied himself to the study of its pages with every sign of satisfaction. After an hour's enjoyment he put back the book, made a pilgrimage round the house, to see that everything was safely locked and barred, and went to bed.

He made no renewal of the night's misunderstanding (or understanding) with Isaiah when he arose in the morning, but contented himself with an added weight and gravity in his instructions for the day.

'And now,' he said in conclusion, 'you can harness the horse. I'm going to drive over to Mr Vale's, according to arrangement.'

Isaiah's face was absolutely expressionless; and Snelling's mastiff glance, which seemed to challenge a renewal of hostilities as it dwelt upon him, discovered no sign upon which to fasten.

Castle-Barfield and holiday would have made a sort of winter paradise to John, and nothing more beneficent than the change and stimulus it might have brought him could very easily be fancied. It was a quiet sleepy place enough in those days, with its mile and a half of straggling high street, where the shops and the private houses shouldered each other all along except where they were broken by the fields. But to a boy bred upon a farm it was full of all those strange and delightful things which towns offer to the rustic intelligence. Everything is comparative. A Cockney thinks Birmingham a little place; Birmingham thought Castle-Barfield a hamlet; and to Castle-Barfield, Beacon-Hargate was an unpeopled desert. But when Beacon-Hargate folk went to Barfield, they talked about going into the town, as if there were no other in the kingdom. It had one bank in the middle of the long sleepy street, a solemn ancient edifice, which John had been in the habit of passing daily on his way to school and home again. When he read of the Bank of England and the bullion in its cellars, he thought of the bank at Barfield, and the one was no richer or more magnificent than the other, to his fancy. Then at the other end of the sleepy street was the police station, where the tramps called of an evening for their relief tickets, and the loafing, brown-faced, barefooted ragamuffins and their mournful female companions were to be seen hanging about for an hour or so on fine evenings, waiting the hour of issue. Thither on

Saturdays the small malefactors of the district were brought up for trial at Petty Sessions; and there was always a noisy crowd of the idlers and good-for-nothings of the neighbourhood, picturesque in the mass, and interesting and profitable to a boy of an inquiring and reflective mind. On Saturday evenings there was a market, through which it was a privilege to wander, which made sixpence look amazing small in view of all the tempting things for show and sale, though sixpence was a mine of wealth at other times and places.

John looked forward to a life amidst these surroundings with a pleased interest and expectation. The shops; the bustle in the streets; the coach, which ran twice a day in lingering, obstinate opposition to the railway; the railway itself, with its monster locomotives rolling past with trucks clanking with the iron produce of the district of fire and smoke so near at hand, and the express thundering past the station at a pace which made the air whirl and the solid stone platform quiver beneath the feet—all these sights were delightful in anticipation. Then Uncle Snelling's shop itself, with its bins and bags and drawers of seeds of every kind, and its dusty and subdued aroma: it would be pleasant to be on terms of intimacy with that abode of wonder, which, though no more than a corn-chandler and seed-merchant's shop to the adult intelligence, was a kind of fairyland to a boy. Then, again, there was an Assembly Room, to which John had once been taken on an afternoon, when all the windows were artificially darkened, to see a panorama of the Holy Land. It stood over against the bank, and made that part of the street doubly rich in association.

When Uncle Snelling drove over in his trap to carry John away, the boy was on the tiptoe of delighted expectation, and the lethargy and self-distrust which his mishap had left him disappeared for the moment. Uncle Snelling pulling up at the gate, solemnly barked for James the hostler; and James appearing from the stables, held the horse whilst the corn-chandler marched up the paved path into the farmhouse kitchen.

'It's understood between us, John,' he said, addressing the farmer, 'that the golden hours is not to be altogether wasted?'

'Just so,' Vale answered. 'He'll try the school of mornings, and see how he gets on with it. But he mustn't be drove too hard at first. And let him have a day or two's rest, to get used to the place before he starts. Let him begin on Monday.'

'So be it,' said Mr Snelling—'so be it, John. You can leave him safe with me. He'll be well looked after, and well took care of.'

'That I have no manner of a doubt of,' the farmer answered.—'Ready, lad? Give your old dad a kiss, then, and off you go.'

John, comfortably greatcoated, gloved, and muffled against the weather, threw his arms about his father's neck and kissed him, and then walked out to see the box which contained his belongings stowed away in the back of the dogcart. He had never slept from under the paternal roof, and the parting was full of romance and wonder. He mounted the dogcart, and sat in readiness a full five minutes before Uncle Snelling, who was engaged with a mug of home-brewed ale, emerged from the house. When Uncle Snelling came, he

put the springs of the cart to a good test, climbing ponderously in, and pulling the vehicle down on one side until it seemed as if he must overturn it.

'Good-bye, Robert; good-bye, John,' cried the farmer from the doorway.

Snelling's bass and young John's treble sounded together; the hostler slipped away from the horse's head, Snelling drew the whiplash lightly along the sorrel's flank, and away the travellers bowled on a firm smooth road. Every inch of the way was familiar to young John, and yet everything had a new look upon it, and the journey, though it was one of hundreds, felt memorable and like a surprise. Castle-Barfield high street had never looked before as it looked then, and never more had quite the same aspect to him. He had an affection for the loungers at the street corners, and felt so expansive beneath his small waistcoat that he could willingly have called out to the passers-by that he was going to live at Uncle Snelling's.

And indeed for the earlier days, life at Uncle Snelling's was an almost unmixed joy. Isaiah had a good deal of driving about to do in a tall trap; and John, to his great contentment, was allowed to go with him, and to hold the reins whilst Isaiah descended for the transaction of business. When he got back from these excursions in time, he went to the gates of the school playground and waited for young Gregg, and tramped a mile or so on the way home with him; and after a week's leisure he himself was sent to school again to work half-times there—a favoured pupil, who had light tasks set him, and was free both of scolding and the stumpy bamboo cane which Mr Macfarlane carried, and was a trifle over-fond of using. Boys who had known other schools were gloomy about this bamboo, for it had properties the commoner growths of cane did not possess. Pins and hairs, though never so carefully introduced amongst the dry splittings at its end, failed to shiver it when it came into contact with the palm. Resin rubbed upon the skin was no protection against its sting. There was a general murmur and rebellion at it, as being an intrusion on the established rights of boys; and the commoner scholastic weapon would have been less detested if it had been even more frequently employed, though that, by the way, would not have been easy. Nowadays, when a schoolmaster cannot administer deserved chastisement to an incorrigible without a fear lest the boy's father shall 'take the law of him'—and when, apart from that consideration, the law which governs children has grown less harsh—the master's sceptre and wand of office is held in no such terror as it used to be. But Macfarlane was one of those

Who always, always, spoiled the rod,
And never, never, spared the child,

if he could help it; and John, whose shaken and addled brains were unequal to any great weight of study, had reason to be thankful for the fatherly injunction which kept him off the punishment roll that quarter. There is scarcely anything which will continue to be wonderful if you look long at it, and yet it continues to be something of a wonder that a grown man should take a pleasure in beating children. Macfarlane did, though he always declared he didn't, and his youthful victims had the profoundest distrust in the phrase in

which he announced the mercifulness of his own heart.

'Now, boy,' would Mr Macfarlane say, taking a right-handed grip of the boy and a left-handed grip of the bamboo, 'this hurts me as much as it does you. But your conduct is of such a nature, that'—

Macfarlane's boys could never be got to credit that formula, though, Sundays excepted, they heard it every day of their lives. These floggings had a baleful effect upon John, who was naturally sensitive to other people's pains. They stunned him and made him dizzy, so that sometimes, for an hour after, he would sit with lack-lustre eyes staring upon his task, and seeing nothing and understanding nothing, except that there was a sick and pitiful muddle in his head which would not let him think.

Uncle Snelling during this time was pompous, and was disposed to take a boy at a disadvantage by the production of sudden posers in way of grammar, history, arithmetic, and so forth; but on the whole he was endurable. Isaiah was always friendly, and his wife cockered young John famously. So, on the whole, things went very fairly with him until the Christmas holidays drew near; and then, one morning, bringing all the greater terror and dismay because it was so utterly unlooked for, the trouble of his life fell upon him, and Uncle Snelling found himself face to face with a horrible temptation.

IN THE CITY OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

A WESTERN SKETCH.

THOUSANDS and thousands of good people still look upon California as a place where the inhabitants are lifted out of the rut of daily toil and transferred to a serener atmosphere, where, somehow, without being compelled to toil or spin, they are enabled to dress themselves like lilies of the field, and have manna and quails and their daily bread without the sweat of their brows. As humanity has a soft spot in its mercurial head, and believes strange stories and acts upon unaccountable impulses, let me say at once that an honourable living cannot be gained in California without work and care. Gold-mining, which for twenty years was the leading occupation of California, has now fallen to a subordinate position. A few years since, the twenty-five cent. piece, or 'quarter'—the equivalent of our shilling—was the smallest coin in general circulation in San Francisco. A man would give one or two of these to his shoeblack: the world went very well then. Now, all that is changed, and the five-cent. piece, or 'nickel,' does duty for the 'quarter.'

I arrived at the *Palace Hotel*, San Francisco, about mid-day. This hotel is, I believe, the largest in the world. It rises seven tall stories from the ground, and has, it is said, housed as many as two thousand five hundred guests. Certainly, all the passengers of an overland train or of a steamer may be stowed away with lightning-like rapidity, and every traveller as well looked after as though his own servant were receiving him in his own house. He is relieved of packages and wraps, and whirled up in an elevator to the rooms to which he is consigned. The entrance is under a graceful archway, and the

spacious central court is completely roofed over with glass.

For the first few days I was thrown upon my own resources: my companions had remained at Denver. But the Americans are a hospitable people, and the Californians are the most hospitable of Americans. The good-fellowship of Western life makes itself felt in the genial bustle of the streets. Though a stranger in the land, I felt no sense of forlorn loneliness such as I have often experienced. As I stepped into the roadway, the distant strains of *Tramp, tramp, the Boys are Marching*, played by a military band, broke upon the ear. Ladies in dresses of very light material and very bright colours, were promenading, in pairs and singly, side by side with others in sealskin. What could it all mean? Surely, thought I, some of them must have a touch of 'that same—you understand me—a speck of the motley,' as Charles Lamb puts it; and it couldn't be those who were lightly clad, because the thoroughfare was baking and blistering in the sun, and I should certainly have preferred discarding my blue serge jacket to donning an overcoat. The houses, in many cases built of wood, were not so tall, so red, or so plastered with advertisements as those of New York. There was a perpetual din of traffic and press of private equipages. The streets were thronged, the dresses were showy, the colours varied: all the indications of wealth and progress were there. One could no more be dull here than in the Strand. What myriads of restless feet had trodden these streets! What fortunes had been made! What hopes had been shattered! What awful deeds had been done amid the 'delusions and deliriums' of the gold-fever!

But now the people began to march in time, for the Second Artillery Band, still playing *Tramp, tramp*, drew slowly up in a street car. For a time the tread of feet was heard accompanying the music, then the car left us behind, the music ceased, and the passengers became less gay. In about an hour it became positively cold. The nights are always cold; and the changes of temperature, I learned, are so sudden and so great, that San Franciscans need the same heavy clothing in midsummer and in winter, and rarely feel oppressed by an overcoat. I now saw, what I have often had occasion to remark, that there is a reason for a good many things which at first sight appear absurd, and that it is well the traveller when in Rome should do as Rome does. I remembered that what once seemed to me to be the foolishness of our ancestors, had turned out to be their wisdom. I used to think there was something comic in the idea of prohibiting a man, so to speak, from marrying his grandmother, that mere age would be a sufficient disqualification, until one day a friend in the British Museum showed me the following paragraph in the *London Chronicle* for September 1772: 'Dublin.—A few days ago was married at Sligo, William Mooney, tobacco-spinner, aged 18, to Widow Vincent, aged 105.'

You can't describe San Francisco with a pen and movable types, any more than you can represent the heavens in a sketch-book. Its houses are the most heterogeneous collection in the world. Nothing can be more beautiful than the artistic homes of the Yankee millionaires, and

there are many of them. These are built of wood, and are in harmony with their surroundings. The palaces erected by the Vanderbilts and Stewarts on the Fifth Avenue in New York are so built as to leave no space for trees, shrubs, and flowers; whereas the magnificent residences which adorn California, Sutter, and other streets are surrounded by ample grounds, tastefully adorned with rare and beautiful trees, plants, and flowers. The business houses, which present a good appearance, are also built mainly of wood, though now and then you see a structure of brick and iron. Deep foundations are rendered impracticable by reason of the earthquakes, which, if not severe, are by no means unfrequent. Of course some of the by-streets of this metropolis of the Pacific coast, a city covering some twenty-five thousand acres, are as dirty as by-streets in London; that goes without saying. But for filth and wretchedness you must go to Chinatown by night. It would be a libel on Petticoat Lane and Seven Dials to compare them with a certain part of Chinatown. Chinatown is lawless, and so dangerous, that it would be about as safe to explore it without a guide as to stroke the royal Bengal tiger or the Nubian lion at feeding-time.

There are two private detectives attached to the *Palace Hotel*—mainly for the purpose of securing guests against the 'snappers-up of unconsidered trifles' in the shape of diamonds, dollars, brooches, &c.—and Mr Fred Dennis, the senior, generously offering to become my conductor, I 'did' Chinatown on the night of my arrival.

I am not an antiquary. I never could go into hysterics over a cracked teacup—my own or anybody else's. There are, of course, beautiful curiosity-shops in Chinatown, shops in which the attendants are dressed out almost as finely as the Celestials one meets in the neighbourhood of Bedford Square. But these did not detain me long. We passed through the market-streets, smoking in self-defence. Several women were in the streets; but my guide said that the ladies of quality never promenaded, for the best of all reasons—they could not walk. The calculating machines with which the Celestials do their reckoning and save their stationery are strange to white men, and their books are not easily decipherable. The streets were full of busy people, bargaining in high tones. We passed what I was told was 'once upon a time' a 'murder-house'; then we dropped into an opium den. Here half-a-dozen men sat on a platform, surrounded with the paraphernalia of opium-smoking. They prepared a pasty substance—an operation of some two or three minutes—put a bit about the size of a pea into their pipes, lit it, smoked it in two or three whiffs, repeated this operation until they began to get drowsy, and then spreading themselves on cushions, calmly waited for unconsciousness and 'sun-bright dreams.' The 'murder-house' we had just passed was in a narrow alley; and while we are watching the opium-smokers, my guide explained the *modus operandi* of its whilom tenant, which may be gathered from the following little Chinese legend, which purports to be an accurate translation of about two yards and three-quarters of Chinese manuscript:

'Chi Ching fell in love with Petti Sing. But Chi Ching was poor, and Petti Sing's father

insisted on her marrying rich Ah Tung, who was also a suitor for her hand. But Petti Sing had given her love to Chi Ching, and neither her father's threats nor Ah Tung's entreaties could make her untrue to her lover. In this state of affairs, old Petti Sing had recourse to Hong Di, the keeper of a murder-house. Hong Di lived in an alley, so narrow that not more than two people could walk abreast. There was no door in his house which opened upon the street, but only a window about three feet from the ground. This window was covered with a blind, behind which Hong Di waited for his victims. Down this alley at night came Chi Ching with old Petti Sing, the former on the side of Hong Di's house. When opposite Hong Di's window, Chi Ching was stabbed to the heart with a crease, a thin wavy dagger, sharp as a razor. His body was then pushed and dragged through the window, and Hong Di found means to dispose of it, this being part of his compact. Had the body been left in the street, Hong Di would have had little to fear on the score of detection: the presumption would have been that Chi Ching had been killed in a row or assassinated by an enemy. Petti Sing, by some sense of which we have no physiological explanation, felt that her lover was dead, and wept so much that her beauty became impaired to such an extent that she was no longer an object of desire to Ah Tung, and old Petti Sing in disappointment destroyed his life. Hong Di's villainy was eventually discovered, and he was put to death with the crease with which he had deprived so many persons of life.

There are two Chinese theatres: the better one is in Jackson Street. Of the beauty of their plots I can say nothing: they are not to be understood without an interpreter. But besides a discordant clangour of gongs, a squeaking of stringed instruments resembling the creaking of doors, a booming and rattling of drums, a noise compared with which one of Wagner's operas performed by the inmates of Colney Hatch would have been soothing—besides all this, we had two murders, a suicide, and other dramatic bloodshed. What more could we expect for half a dollar?

Of the Chinese Buddhistic temples, of which there are four or five, I shall say nothing. Their restaurants, the best of them, struck me as being particularly clean. But there is something saponaceous about all Chinese cooks, and something greasy about their cooking which is to me distasteful. The meals were costly enough, and could be partaken of in true Chinese style. I have, however, a constitutional aversion to tea; and the bird's-nest soup, sea-slugs, bamboo sprouts, and other Celestial delicacies, tempted me not. Doubtless, they were good enough in their way; but, to use the favourite expression of a very great friend of mine, different people have different ideas.

San Francisco is singularly bare of trees; yet to no city could they be a greater acquisition. The people like sunshine; and to enjoy it they are willing to put up with dust. Sand-storms are the curse of the city.

When the heavens hang down to the languorous earth, and a palpitant white heat shimmers on the streets, it is pleasant to drive out to the Cliff House and watch the seals and sea-horses basking

on the sun-kissed rocks, and barking and rolling in the waves. The Seal Rocks are distant but a stone's throw from the Cliff House, whose foundations are licked by the 'furrow-faced sea.' Countless seals disport themselves in plain view from the Cliff House balcony; and no one ever thinks of discharging a rifle at them, not because—as Mr Froude seems to think—the Americans are less cruel than the English, less ardent in their sport, and have no love of killing for its own sake, but because there is a prodigiously heavy penalty for so doing. Beyond a few measly specimens in menageries and a fine herd in Yellowstone Park, where is the noble buffalo? In his wild state he is already as rare as what we call a white elephant, and in a few years he will be as much a thing of the past as the great auk. The coyote, or prairie-wolf, survives because he seems to have learned the art of living on nothing, and to have discovered the secret of continual motion; but the antelope-hunter has often to content himself with a sight of 'tracks.'

Unlike the old Indians of the North American continent, the negro has lived to improve his lot. From his face the am-I-not-a-man-and-a-brother look has disappeared. Freedom is 'writ large' upon his forehead; and if his employer is dissatisfied with his services, he leaves that benighted man, and seeks to confer a blessing on one more worthy. He occupies many positions of trust, and has so well obeyed the command to go forth and multiply, that he must of necessity ere long become a real power in the land. At present, the traveller makes his acquaintance in evening dress—white waistcoat, white choker—discharging the duties of waiter in many Western hotels, and no James or Robert in Piccadilly or St James's was ever buoyed up and sustained by a higher sense of the importance of the duties which he is called upon to perform, or a surer conviction that he will gain your approbation—and a tip.

I had been in San Francisco for about ten days, when an American speculator, whose acquaintance I had made in London, carried me off to his home in Oakland. Oakland is on the inner or opposite side of the Bay, is the principal town of Alameda County, and has forty thousand inhabitants. It is, so to speak, the fashionable suburb of San Francisco. Ferry-boats cross the Bay each way at intervals of half-an-hour. These ferry-boats are floating palaces. The saloons are gorgeous, with carpets downy as Turkish, costly mirrors, luxurious spring cushions, and panels resplendent with green and gold. From their decks by night the lights of San Francisco show like the flickering remnants of a monster pyrotechnic display. Oakland is far more beautiful than San Francisco. It is a city of bay-windows, gardens, and trees. Nature has been prodigal of indigenous evergreen oaks. Art has added palms, roses, and all the most beautiful favourites of the garden. Its drives, which are wide and smooth, are, thanks to a plentiful water-supply, innocent of dust; and its lawns are bright with grass almost as delicate and healthy as the grass of England. The gardens—and there is a garden to almost every house—are, many of them, large and luxuriant, all neatly kept. There is an aristocratic side to the principal street. The fashionable promenade rejoices in the name of

the 'four-bit' side, the opposite side of the way being known as the 'two-bit' side. 'Bit' is the American term for a ten-cent piece. Strange terms these for a democratic country, where one man is supposed to be as good as another—and a great deal better, as the Irishman said.

On the whole, I agree with Mr Froude, that the taste in California is greatly superior to what you see in New York. This is particularly noticeable in the interior of the Californian houses, where there is not the senseless agglomeration of costly things and over-supply of gold and showy colours which strike one in the East. Wealth cannot purchase an artistic taste. That faculty of the mind which discerns harmony with pleasure, and its opposite with dislike, though often intuitive, may be acquired by education and surroundings. A quantity of gold, silver, silk, china, and yards of painted canvas in splendid frames, are undoubted proofs of wealth; but great care must be taken in their arrangement, or the effect will be aesthetically unsatisfactory. The general taste of Americans is for display. To banish this from among them, the tasteful elegance of the French interior, the simplicity of the Italian, and the solid comfort of the English, might be studied with advantage, and imitated without being copied.

JEREMY YORK.

v.

THE world moved very slowly in those days, and Deal's solitary constable, Timothy Budd, had not fairly started for the house of the widow Bax on a road that would have brought him in time to the ancient and beautiful minster of Minster, until the clock in Deal church showed the hour to be a quarter before nine. He was mounted on a clumsy village cart, like to what Hogarth has more than once drawn, armed with the warrant, a full description of the tall young man, to the obtaining of whose name from the brig *Jane*, still lying in the Downs, the magistrate objected on the grounds of delay, and animated with full conviction that he would find the malefactor at his sweetheart's house.

The old village cart was drawn by a lame horse, that was occasionally to be impelled into a brief staggering trot by the one-eyed driver who sat by Constable Budd's side, and who on occasions acted as assistant or 'watch' to that worthy. A crowd followed the cart out of Deal, for the excitement was very great indeed; and many would have been glad to have accompanied the constable the whole distance; but this he would not suffer, sternly ordering them to turn about when they had proceeded half a mile, 'lest,' as he bawled out, 'the criminal should catch scent of their coming and fly.'

It was a drive of five or six miles. Constable Budd stolidly puffed at his pipe, with now and again a glance at his heavy stick, and an occasional dive into his coat-pocket, where jingled a massive pair of gyves or handcuffs, for such ease of mind, maybe, as the chill of the iron

could impart to him. Seawards, where the blue of the ocean showed steeping to the golden line of the Goodwin Sands, hung the huge white cloud of the line-of-battle ship, scarce stemming the slack westerly tide, though every cloth was abroad with studding-sails far overhanging her black sides and grinning batteries. Little was said by the two men as they jogged along between the hedgerows and past the sand-downs on that rosy and sparkling September morning, saving that when they were nearing Sandwich, Budd's mate turned and said to him: 'Timothy, it's the long chap, as he's described, as slept with the bo'sun, that you're to take, ain't it?'

'Oy,' said the other with a slap at his breast, where lay the warrant.

'But who's to know,' said the driver, 'that it wasn't the bo'sun as killed the long chap?'

'If you'd heered what was said, you wouldn't ask such a question,' answered Budd. 'I knew Mr Worksop. He wor a proper gentleman. Mr Worksop won't a man to shed the blood of a flea.—Whoy, look here—the long chap comes ashore wanting money, and he goes to bed with a man with noigh hand forty guineas in gold. It speaks for itself, Willum; it speaks for itself. —Now, then, probe this old clothes-horse, will 'ee? We shall be all noight at this pace.'

They rumbled through the streets of Sandwich, over the quaint old structure that bridged the little river of Stour; then to the left, into the flat plains—dashed here and there with spaces of trees—that stretched pretty nearly level all the way to Canterbury; and as the great globular watch in Constable Budd's breeches' pocket pointed to the hour of ten, the cart came to a halt opposite one of a group of cottages—the prettiest of them all, a little paradise of creepers and green bushes and small quickset hedge, shadowed behind with trees, with the dark glass of the windows sparkling in tiny suns through the vegetation, and the air round about sweet with a pleasant farmyard smell, and melodious with the voices of birds, and the bleating and lowing of cattle in the distance.

Budd and his man got out of the cart, threw the reins over a post, and walked to the house-door. It stood open. With a mere apologetic blow upon it with his fist, the constable marched in, and swiftly peeping into a room on the left-hand side, and noting that it was vacant, he turned the handle of a door on the right of the passage and stood in the threshold, filling the frame with his gaunt, knock-kneed figure and huge skirts.

A little table was laid for breakfast; the room was savoury with the smell of eggs and bacon and coffee. Half risen from his chair was the figure of York, a table-knife in his hand, a frown of amazement and indignation upon his brow; confronting him was a comely old lady in mourning, half risen too, and staring with terrified eyes and pale cheeks at the constable and the one-eyed face that showed over his shoulder. Close to York was his sweetheart, Jenny Bax, an auburn-haired little woman of eighteen, with soft dark eyes and girlish figure and breast of snow scarcely concealed by the kerchief that covered her shoulders.

'It's the Deal constable!' cried the comely old lady.

'What do you want?' exclaimed York, slowly rearing himself to his full stature.

'You!' thundered Budd.—'Put that knife down.'

York did so with an expression of amazement. The constable produced his warrant.

'I'm here,' he cried, 'to arrest you for the wilful murder, either last night or in the small-hours this morning, of Gabriel Worksop, mariner, who shared his bed with 'ee and who's missing.'

He thrust his hands into his pocket with a look behind him, and in a breath almost, so quickly was it done, he and his assistant had thrown themselves upon York and handcuffed him. Ten minutes later, York, pinioned in the cart, between Budd and the driver, was being leisurely conveyed to Sandwich jail, whilst the widow Bax hung weeping bitterly over the form of her daughter Jenny, who lay motionless and marble-white, as though dead, upon the floor.

VI.

When York was searched, they found in his coat pocket a large clasp-knife with a ring through the end of it, capped (where the ring was) by a mounting of copper such as formerly might protect the butt-end of a pistol, upon which the words 'Gabriel Worksop' were rudely scored. The knife looked to have been newly cleaned. There was no stain of blood or anything approaching such a mark visible upon it. In the pocket where this knife was they found a Spanish gold piece minted in the year 1690, with a hole through it, as though the coin was used as a charm or an ornament. His bundle contained merely a few trifles of wearing apparel. They also found upon him four shillings in English money and other articles of no moment as evidence. But when they came to strip him, they found the left side of his shirt heavily stained with blood.

All that he said was, he was innocent of the crime charged against him, but refused to declare more.

The first hearing was before the mayor of Sandwich and a bench of magistrates. The room was crowded; never in the memory of the most ancient inhabitant had anything of the kind excited so much interest, not indeed in the district, but throughout the south-eastern portion of the county. It was universally agreed that Mr Worksop had been murdered, and by whom, if not by Jeremy York? But, then, what had become of the body? The marks of blood proving that it had been dragged to the timber extension were conclusive enough; yet it was almost inevitable that a corpse thrown into shallow water close inshore should be set upon some part of the beach by the action of the tide, unless weighted by a heavy sinker, in which case there would be a chance for the grapnel. But day after day, a broad tract stretching from Deal Castle to Sandown Castle had been swept without result. Would completer evidence be forthcoming? Would York confess, or make some admission that might help to solve the mystery?

The landlady of the *Lonely Star*, along with other witnesses, proved that the knife and the gold coin had belonged to Mr Worksop. The landlady stated that she had frequently handled the coin, and that on the day preceding his dis-

appearance or death, she had asked him to sell it to her; but he replied that it had been given to him by a sweetheart twenty years before, and that he would not part with it for a ton of gold. She and other witnesses also testified to Mr Worksop having been in possession of some thirty or forty guineas, which in his cups he had a trick of lugging out by the handful, that the company might know a jolly sailor need never be a pauper. The two boatmen that had rowed Jeremy York ashore gave evidence that he confessed he was only worth half a guinea, that there was a quarrel over the fare, and that they had to be satisfied with four shillings.

York's statement, on the other hand, was as follows: He said that on the night in question he fell asleep, after having lain with the boatswain for about an hour. He was then awakened by the oppression of the atmosphere, which made him fear that he would suffocate; and being parched with thirst, besides desperately fevered by the atmosphere, he resolved to seek for the inn's back-yard, where he might hope to find a pump, and where he would be sure of the relief of fresh air. As he could not lift the latch of the door, he searched Mr Worksop's clothes, not choosing to disturb the man, who had shown himself querulous and grumbling, as though in pain, and found a knife, with which he succeeded in opening the door. It was a little past two o'clock when he returned to his bedroom; a faint light penetrated the window from the oil lamp outside, which enabled him to see that the bed was empty. He also took notice that Mr Worksop's wearing apparel, that had lain upon a chair, was gone. He was somewhat surprised, but concluded that Mr Worksop had been awakened, as he himself had, by the heat, had dressed and walked forth into the night, and that he would return presently. He got into bed again, but lay sleepless, until, hearing some distant clock strike four, he rose, clothed himself, took his bundle, and left the house, carrying away the boatswain's knife, which he would have left behind, had he remembered that it was in his pocket. He was unable to account for his possession of the Spanish piece of gold, which the witnesses swore had belonged to Mr Worksop; nor could he explain how it was that there were blood-stains upon his shirt, in the bed, on the floor, not to mention the marks which terminated at the waterside.

Having heard the evidence, the magistrate committed him to take his trial for wilful murder at the forthcoming assizes to be held at Sandwich.

There was probably but one person living at that time who believed in Jeremy York's innocence, and this was his sweetheart, Jenny Bax. The widow Bax, after much mental swaying to and fro, arrived at the conclusion that the youth was guilty. How could it be otherwise? she reasoned, as did all others who discussed the matter. The mysterious disappearance of Mr Worksop—the knife and coin in York's pocket—the bloodstains, the incriminating marks discovered on him—if these things did not point to his being the assassin of the unfortunate boatswain, what, in the name of truth, could they signify? But what had he done with the guineas, to obtain which, of course, he had committed the dreadful deed? Well, that was a thing not to be conjectured. It was strange, no doubt, that the

money should not have been found upon him when he was searched; for one might well think that if he had been artful enough to conceal his booty somewhere on the road to the widow's cottage, he would have taken care to hide such damning testimonials to his guilt as the knife and the Spanish coin. But it is always through some oversight on the part of the evil-doer that he is brought to book. However it might be as regards the concealment of the guineas and the retention of the knife and coin, it was beyond all dispute manifest that Mr Worksop lay somewhere secreted, a murdered man, and that York was his assassin.

Jenny alone believed in his innocence. She and her mother were poor; but had the widow been well to do, she would not have advanced a groat in defence of the man whom she believed a murderer. In the brief time that the lovers had been together before the arrival of the constable, York had told his sweetheart that he was in hope of obtaining the balance of his wages as second-mate from the owner of the *Celia*; and this coming into Jenny's mind whilst her sweetheart lay in Sandwich jail, she wrote imploringly to the owners of the brig, spoke of the terrible charge that had been brought against Mr Jeremy York, and how neither of them had funds to enable them to procure counsel; and she prayed them, with all the might of her little bursting heart, to send her the money her sweetheart said was owing to him, that some effort might be made to rescue him from the gibbet. In response to this piteous entreaty, the owners of the brig sent her fifteen guineas, with which money she hastened to Canterbury and there engaged the services of the likeliest lawyer that that ancient city contained. This lawyer had several interviews with York, and he was candid enough to represent to Jenny Bax that though he would do his best, there was little or no hope. Beyond his solemn assurance of innocence, coupled with the carelessness, which certainly did not look criminal, of his suffering the knife and coin to remain in his pocket, the young man seemed incapable of stating a single point upon which the defence could rely or which it could make anything of. And it turned out as the sagacious lawyer had predicted: the evidence that had been previously tendered was gone over again, and far more diligently examined; the blood-stained shirt, the knife, the coin, were produced. The landlady of the *Lonely Star* along with her husband and six other witnesses were present to testify to the coin, to the knife (though the name scored upon it abundantly indicated the ownership), to the money in possession of the boatswain at the time of his disappearance, to the circumstance of Jeremy York having shared the bed with him, to the avowed poverty of the young man, to the blood-marks terminating at the timber extension, from which point beyond all question the corpse had been thrown into the sea.

The judge summed up, making but little of the circumstance of what he referred to as the heedlessness of York in retaining upon his person such incriminating articles as the knife and the coin. The jury conferred a few moments without withdrawing and returned a verdict of 'Guilty.' Whereupon his lordship put on the black cap, and after a tedious sermon on the hideousness of the crime for which the prisoner was to suffer,

sentenced him to be hung by the neck until he was dead.

VII.

In the days in which Jeremy York flourished, the gibbet was a much less conventional detail of the civilisation of the century than the gallows now is. Pirates and blood-stained smugglers were, to be sure, hanged in chains upon gallows erected on Thames mud. Execution Dock and the lower reaches were fixed points in Jack Ketch's programme when it came to maritime tragedies or felonies committed in the home waters round about the coast within convenient distance; but the ordinary land-going felon was again and again 'turned off' in places adjacent to the scene of his wrong-doing. There seemed to the old-fashioned intelligence a sort of poetical justice in hanging a man within view of the spot where, according to the ferocious laws of those days, he had earned his bitter title to the halter.

In conformity, then, with this practice, it was decided that Jeremy York should be hanged on a gibbet erected within musket-shot of Sandown Castle; that is to say, within a mile or so of the old wooden structure on to which he had dragged the bleeding body of the hapless boatswain, and from which, with horrid secrecy, he had committed it to the sea.

It was a windy melancholy morning, sombre with the stoop of dusky weeping clouds sweeping out of the north-east, with an edge of frost in their occasional showering of wet. The sea ran a dark hard green under their shadow, with a ghastly glare of froth along the horizon where the surf was boiling upon the Goodwin Sands. The sandhills were dusky with crowds of people, who had assembled to witness the fine show of a hanged man; many full of curiosity, congregated close about the gibbet, that stood black and horrible like a hideous signpost pointing the road to Death, with the rope swayed by the wind dangling from the extremity of it. But the mass of the mob seemed to give it a pretty wide berth, as though it was an object to be best admired from afar.

One might have noticed, however, that amongst the people who lingered in the immediate vicinity of what used to be called the fatal tree was a knot of some eight or ten persons, whom the least observant eye might have suspected were present from a motive that had but little reference to curiosity. They were most of them young men, with a certain air of resolution in their manner; they conversed very earnestly; they might have been observed to measure the height of the arm of the gibbet from the ground, the length of the rope, and the space from where the noose would be when the end of it had been coiled about the neck to the sand beneath. Some time before the arrival of the felon, a woman of slight figure, in deep mourning, her face concealed by a veil, came to the steadfast group of men, conversed with them for a few minutes, then broke away sobbing passionately, and was seen to walk hurriedly in the direction of Sandwich. It was whispered amongst the crowd that she was Jenny Bax, the murderer's sweetheart; and several females who recognised her as she walked away, exclaimed that, for all her mourning and veils, she could not but be an unfeeling person to come and view the gibbet where her sweetheart was to be strangled,

even if she had not made up her mind to witness the whole scene from behind one of those sandhills she was skirting in such a hurry.

A little before eleven o'clock, a murmur ran through the crowd like the cry of a wave breaking aslant along a mile of shore. The procession was in view! a horse and cart, in which were seated York the malefactor, the chaplain of the jail exhorting him, and the hangman sitting behind, with his legs over the edge, fortifying his spirits with a sly dram from time to time from a flat bottle which he drew from his pocket, for this was a country pageant, with nothing but rooks, and here and there a farmyard labourer, as sight-seers; no crowded progress, such as that from Newgate to Tyburn or Newcastle jail to the town moor. On one side of the cart walked the sheriff, on the other three constables, one of whom was Budd, and a small detachment of helpers after the pattern of the one-eyed man. Jeremy York sat cold and silent, gray as tobacco ash, habited in the clothes he wore when taken; he held his eyes bent downwards; his lips were compressed into two bloodless lines; he gave no heed to the chaplain, who mumbled in his ear; he had only spoken once since he had entered the cart, and that was to say to the ordinary: 'Sir, before God I am innocent.' All the while he lay waiting for the day of execution he had said no more.

The cart rolled up to the gibbet, and the constables and helpers drove the crowd into a circle round it. It was thought that York would make a speech, but he held his peace, never looking up. His arms were pinioned; the hangman hitched the end of the rope round his neck; the chaplain prayed earnestly and devoutly; the crowd held their breath, and not a sound broke the dreadful stillness saving the dreary sweep of the wind over the sandhills and the seething and hissing of the breakers rising and falling upon the shingle. The sheriff then gave the signal; the driver who held the horse's head started the animal, the cart rolled away, and left Jeremy York hanging.

But scarce had he swung to an erect posture under the gibbet, when it was observed that the hangman had not allowed for his considerable stature; his toes touched the ground; but ere the crowd could well distinguish this, the group of men whom the veiled woman in black had conversed with gathered round the suspended figure in such a way as partly to support it. The sheriff, conversing with the hangman, looked away; no notice was taken of the action of these people, for it was a common custom in those days for friends of a malefactor to gather about him after he had been turned off, to shore him up, and to do their best to keep him from strangling during the half-hour in which he dangled. The crowd looked on; what the group of men were trying to effect they might have guessed; but whether the criminal should be ultimately saved or immediately throttled was all the same to the mob, as it was apparently to the sheriff. It was an execution anyway; this was the sight that the people of Deal and Sandwich and of adjacent hamlets had covered the sandhills to witness, and be the issue of the spectacle what it would, there was nothing to disappoint them in the presentation of it.

At the expiration of half an hour, time was called by one of the men who crowded round

the motionless body; the sheriff signed to the executioner, who, springing forward, severed the rope, and the body fell into the outstretched arms of those about it. A minute after, a small cart, containing a shell, was brought to the gibbet, the body was placed in it, five men of the group who had clustered about the pendent form sprang into the cart, and within a few moments the vehicle was being driven rapidly in the direction of Sandwich.

TRAPPING TIGERS.

AMONG the most interesting of books to Scotchmen who love to read of the words and works of their fellow-countrymen in distant lands and among stirring scenes of adventure and peril, is the *Lives of the Lindsays*, published by Mr Murray in 1849, and not the least interesting pages of this delightfully clannish compilation of tales of travel are those contributed by Robert Lindsay, who was Resident of what was then known as the 'Province' of Sylhet, just one hundred years ago. To his successors in charge of one of the swamiest and prettiest districts of India—a collocation of adjectives which shall presently be explained—it is tantalising to read that in days of an easy and paternal administration and ample leisure, it was possible, in twelve years, with a nominal salary of five hundred pounds a year, to amass a large fortune. The lucky Robert, while yet a young man, was not only Resident over the valley of Sylhet and the marshes thereof, but enjoyed a monopoly of trade with the inhabitants of the surrounding hills, of which those on the north, a huge wall of limestone five thousand feet high, seamed with cascades and clothed with orange-trees, provide the district with scenery so picturesque that the wonder is that it has been so rarely and so inadequately described. Nowadays, Robert Lindsay's degenerate official descendant receives a bare salary, which, counted in depreciated rupees, is worth little more than the nominal emoluments of a hundred years ago; and with this he has to face enhanced prices, a more civilised society, and the withdrawal of the prohibition to trade. Truly, the golden age of Indian officialism has passed, never to return—to join 'the snows of yester-year.'

Meanwhile, other things have changed. The low jungle-crowned hills which extend into the district, like the fingers of an outspread hand, from independent Tippera on the south, have been reclaimed from tigers and elephants, and are covered with flourishing tea-gardens, in the opening out of which Robert Lindsay's countrymen have borne no small share. To meet the wants of these and carry away their tea to Calcutta, great steamers ply the waters of the Surma and the Kusara, and their booming whistle is heard in the quiet villages which nestle under ancestral peepul and tamarind trees on the densely populated banks of the two great rivers of the district. But in the villages themselves very little is altered. To a man who knows India,

nothing speaks so strongly for the inrooted conservatism of its people as the perusal of such a narrative as that of Robert Lindsay. The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table revisits Europe after an absence of only fifty years, and delights to pick out and commemorate the institutions and habitations which have survived since his last visit, evidently because they are oases in a desert of change. But Robert Lindsay, if he refrained from visiting the tea-gardens, might well imagine himself to be in his old province in the old times, could he return to it now. His arrival in a green budgerow—if he wisely abstained from travelling in a cargo steamer—would be greeted by a fleet of boats, more or less gaudily equipped with bunting, and filled as of yore with his obedient and obsequious *omlah*, or native subordinates. He would find the ancient and picturesque mosque of Shah Jalāl still visited by devout admirers of the wandering saint, who pitched his tent here, on the extreme limits of Mohammedan rule, three hundred years ago. And as for the villages, they stand where they did, and their inhabitants live much the same life, with its easy round of agricultural labour, much facilitated by the abundant and never-failing rains which have made Cherrapoonjee the meteorological wonder of the world. Their amusements are much as they were one hundred years ago: boat-racing in long canoes on the noble rivers and in the great shining meres of the southern valleys is still practised. And above all, the page which we are tempted to extract, and which describes the sport of trapping tigers, is still a true description of a very characteristic and picturesque incident of Eastern rural life. Robert Lindsay's account runs as follows: 'Large traps, constructed of wood and turf, with four doors successively opening from each other, are built in such places as the tigers frequent. The bait is a living bullock in the centre. The tiger may enter on either side: on treading on a spring, the two counter-doors drop, and he is secured, while the bullock remains in perfect safety. A tube or cylinder, of about twelve feet long and eighteen inches calibre—made of mats, and fortified with rope or ground rattans, and secured at the further end by two sticks run across it—is now introduced; and the tiger, being previously teased in the trap and abundantly anxious to escape, seeing this ray of daylight conveyed into his prison through the tube, gathers himself together and darts into it, in hope of finding a passage at the opposite extremity; but is stopped by the crossbars. A man stands by to drive in two other bars across the end by which he entered. No mouse was ever more inoffensive than this powerful animal now finds himself; the whole space he has to move in is only eighteen inches calibre, which barely allows him to move, and I have repeatedly taken him by the whiskers with impunity.'

In Robert Lindsay's time, the unfortunate animal was usually carried to the walled enclosure of a deserted mosque, and there, in presence of an excited crowd of spectators, compelled to do battle with a buffalo, tame or wild. The result was seldom doubtful; for if the buffalo once got his opponent within reach of his huge and massive horns, the unfortunate tiger was tossed from one horn to another with a dexterity of

which the uncouth gait of the buffalo gives small promise, and was speedily killed.

Nowadays, the captured tiger or leopard is usually carried in triumph to the homesteads of the more wealthy landowners, who are expected to recompense the captors with presents suited to the donors' importance and wealth. When the poor beast is worn out by its ineffectual struggles in the confined space which renders its mighty muscles powerless, it is conveyed to the nearest official, who has it put to death as speedily and mercifully as possible, and disburses the customary government reward, the amount of which seems to have been determined a hundred years ago. One improvement only has been effected in the method of capture. On the trapdoor is now usually mounted an empty kerosene oil tin, the work of distant American tinsmiths, and this serves by the clatter of its descent to waken the builders of the trap, who commonly sleep in a temporary hut hard by.

The process of driving the tiger into the long 'tube' of mats and rattans is more exciting and dangerous than Lindsay's description would lead the reader to suppose. The trap-door has to be raised to admit the end of the tube, and there is always the possibility that the infuriated animal, whose roars are loud enough to strike terror into the stoutest breast, may break loose on either side. Consequently, an excited ring of villagers, armed with spears, billhooks, and perhaps even a rusty muzzle-loading fowling-piece or two, is formed round the trap, ready to account for the animal, if his exit should not take him into the cunningly devised tube. If he does break loose, a general stampede is not uncommon, or else one or two of the stouter villagers receive honourable wounds from tooth or ravening claw. But more commonly the frightened beast crawls quietly into the long tube, and is powerless, in spite of the fragile appearance of his mat envelope, which in shape exactly resembles the pink or white biscuits which are commonly eaten with ices. It is a curious sensation to see a tiger's growling face within a few inches of your own, and to be able, if you are so little magnanimous as to follow Robert Lindsay's example, to pull the great cat's whiskers. I have even known young men boast, with a fine air of paradox, of having shot tigers in their own verandas; but the tiger was swaddled in one of these tubes, and to slay him was but butcher's work.

In many other respects than the custom of tiger-trapping the inhabitants of Sylhet are conservative folk. The district was one of the first to come under British rule. It has been under the administration of several officers, who have subsequently won fame in more important spheres. It has even, for Englishmen, a faint flavour of literary interest, for one of its earliest magistrates was the father of William Makepeace Thackeray, as the name of Thackeray Street in the town of Sylhet testifies. But to this day wheeled vehicles are unknown in the greater part of the district, and roads are yet to make. On market-days, the rivers are thronged with thousands of boats; or, when the drier season of winter stops this mode of communication, the villagers trot in Indian file along the footpaths leading to the market, bearing on their shoulders a bamboo, from each end of which is suspended a load of merchandise. When

a European travels in the district, his tent and his camp equipage must needs be carried in similar fashion. And if the outward aspect of life in Sylhet is little altered, there is probably even less change in the mental attitude of the two millions of cultivators who till its rice-fields. Education has extended marvellously; every village has its little vernacular school, every 'subdivision' of four or five hundred thousand people its high or middle-class schools. But for the most part the people are content to live their traditional life, and to see as little as possible of the busy world outside. The Sylhetia has an ill reputation among inhabitants of other parts of India for manners and morals, a reputation not entirely deserved, and won partly by a sturdy provincialism and local patriotism and pride which has something attractive about it. One of the difficulties of the wide-spreading, all-embracing British rule in India is this, that the laws which are passed in Calcutta embrace the whole country, and include such conservative and old-world tracts as these. Municipal boards and local councils have to be created, and fostered and propped up with official praise. But they are foreign to the habits and traditions of the people, who are for the most part quite content that the work should be done for them by their European ruler. And so the matter is commonly compromised. The 'magistrate,' unlike the conventional constitutional monarch, really rules under a pretence of governing, and the compromise works fairly enough. Possibly the people are being slowly inducted into the elements of popular government, at least in local matters; but before they can attain to any independent control over their local government, there are not wanting signs that they will pass under the hands of wirepullers and agitators, whose advent the most easy-going of officials cannot regard with approval or without anxiety.

We must not leave Robert Lindsay without one more extract, to prove that in some respects British rule has worked wonders in the way of civilisation. He is describing the Khasia chieftains who had come to meet him to negotiate for the lease of their lime-quarries, the possession of which was the most important step towards the fortune which he took home with him to Scotland. 'In order to pay due attention to the great man, they had come down from every part of the mountain, accompanied by their retainers, dressed in the garb of war; and when thus accoutred, their appearance is most unquestionably martial, and by no means unlike our native Highlanders when dressed in the Gaelic costume. Many hundreds of this description were now before me. But my new friends on this occasion breathed nothing but peace and friendship; though it was still evident, from their complexion and from the war-yell that occasionally escaped their lips, as well as the mode in which they handled their weapons, that their temperament was not dissimilar to that of other mountaineers; and the opinion I thus hastily formed I found corroborated in the sequel. We had a most sumptuous entertainment on the turf. Our viands, to be sure, were neither of the most costly nor delicate nature; nor were the decorations of the table such as would suit the dandies of the present day. The repast consisted entirely of six or eight hogs,

barbecued whole, or rather roasted in an oven, according to the Otaheite plan—a hole being dug in the ground, lined with plantain leaves, and filled with hot stones—the hogs placed therein—more hot stones laid on the top, and the whole covered with turf. The chiefs acted as carvers, their dirks being the only instruments used, and the large leaves of the plantain served for plates. The entertainment was universally admired, and abundance of fermented liquor closed the festivities of the day.'

The Khasias still eat pigs and drink fermented liquors. A favourite dish among European habitués of the Cherrapoonjee dawk bungalow is a tender Khasi sucking-pig roasted, to whose crisp succulence only Charles Lamb could do justice. And as for Khasi beer, it is not bad stuff when better is not to be had. But in other respects these wild 'Tartars,' whom Lindsay took to be 'inhabitants of the high range which separates our possessions from the Chinese frontier,' have altered greatly for the better. A magnificent cart-road traverses their territory from north to south, terminating at one extremity in our civil station of Gauhati in the plains of Assam, and at the other in the new wire tramway which plunges temerarily from the brow of the hill below Cherrapoonjee into the plains of Sylhet. Midway, in the very heart of the hills, lies the charming station of Shillong, bosomed in fragrant pine-groves, the headquarters of the new province of Assam, of which Sylhet is the most populous district. The Khasias are now as peaceful as the Highlanders among whom Robert Lindsay ended his days, and have become great traders. Many of them are converts to Christianity, owing to the zealous labours of the Welsh missionaries, whose stations are scattered all over the hills. Two Europeans wandering on a walking tour, not long ago, in a part of the hills where they supposed few of their colour had been before, were greeted by a chorus of school children singing, 'Men of Harlech, flags are streaming!' Quaint old superstitions linger among them, such as that of the great serpent who is said to have lived in a cavern in the hills, and whose ghostly shape haunts certain families, who have to perform ghastly sacrifices to its memory if they would maintain their property. But a European may wander with perfect safety, unarmed and unattended, from end to end of the hills, and may enjoy the lovely scenery of their unequalled gorges. He must be an experienced traveller, indeed, who has seen anything more lovely than the glassy veil of the Maosmai waterfall, spread over the face of a great fern-clad cliff, or the wonderful view from the summit of the bare brown Kullong rock. And of the people he will retain the pleasantest memories: of the stout, muscular good-humoured men, dirty and smiling, one cheek invariably distended with a great quid of betel-nut; of the women, buxom and plump, and equally good-natured and dirty; of the sturdy children, who shout a friendly 'kooblay,' or good-morning, after the traveller, and are rapturously thankful for a copper coin wherewith to buy oranges.

Of Robert Lindsay himself it only remains to say that he seems to have followed the best traditions of Indian official life in securing the confidence and intimacy, so far as that is possible, of

the natives under his charge. The task was an easier one in the days when more independence was allowed to the heads of districts, when the mere routine of governing was less absorbing in its multiplicity, and leisure was more ample. But the tradition has not died out; and many an Indian official, spite of depreciated rupees and the cost of remittances, spite of inspections and reports and the crushing grind of modern administrative work, loves his district, and is proud to own many good friends among its inhabitants.

ANTIPYRIN.

PROBABLY no class of investigations has been more popular with chemists of recent years, and certainly none have been more prolific of wonderful results, than those in which they have attempted the artificial production of alkaloidal substances. It was, for example, in the attempt to construct an artificial quinine that the first aniline colour was discovered—a discovery which has developed one large and important industry and revolutionised others. It was in conducting investigations in similar directions that one of the latest remarkable discoveries was made—the production of saccharine, a substance recently noticed in these pages. Between these two discoveries, which in a certain sense might be termed the earliest and latest valuable products of public importance derived from coal-tar, there lies a third, which has all these years been slowly but surely developing; and although the discoveries connected with it may not startle the world in the same way that both mauve and saccharine did when first introduced, still they promise to be equally important in another way, and deserve more than a mere passing notice.

The discoveries referred to are full of technicalities, and it would be out of place to discuss these at present; but if the developing process just spoken of is to be thoroughly understood, it will be necessary to explain that a certain chemical relationship exists between quinine, a well-known alkaloid derived from the cinchona bark, and another substance called chinoline. This last substance can be prepared, amongst other ways, from coal-tar; and from the circumstance that it had medicinal properties similar to quinine, as well as this chemical relationship to it, it was thought that some new alkaloidal substance might be built up from it which would take the place of quinine. Hence the reason that, since the year 1881, chemists have been systematically, persistently, and also successfully pursuing their investigations in this direction. One after another of such valuable coal-tar alkaloids have been discovered, and several of them at the present time are slowly, but certainly, changing one department of medicine, and no one can quite foresee how very important these discoveries may yet be, alike to science and medicine. All these coal-tar alkaloids have a powerful tendency to reduce the temperature of the body in cases of fevers, hence they are called antipyretics; and antipyrin, it will at once be understood, derives its name not from anything connected with its composition or

production, but from its antipyretic action as a medicine.

It was discovered several years ago by Dr Knorr of Munich; and when its important medicinal properties were also discovered by repeated experiment, its manufacture was handed over to a Company, who acquired proprietary rights, and in their hands it has remained very much ever since. For a considerable time, little was known regarding it; but ultimately Dr Knorr published a paper on its chemistry, and thus scientific men got to know its composition and mode of production. Chemically, it rejoices in what, to ordinary minds, will appear the unpronounceable name of 'Dimethyloxychinizin'; such a name, unlike antipyrin, being intended as much as possible to represent to scientific men its chemical constitution.

It is one of the very best antipyretics ever discovered, not even excluding quinine. It reduces the temperature in cases of fevers with almost unflinching certainty from two to four degrees within two hours of being administered, and this, too, without the after-disturbing constitutional effects of quinine. This thermic effect of antipyrin seems to be much more prolonged than in the case of the majority of the other newly discovered antipyretics, and equals anything ever produced by quinine. To quote two cases out of many which have recently appeared in the medical journals: fifteen-grain doses were given to two patients suffering from typhoid fever, and reduced the temperature nearly to normal, while in both cases a refreshing sleep for five or six hours was obtained. In commerce it appears in small white crystalline scales, and also as a white powder, in both cases being soluble freely in water, without smell, and of a mild bitter taste. It is thus very much easier administered than quinine, particularly to children and those patients who cannot readily take nauseous medicines. When first introduced, it was entirely for its antipyretic action; but medical men were not slow in discovering that such a valuable agent could be advantageously employed in many cases besides fevers. It is, for example, recommended in cases of phthisis, pneumonia, pleurisy, neuralgia, lumbago, sciatica, and in that distressing complaint, sea-sickness. In short, its history is intimately connected with the history of medicine for the past three years, and it would be difficult to cite all the different cases in which it is recommended to be administered.

Probably, however, it has attained its greatest popularity in this country, so far as the general public is concerned, from being recommended as a cure for headaches. The writer has daily means of knowing that its use in this respect is largely increasing, and this of itself is sufficient to prove that in such cases it is useful. Only those who know how distressingly common this complaint is can rightly understand and appreciate what a public boon it would be were a reliable and at the same time a safe cure to be discovered. It is not to be expected that it will prove a panacea in every case; but that it has a wonderful power in many cases in allaying if not in entirely averting these painful attacks is undoubted. It may be given in doses of from ten to twenty grains with perfect safety, either at the commencement of the headache, or as soon after as possible,

and rest should be taken for several hours afterwards.

One peculiar circumstance remains to be noted as to antipyrin, namely, that while introduced, probably in the first instance, as a rival to quinine, not so much in regard to efficiency as in regard to price, its market value at the present time ounce per ounce in this country is double that of quinine. If the respective dose of each substance be taken into consideration, the value is more than four times that of quinine, as antipyrin as a rule is given in doses double that of quinine. Notwithstanding this fact, its popularity and consumption are daily increasing, and as it gets better known, will no doubt increase still more. As evidence to show that it holds an equal reputation in its native home, it may be mentioned that it has officially been recommended for introduction into the next edition of the German Pharmacopœia.

FROM A CANADIAN BANK CLERK'S NOTEBOOK.

THE business of banking is generally regarded—and quite rightly—as a very serious one. The most enthusiastic member of the profession will hardly assert that it offers much scope for the display of wit and humour. Yet here too 'the eye sees what it looks for;' and even a bank clerk bent on discovering an amusing incident to enliven the monotony of business hours, will occasionally find one—in Canada, at least. The writer cannot answer for the mother-country.

Who, for example, could help feeling grateful to the unconscious humourist who writes :

DEAR BANK—Pleas find enclosed 25 dollars, the amt of My note to ——. The note is Due Nov. 3, but I send the money to days a head, as I am awfully afraide of Banks.—Pleas send the Note to yours truly, J—— S——.

The writer of the above frankly confesses his mistrust of our profession. But many of our correspondents display a gratifying confidence in our good-will and energy. Among these is the country farmer who wishes to dispose of twelve pounds of salt cod-fish, and who writes to request the biggest bank in Montreal to conduct the transaction for him. Another equally confiding countryman desires to invest in ten pounds of maple sugar through the same medium.

Among the doubters is the old lady who presented herself the other day at the Savings-bank department with a demand for the one hundred dollars she had recently deposited. She received the money, and forthwith retired to a seat for the purpose, it was supposed, of depositing the notes in her boot, according to the graceful custom of many country customers. But after subjecting the notes to a close and rather suspicious scrutiny, she got off her stool and handed them again to the teller. 'I don't want 'em,' she explained. 'I've got no place to keep 'em in at home.—Why, if I was to have 'em in the house, Jim—that's my boy in the lumber-trade—he'd have 'em away from me right off, bless him! I only wanted to be sure I could get them any time I liked.' And she departed, fully satisfied with the success of the experiment.

Many of the Savings-bank depositors cannot sign their names; in which case they make their mark, and a note of their personal appearance is entered in the ledger. Mistakes sometimes occur here, as, for example, when a young man found himself described, much to his disgust, as having 'prominent hair and black teeth.' Another was entered as 'a small boy;' and the description was transferred from ledger to ledger by successive clerks, until, at the age of thirty, the depositor appeared to claim his accumulated savings, and found difficulty in getting the money because he 'did not answer to the description.'

'Mary Ambrose' is evidently aware of the necessity for clearly proving her identity, for when she writes to withdraw her savings, she is careful to sign herself, 'Mary Ambrose, wife of James Ambrose, plumber and painter, Erie City, Penn., and sister of William Wyer, blacksmith, Staffordshire, England.'

Mrs Elizabeth Molloy is a well-known visitor to the same department. She is frequently the worse for liquor when she appears to transact her business. On one occasion she wanted to draw seventy-five dollars without taking the preliminary step of depositing them. A somewhat stormy interview with the ledger-keeper ensued, which ended in her taking her departure, at the threat of ringing for the police. The next day she appeared again, and informed him she had found the missing money. Her remorse was poignant and loudly expressed. 'To think,' she cried, 'that I should have accused a gentleman like you of robbing a poor old woman of her savings! I'd loike foine to do you a bit of a koindness, just to make up. Now, wouldn't you'—very persuasively—'come round to our little place and taste the case of whisky my husband "found" on the wharf last night?'

The day after that on which her husband died—he had 'found' more whisky than his constitution would stand—she called upon us again: 'Yes,' she said sadly, 'he's gone. Poor Mike. He was a good man.' Then brightening up, she added: 'But anyway, I'm all right; for, do you see, there's Teddy Rooney down in Little Dublin dead-broke on me, and I needn't be a widdy a day longer than I like.' With which cheering reflection she took her leave.

C O L U M B U S.

I KNOW not rightly whether bard or sage
Hath ever moralised upon his name;
And yet 'twas well, for like a giant came
His soul, the mightiest in a stalwart age,
Bearing the Christ across the water's rage.
And though succeeding ministers of shame
Belied their King of Peace with sword and flame,
Yet we are fallen upon a lovelier age,
When the West stretches out its filial hand
To bless the Old World on the Eastern shore,
And crowns with endless fame that Christopher
Whose sacred burden ever more and more
In links of mutual love and common care
Doth bind the Sunset with the Orient strand.

EDWARD LUMMIS.

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INDISCRIMINATE CHARITY.

On a bright summer day a short time ago, as an employer of labour was driving through Charlton, in Kent, on his way to London, he observed a poor man lying down by the wayside in a state of apparent exhaustion. Getting down from his trap, he elicited from the man that he had walked from Chatham that morning without food, and was on his way to the metropolis in search of employment, having been discharged from the Chatham dockyard a few weeks previously. After putting a few questions, the replies to which were satisfactory, the gentleman presented the poor fellow with half-a-crown and directed him to finish his journey by train from the station close by, giving him at the same time his card, with instructions to call on the following morning at the place of business pencilled thereon, when there might possibly be employment for him.

The next day passed without the man appearing; but on the following morning a gentleman from Bromley called and, producing the card, stated that the party in question had waited upon him seeking assistance, presenting the card as evidence of the *bona fides* of his recommendation; and that, giving him a shilling and leaving him in the hall while he directed some food to be taken to him, he found on his return that the fellow had decamped, carrying with him a great-coat and a silk umbrella.

At the time of this occurrence there existed much penury and want, owing to a number of people being out of employment, and this evil, instead of diminishing, has steadily increased; but while it is to be deplored that so much misery and destitution should periodically prevail throughout the land, it cannot but be admitted that many claims upon public sympathy, and upon the purse of the charitably disposed, are frequently preferred by persons of questionable character and unworthy of relief.

The country swarms with professional mendicants and tramps, many of whom are born and brought up to the business; the majority, how-

ever, proceeds from a class of improvident people, who, while they profess to be anxious to obtain employment, invariably indulge in the idleness of poverty in preference to the performance of such labour as would supply their more immediate necessities. All attempts, hitherto, to dispose of this pestiferous class or to keep it within proper limits have proved abortive. The labour-test in the vagrant wards does not trouble them, for they are too cunning to avail themselves of the guardians' hospitality.

Let any person, for a change, in preference to spending a holiday at the usual seaside resort, take a walking tour through the country clad in professional tramp costume, living as they live—omitting the mendicancy—frequenting the places they most affect, domiciling in the 'padding kens' they nightly patronise as they pass from place to place in the round of their nomadic life, and he will be amply repaid by the knowledge he acquires for the temporary inconvenience and discomfort he must necessarily experience.

Great facility is afforded to their operations by the possession of a hawker's license. Armed with this authority, which is procurable for five shillings, and provided with either a few sheets of writing-paper and envelopes, which they term their 'book,' several cards of buttons, or a common comb or two, to which may be added a knowledge of the words of a couple of Moody and Sankey's or Salvationist hymns—tunes desirable, but not indispensable—as a cloak to their mendicancy, they can generally baffle all attempts of the police at detection. Giving Tuesday until Friday to working small country-places, they bestow their patronage on the towns on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. By intercommunication, few of them are unacquainted with the merits and demerits of the different poorhouses on their circuit, and know pretty well where to choose a hospital or infirmary, into which, by artistic preparation, they can obtain admission, and pass the winter comfortably should business prove slack. Their hardihood and persistence are somewhat remarkable, although not always attended with success.

'Och! shure,' said a female Hibernian, on hearing the charitable acts of a worthy priest highly eulogised, 'I must go and see his riverence;' and calling upon him with a piteous tale, she managed to obtain the loan of a shilling; and a month later, on arriving at the same place in the order of her route, she waited upon him 'to pay back the money so kindly lent in me thrubble; and shure, your riverence, if I could only get some good Christian to loan me a few shillins for a while, it wud be the makin' of me wid the haukin', so it wud.'—'Well,' said the reverend gentleman, 'here is the shilling you have so honestly repaid. I will give you that towards it; but don't trouble me again.'

To bestow food or clothing upon this class is mistaken charity. The former is only an encumbrance, to be got rid of at the first opportunity; and the latter is of no use unless available for the pawnshop.

'I don't want bread—I want coppers,' said a sturdy beggar the other day in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, as he threw the proffered bread into the street; and the act attracting the attention of an observant constable, was rewarded by him with a free pass for a night's lodging at the police station.

In the counties of Gloucester and Hereford, a rule was in force, a year or two ago, by which tramps were required to apply at the police station for a ticket, on which were inscribed their name, age, description, and destination. This ticket was accompanied, on its issue, by an order for a night's lodging and a pound of bread, and was also endorsed for another town on the tramp's route, some ten miles farther on, for the following night, where he would receive similar accommodation and allowance, and so be passed from town to town till clear of the county.

'Will you be kind enough to tell me how far I am from Aldershot?' inquired a decent-looking young fellow, a few months ago, of a gentleman who was walking in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham. Expressing his surprise at such an inquiry at such a distance, he put a few questions to the young man, and gathered from his replies that, being out of work, he was on his way to Aldershot, in order to enlist in a regiment in the camp there, in which regiment he had a brother serving Her Majesty.

Explaining to him that it was not necessary to walk such a distance to accomplish his purpose, and instructing him how to proceed, the gentleman gave him a shilling, on its being intimated to him in a quiet way that the military aspirant had not the necessary funds for his night's lodging. About three weeks after, the same gentleman was accosted by the same man in the vicinity of Gloucester, requesting to know if he was on the right road to Aldershot; and it is more than probable that the same individual is still inquiring his way to that military station.

Should a strike or unusual depression in trade occur in any locality, creating a call upon the charitable, to that locality will these human vultures flock, and ruthlessly thrust aside those for whose benefit the bounty is bestowed, in order themselves to prey upon the spoil.

Another class which preys upon the charitable consists of the families of the disreputable drunkards and loafers who are invariably to be found

in certain districts in every town, and who have no idea of earning a fair day's wages for a fair day's work; who, in far too many instances, maintain their worthless existence and satisfy the craving of their depraved appetites out of the proceeds of the wife and family's labour. These are men who, sunk in degradation through their own vices, would still loaf and idle even if there were employment for every working-man. Upon the families of these men charity is ill bestowed.

We have next a class of improvident people, with which all our large towns abound. No matter how brisk trade may be, they are never able to make both ends meet. When work is in full tide, no provision is made for any future contingency. The greater part of the husband's earnings passes into the publican's hands weekly. The wife pays her regular weekly visit on the Monday to the pawnshop to pledge, and on the Saturday to redeem. She patronises every travelling draper from whom she can obtain goods, the greater part of which finds its way to the pawnshop. She runs a weekly account for groceries and provisions at some small shop. Enter the house at any time, and the waste of food perceivable is almost incredible! There is not a charity in the town with which she is not acquainted, and from which she is not a recipient. Every charitably disposed person is a fair object for her operations, and the parish relieving officer is not free from her attacks. Her tale of misery is never ended, and her demands are insatiable. Let her but once enlist your sympathy so far as to obtain a pair of old shoes for her youngest child, or an old frock for her eldest girl, and from that moment your wardrobe ceases to be under your own control, and the rapacious demands to satisfy real and imaginary wants increase to an alarming extent.

'I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir,' from a female suppliant at the time of an epidemic, 'but you've been so kind during my husband's illness, that I make so bold as to ask if you will help me with a trifle towards his funeral.'

'Why,' was the reply, 'I thought your husband was in a Burial Club?'

'So he was, sir; but you see we got behind in our payments, and it threw him out of benefit.'

'When did your husband die?'

'Well, sir, he's not quite to say dead; but we don't think he can live over to-morrow.'

And such illustrations might be cited *ad infinitum*.

Nevertheless, the fact is incontrovertible that throughout the country misery and want are rife; and as the ranks of the unemployed are daily recruited by foreigners and the refuse from other lands, the demands at the most inclement season of any year will not be trifling.

Britain has never failed to respond to the cry of the wretched and the suffering either at home or abroad, and it is to be hoped never will; but it is desirable to prevent as much as possible the relief intended for the deserving poor from being appropriated by the undeserving and vicious. Misery that presents itself in appalling forms, openly to our view, is calculated to enlist our sympathy and aid, rather than that which remains unseen. The sturdy wooden-legged crossing-sweeper who stood in former years near London Bridge, and could afford to spend ten shillings

per day on his favourite brandy; the well-dressed children who, as clever violinists, a few years ago reaped a golden harvest under George Stephenson's monument in Newcastle-on-Tyne, while their disreputable parents lurked in the neighbourhood waiting to clutch the receipts for drink; the old widow Nanny Blain, who for twenty years received parochial relief in Scotland, and was buried at the expense of the parish, who lay with one hundred pounds in notes, and no end of silver coins, concealed in her bed; the miserable wretches with hired babes who prowl our streets for alms; the wretched match-selling children who haunt the places of public resort; even the urchins who vend the evening papers, and dare not return to their wretched homes without the amount necessary to satisfy their unnatural parents—these, and scores of other cases, have all in their turn excited our compassion and demanded our aid.

Wherever charity stretches forth its hand there will it be abused, and a great point for consideration is, how to reduce the abuse to a minimum.

'The poor ye have always with you,' were the words of the Great Teacher; but the deserving poor are not always to be found by the wayside begging. The class which loudly calls for sympathy and aid is of no blatant kind, but rather conceals much of its want and misery from public notice; when article after article of clothing, and even the very furniture, down to the poor bed itself, have been parted with to supply the commonest necessities of life. The husband has probably travelled many a weary mile day after day, legitimately seeking for work, only to return at nightfall to his poverty-stricken home with hunger gnawing at his vitals and despair in his heart. This class requires much searching out, and often when face to face with those who fain would relieve, make the most of their miserable surroundings in order to conceal their poverty. Indiscriminate alms-giving should be avoided and organisation adopted; not the organisation which requires elaborately furnished offices and a heavy staff of paid officials, but that which consists of benevolent individuals who have time at their disposal, and the heart and means to give, co-operating with each other.

In a northern town, one winter, forty railway trucks of coal were distributed amongst the poor by ticket, each ticket entitling the holder to thirteen hundredweight. Five-sixths of these tickets were sold by the recipients for a couple of shillings to the small coal-dealers and others. This abuse might have been avoided by the ticket simply authorising the holder to receive one hundred-weight per week for a certain number of weeks.

Soup-tickets are often obtained by shopkeepers in low localities, avowedly for distribution, but in reality for retail sale. Blankets find their way to the pawnbrokers. A benevolent Scotch lady once suggested that these should be procured in two separate colours, and the blankets divided down the centre, and the half of one colour neatly attached to the half of the other, thus answering the purpose of the gift or loan, but rendering it valueless as a pledge.

In all cases, the assistance afforded should be adapted to the circumstances of the case, and wherever possible, assume the form of a loan in preference to that of a gift. Money should

demand an equivalent of labour in some shape or form: an outhouse whitewashed, a stable cleaned, a fence mended, and a hundred other ways. Organisation could provide common material for shirt-making at proper prices by starving seamstresses, even if the articles were subsequently sold at a loss or given away. In any case, let something, however simple, be required in return, and so indiscriminate charity would be largely avoided.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER V.

It happened on that particular morning that an unfortunate who was pretty constantly in trouble was seated at his desk at the very bottom of the class, and as far away from the fire as the confines of the room would permit. He was a gaunt and bony boy, who wanted a prodigious deal to eat, and rarely got it, his guardians being of opinion that it was well to teach children to repress their fleshly appetites early. He was a boy who grew very fast—which perhaps accounted for his being so constantly hungry—and there was always a *lacuna* between the bottoms of his trousers and the tops of his highlows, whilst his jacket was never within a size or two of his needs, so that his great red hands and bony wrists stuck out beyond his sleeves. He was a cold boy—he thought for his own part that insufficient nutriment left his circulation languid—and being at the farthest corner from the fire, he essayed to warm himself by a surreptitious beating of his limbs. Mr Macfarlane's desk stood beside the fire, and Mr Macfarlane was comfortable enough to make this behaviour on the boy's part seem scandalous.

'Jenvey,' said Mr Macfarlane, 'you are warned.'

The bony boy went quiet, and tried secretly to warm his fingers by blowing upon them from a distance, but met no great success. By-and-by Mr Macfarlane, turning away to tweak another boy's ears, Jenvey saw his chance, and began to beat his shoulders with his tingling fingers, whilst he kept a keen lookout on authority. Authority was one too many for him; the ear-tweaking had been no more than a cunning ruse, and when Macfarlane turned suddenly round, there were the guilty Jenvey's arms going like windmill sails. A frantic plunge to stop midway, and to assume an air and attitude of profound study, bettered the case from Macfarlane's point of view, inasmuch as it sent a leaden inkstand flying from the desk to the floor.

'Jenvey,' said Mr Macfarlane, softly and persuasively, 'come out, sir.'

Jenvey, ruefully sucking his chilled knuckles, numbed by their sudden contact with the inkstand, came out, filled with dire forebodings.

'You were warned, Jenvey,' said Mr Macfarlane regretfully and politely—'you were warned.' Jenvey knew his ways, and came on with the forebodings deepening. The schoolmaster took

up the bamboo from the desk, and gave a firm resounding slap with it, to quicken Jenvey's lingering footsteps and encourage him. 'Now, sir, will you be so kind as to explain this conduct?'

'I was cold, sir,' said the wretched Jenvey; 'I'm always cold, sir.'

'You will not be cold,' returned Mr Macfarlane with a soft reflectiveness—'you will not be cold, Jenvey, in a little while from now.' Jenvey gave a short sharp yelp, as if to say he knew he wouldn't, but on the whole would prefer to be; and the schoolmaster, taking a business-like grip of the jacket collar with his right, raised the dreadful left with the bamboo in it. 'Now, Jenvey,' said Mr Macfarlane, 'you know that this hurts me as much as it hurts you, but'—

'It's a lie!' bleated the desperate Jenvey.

The whole schoolroom was silent for a moment. The boys were petrified with astonishment and fear, and the schoolmaster himself was frozen by the impious horror of this rebellion. In the middle of this awful stillness, a laugh sprang up, a wild excited ringing laugh.

'Vale!' cried the schoolmaster, 'you dare to laugh at this unparalleled and shameful affront?—Stand up, sir.'

But Vale laughed the more, for the luckless Jenvey was his next-door neighbour and a chum, and overwrought sympathy and terror had already brought him to such a state that Jenvey's unexpected outbreak had thrown him into a sort of hysteria.

'Stand up, sir!' thundered Macfarlane, and the voice of power was strong enough to frighten hysteria away and to silence the shrieking laughter. 'Take your place upon that form, sir; I will attend to you directly.'

John obeyed. He could not have told, to save his life, what he had laughed at, but he knew that he could not have helped it. He was very pale, and his breath was troubled.

'Now, Jenvey,' said Mr Macfarlane. It was a brief exordium, and Jenvey could have wished it longer, not being yet learned in that philosophy which teaches that where an ill is unescapable, it is best to have it over. And whatever want of faith the ill-starred youth was conscious of in regard to Macfarlane's inward sufferings, he would have admitted, if it had been put to him, that the schoolmaster's prophecy had come true, and that he was not cold any longer. Macfarlane certainly bore his own pangs like a hero, and bated none of them. It sounded from outside as if a savage tribe had turned carpet-beaters, and timed the service with war-whoops. The most pressing sense of duty could not sustain Mr Macfarlane's powers for ever, and he found his strength failing him. The spirit was still willing, but the flesh was growing weak.

If everybody had not been so entranced by the excitement of the scene it might have been known earlier that a loud and exigent rapping sounded at the schoolroom door. As Jenvey grew hoarse and Macfarlane grew tired, the noise from without

grew louder. Then it ceased suddenly, the door was thrown violently open, and Isaiah appeared in the doorway. The schoolmaster let fall his uplifted arm and looked magisterially at the intruder.

'I'm sorry to spoil sport,' said Isaiah. Whether he were serious or satirical, his face showed nothing. 'You can finish when I'm gone, sir, if there's anything left to do. I want Master Vale at once.'

'Master Vale, I am sorry to say,' returned Mr Macfarlane, 'is at present in disgrace.'

'Well,' said Isaiah, 'he'll have to come out of it. We've just got news as his father's asking for him, and'— The rest of the sentence was whispered into Macfarlane's ear, Isaiah sheltering the whisper with his hand.

'Vale,' said Macfarlane, 'you are wanted at home.' John seemed to take no notice of this statement. It appeared, indeed, as if he had not heard it. 'You are wanted at home, Vale. Do you hear?' cried Macfarlane.

'What hast done to the lad?' Isaiah demanded, seeing that John stood still upon his form with an altogether vacant air.—'John! Master John! you come along with me; you're wanted. Your father's asking after you.'

'This is obstinacy,' said Macfarlane.

'It looks a good deal worse than that to my eye, gaffer,' Isaiah answered. He made his way to where John stood, and taking him up in his arms, bore him to the middle of the schoolroom and set him down before the fire. The wretched Jenvey was still moaning and whining, and was rubbing himself with many contortions. When he had rubbed for a second or two at one place, he seemed suddenly to remember another, and transferred his attention to that with an exasperated feeble yowl like that of a frightened cur.

'Never mind, Jenvey,' said John with a face strangely grave.

Jenvey left off rubbing and stared at him in mere amazement. The schoolmaster was puzzled and troubled; but Isaiah put an end to the scene by taking the boy's hand in his own and leading him away. Caps and overcoats and satchels were hanging up outside the schoolroom in a little corridor, and selecting John's belongings, Isaiah helped him to put them on, and led him into the street, through the long narrow playground and past the big green-painted gates. There stood the tall trap, with a small boy at the horse's head; and Isaiah, having given the boy a penny, lifted John into the trap, mounted after him, and drove away with many sidelong glances at his charge.

'Has the school-gaffer been beating you?' he asked, stooping sideways towards him.—John shook his head.—'Then what's put you into this state?'

'He beat Jenvey,' said John, breaking silence for the first time.

'Well, yes,' said Isaiah; 'he certainly did beat Jenvey.—What did he do it for?'

'Jenvey broke an inkstand,' John answered. The open air and movement were restoring him, but he spoke in an odd dream-like way. 'Then Mr Macfarlane called him out. Mr Macfarlane said it hurt him as much to punish Jenvey as it hurt Jenvey to be punished, and Jenvey said it was a lie.'

'That was it, was it?' asked Isaiah. 'Jenvey'll

grow wiser by-and-by than to show his wisdom.—But what made you fret so about seeing Jenvey catch it?

'I don't know,' said John. 'It makes my head swim; everything turns round, somehow.'

'That's how it is, is it?' Isaiah responded. His features did not lend themselves readily to the play of any emotion, but he looked often towards his young companion, as if he were disquieted. There was silence between the two for the space of perhaps a mile.

'Where are we going, Isaiah?' John asked him then. 'Are we going to father's?'

'Yes,' said Isaiah; 'that's where we're agoing to. We're agoing to your father's, Master John.'

Then there was another silence, and now, in place of Isaiah looking at him, John often looked at Isaiah; but he was busily intent upon the horse, and seemed to have no attention for anything else in the world.

'What are we going to father's for?'

'What are we going to your father's for?' Isaiah repeated, with that elaborate air of frankness which some people assume when they have anything to hide. 'Why, I suppose we're agoing to your father's because your father sent for you.'

'Do you know why father sent for me?' asked John.

'Why,' replied Isaiah, turning round to look more frank and open than before, 'because he wants to see you.'

'Yes,' pursued John, frightened by Isaiah's manner without knowing why. 'But what does he want to see me for?'—Isaiah hesitated, and looked confused.—'Is there anything the matter?' cried John.

'Well, in a way theer is, Master John.'—The boy laid hold of his coat sleeve and looked up at him.—'Your father's been rather badly hurt this morning, and he wants you at home. A chain broke, somehow, at the mill, and a sack of flour fell on him.—Come, come, Master John; he won't like to see his little b'y acrying; he'll expect his lad to bear up and be brave; that's what he'll naturally look for.'

'Is he—much hurt?' the boy asked, pausing, as if he hardly dared to put the question.

'Well, from what James told your uncle Snelling, he does seem to be rather badly hurt,' returned Isaiah. 'A sack of flour is a weighty thing, you see, Master John, and falling from a height, it would do a deal of damage to anybody it fell on.—That's only natural, ain't it, Master John?' He spoke as if he vaguely expected the boy to find some sort of comfort in this; but if his own hard visage, enamelled with soap and weather, showed anything, he seemed to find but little comfort for himself in it.

'Will he die, Isaiah?' the boy asked in a terrified whisper.

'Dear, dear!' returned Isaiah, avoiding his eye again. 'What has put such a thought as that into your head? We've all got to die, Master John; but there's none of us as will die afore the time comes.'

'Did it strike him on the head, Isaiah?' John in asking this question put his hand to his own head; and Isaiah, transferring the whip from his right hand to his left, put his hand on the boy's

further shoulder before he answered, and patted him twice or thrice.

'No, no,' he answered after a pause, in which a keener observer than young John might have thought that he mistrusted his voice. 'It wasn't so bad as that. He happened to be stooping at the time, James told us, and the bag fell on his back. It was a nasty thump, of course, and they had to carry him home. James drove down to tell your uncle Snelling about it, and so your uncle Snelling went on ahead, and sent me to fetch you with word to follow.' When Isaiah had got as far as this, he began to recover himself somewhat. He continued with friendly cunning: 'A man of your father's age, Master John, can't get a blow like that without suffering a good deal from it.—Now you listen to what I'm saying, Master John, and try to remember it, because it's for your father's good, and what's for your father's good is for your own good. It's like enough that your father won't be able to tell at first whether he's bad hurt or no. If he sees you frightened, he'll think you've heard somebody say as he's hurt very bad indeed, and then, don't you see that may cast him down? So you must just be as brave and quiet as you can, Master John.'

'I'll try, Isaiah,' said John, sobbing and trembling a little; and Isaiah put the horse to his best speed.

John looked anxiously at the house when they came in sight of it, and saw that the blinds of his father's bedroom windows were drawn down. Hostler James stood at the gate, guarding the doctor's chestnut mare and Uncle Snelling's sorrel. Isaiah catching the hostler's eye, gave an almost gesture of the left thumb, indicating John, and executed a ghastly grin of warning.

'What's the news now, James?' he asked as he alighted and fastened the reins to the fence.

'Young master's wanted up-stairs,' James answered guardedly; and John entered the house and climbed the stair with so strong a certainty of the worst imprinted on his mind, that he often recalled it in after-years, and thought it strange. The corridor at the head of the stairs was dark, and he had to grope for the bedroom door. When he had found it, he knocked softly, and Dr Haycock came to open it. After the clear wintry sunlight without, with everything made bright and dazzling by a coat of dry powdery snow, the room looked dark, and John could only make out the great old-fashioned mahogany four-poster with its canopy and hangings of dark maroon as if it had been a cloud in twilight.

'Is that John?' his father's voice asked faintly. He knew the voice, and yet it was strangely altered; all the manhood had gone out of it, and it was weak and low. 'Bring him where I can see him.'

This request and the gloom of the chamber and the silence of the dim twilight figures there all seemed like a continuance of the dread certainty which had fallen upon the boy in the darkness of the stairway. Uncle Snelling's great bulk reared itself beside the bed on the far side. The housekeeper stood on the near side, her white cap a little clearer than other objects against the dark bed-curtains; she took young John by the hand. Why so gently, unless that awful sense of certainty were true?

'Put him on the bedside,' said the farmer.—'Give me a kiss, lad. I'm glad thee gottest here in time.'

There was the certainty again, but John stooped and kissed his father without a sob or a tear. He found his cold hand, and held it in both his own, fondling it softly, as if he had been the elderly man and the sufferer had been the child.

'It's a mercy I'm in no pain,' said the farmer in that changed voice. 'I should ha' thought a man would ha' suffered.' He paused for a time and then called 'Robert.'

'Well, John?' asked Snelling, stooping over him.

'You'll find everything straight and orderly. You'll be sole executor, and John's guardian until he's twenty-one. I've left you a thousand pound in ready money, in testimony of our friendship and the esteem we've had for one another.'

'Thank you, John,' said Snelling; 'I take it kindly of you. I've neither chick nor child of my own, and John will get it again when my time comes, and something to the back of it.'

'The rest,' said Vale, 'goes to John. I leave him to your charge, Robert. You've been good to him always; but now you'll have to stand for everybody. He's got nobody else i' the world. Be good to him, Robert.'

'Make your mind easy on that score, John,' Snelling answered; 'he shall be taken care of.'

'It's a great blessing to be out of pain,' said the farmer after a long interlude of silence. 'I should ha' thought a man would ha' suffered more.'

Young John heard, saw, and noted everything that was to be seen, heard, and noted. He was aware of no unusual interest, and yet he remembered years afterwards the position and aspect of things about the room.

'You'll find yourself remembered, Mrs Herrick,' the farmer said, turning his eyes upon the housekeeper. 'So will James.'

Except his eyes and his pale lips, not a feature stirred, and his head and limbs were as immobile as if he had been dead already. The eyes rolling round the darkened chamber, and the face otherwise motionless, frightened the boy, and he clung tightly to the cold hand he held. The eyes turned towards him.

'Kiss me again, lad.—Good-bye. Be a good lad, John.—You'd better take him down-stairs, Mrs Herrick.'

'No, no,' John besought him in a whisper.

'Let the lad stay,' the dying man said feebly. 'Poor little chap. I'm all that's left him, and he won't have me for long.'

Snelling, moving noiselessly, crossed to the doctor, and whispered to him. The doctor shook his head, and the two stood side by side in the twilight looking down. Suddenly the farmer spoke out clear and loud: 'Robert, you'll do your duty by him?'

'Make your mind easy about that, John,' Snelling answered. 'I shall do my duty by him.'

With that Vale sighed and closed his eyes, and the elders looking at him saw that his chin had fallen. The housekeeper took young John by the hand and led him away. He knew as well as she did what had happened, and wept bitterly.

He had good reason to weep, being thus robbed of that kindly father; but if he had seen into Uncle Snelling's mind, he would have found a better reason still.

(To be continued.)

OVERLAND TO INDIA IN 1789 AND 1889.

It has long been a common thing for novelists to seek material for their pens in depicting the marvels and wonders of which the year 1900 A.D. will be the witness. The pen of Lytton has described for us the 'Coming Race,' and other writers have exercised their ingenuity in picturing the circumstances by which that remarkable people will be environed. Submarine vessels, self-steering air-wagons, the utilisation of the central fire, are only some among the many marvels which the end of the twentieth century will, according to them, employ as every-day mediums. It is not, however, our present purpose to add to these annals of prophetic fiction; but to go back in spirit, and see some of the ways and means of our forefathers even a short hundred years ago.

A weekly mail, and, in an emergency, the cable, has been so long familiar to us, that it is difficult to realise that India is really four thousand miles away; while, thanks to Indian Museums and Colonial Exhibitions, it is no longer to us the land of marvel that it was to our forefathers. In a general way we know and realise that Columbus, Cabot, Magellan, and Drake found travelling no very easy thing; but they are out of our sphere and age, and we cannot fancy ourselves in any way like them. India of to-day is a thing that we understand. It is a little out of the way; but one can take a return ticket to it as one would from Baker Street to Gower Street, spend six weeks upon its shores, and return home to keep an engagement not quite three months old. It is a little pleasure trip in which one experiences in reality little more discomfort than would be one's lot in a journey to Switzerland. The traveller can time himself to a minute. Sixty hours to Brindisi, three days to Alexandria, ten days from there, and the journey to Bombay is an accomplished fact.

Such is the overland route of to-day; but such was not the overland route of 1789. In that year, Major John Taylor of the Bombay establishment, partly for private reasons, and partly on behalf of the Honourable East India Company, decided, as the sea-route *viâ* the Cape was ineligible at that season, to proceed to India by an overland journey, *viâ* the Tyrol, Venice, Scanderoon, Aleppo, the Great Desert to Bassorah, and the Persian Gulf. His companions in this most arduous undertaking were Mr Blackader, also of the Company's service, and Mrs Taylor, who intended only to proceed as far as Venice, but who eventually elected to follow her husband to India. The first and most necessary item of the outfit required for the journey, and upon the worth of which the Major lays great stress, was a strong travelling coach, completely fitted up. To us of to-day it is difficult to understand the meaning of the term, unless one takes for a model that famous carriage of the First Napoleon which was so familiar an object to our young eyes in the showrooms of Madame Tussaud. To this, besides the necessary changes

of linen, were added two pair of pistols and a gun 'with the necessary apparatus;' portable soup, tea, a medicine chest; some maps of the countries through which they were to pass, a compass, a spyglass, a sextant, and some phosphorus matches. Two servants accompanied the party—one a native of Bengal, and the other a European, who could talk both French and German.

A start was made from London at 10 A.M. on the 22d of August 1789, and Ostend was reached in twenty-eight hours. Fast coach-travelling leaves little time for observation of scenery or people; but in the Major's notebook we find remarks upon the different places at which they stopped, which read strangely now. The approach to Aix-la-Chapelle is described as 'unspeakably bad;' at Cologne the accommodation seemed tolerable; but the travellers were detained there all night, as the gates of the city were closed immediately after their arrival, and were not opened till next morning; they therefore slept all night in their coach, so as to be able to start at an early hour next morning. Nassau is 'poor and ill built;' while near it are described the hot springs of 'Embs,' which, however, 'were not much frequented,' as the more fashionable attractions of Spa drew away all but those whose slender purses made the last place inaccessible. At Worms they were again obliged to sleep in the coach during heavy rain. Incidents such as fording rivers, passing dangerous mountain defiles with a wall on one side and a precipitous gulf on the other, are common. Although they make light of the bad accommodation and food they met with, they complain bitterly of the bad roads, of the inefficiency of the drivers, and of the want of post-horses. At almost every town they lost time waiting for relays of horses, and had to submit to the extortion and insolence of the postmasters. For two days they travelled behind the carriage and suite of the Polish ambassador to the Porte, who of course monopolised all the fresh posthorses, and left behind him his jaded cattle for Major Taylor's use. At Trent, to avoid this, he changed his route, and thus got ahead of the ambassador, and reached Venice twenty-four hours before him. The total distance from London to Venice (ten hundred and fifty-two miles) was accomplished in seventeen days, and at a cost of two hundred and fourteen pounds three shillings and sixpence.

In the city of the Doges the party was detained from the 8th until the 17th of September before they could secure a vessel to proceed down the Adriatic. However, after many wearying delays, they embarked in a small brig, whose master agreed to conduct them in safety to Cyprus, the passengers finding themselves in everything save water, fuel, and fire; and to defray their passage they were to pay the captain the sum of seventy-one pounds and tenpence, and further to make him a present according to their generosity and to the attention they received on board his ship. That the comfort and speed of the journey were not great, we may infer from the earnestness with which Major Taylor urges his friends never, in a like emergency, to engage with a Slavonian. Here, enraged with these needless delays, they attempted to leave the ship and to engage with another. This plan the captain attempted to frustrate by refusing to allow them to disem-

bark. However, this was finally accomplished, and Zante was quitted on the 14th of November, an English vessel bound for the Levant having opportunely made its appearance; and the party landed at Scanderon on the 28th. From here they rode to Antioch under the protection of parties of Turkish soldiers placed along the route to protect travellers from the extortions of various neighbouring pashas; and they entered into that ancient stronghold of Christianity after two days' journey. Of the inhospitality and hostility of the Antiocheans, Major Taylor speaks bitterly; and when they finally got away, the party, by the advice of a friendly Armenian, walked to the outskirts of the town, to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of the natives, who would not allow to Europeans the dignity of mounting on horseback within their gates.

From Antioch, their way led to Aleppo—which our traveller enthusiastically describes as a flower-surrounded city rising from the bosom of a desert—and thence to Bassorah across the Great Desert. Major Taylor engaged a caravan for his party at a cost of three hundred and thirty-three pounds six shillings and eightpence, by which they were allowed fourteen camels for the tents, baggage, &c., besides those for their own riding. Thanks to the intelligence of their escort, the usual troubles to be expected from hostile sheiks were avoided or compromised by presents; and after thirty days' march and the endurance of many discomforts and privations, they entered Bassorah. Here they rejoiced to see the British flag flying over the house of the Resident, who received them cordially. The comforts they here enjoyed, the fruit which abounds in that district, appeared to them, after their many and arduous trials, the height of luxury. On the whole, their journey through the Desert was a quick one; for, though Major Taylor allows that, mounted on a dromedary like his Arab guide, and travelling express with no encumbrances of tent or baggage, a man may cross the Desert in thirteen days, yet he judges that few Europeans could stand the fatigue and exposure.

At Bassorah they were not exposed to any needless delay, for the cruiser *Intrepid*, belonging to the Honourable East India Company, was fortunately in the bay; so the party promptly embarked for Bombay, and, after one or two *contretemps*, reached their destination, after a passage of twenty-one days, on the 23d of February 1790; thus making a total of one hundred and eighty-six days from London. The entire cost of this journey for the three travellers and their two servants was thirteen hundred and twelve pounds eighteen shillings and threepence.

Such is a brief sketch of what our great-grand-fathers underwent who tried the overland route to India just one hundred years ago; and on the whole, Major Taylor and his party were very fortunate. Five years previously, a party of gentlemen had essayed to return from India by this Bassorah route, and on their arrival in that city, found the Desert to be reported by the natives in so unsettled a state, that they changed their line of march, and embarked upon the river Euphrates, to Hillah, thence to Bagdad, and so to Aleppo. They divided their numbers; and the first party, under protestations of friendship and promises of escort, were cruelly murdered by the

Arabs. The second band, warned by signs and symptoms of excitement among their treacherous allies, only saved their lives by their determined attitude; and after numberless escapes from worse than death, arrived in Marseilles twenty-one months after their departure from Bombay.

Though Major Taylor could hardly deem his experiment a success, he was too much impressed with the necessity of finding an expeditious route to India to be discouraged by his failure. In 1789, France was threatening the safety of our Indian possessions. The Eagle was striving to rend from the Lion this important and valuable prey. So Major Taylor argued that India would be attacked through Egypt and the Red Sea, and urged that British supremacy should be maintained in these parts at any cost. Keeping this, then, in his mind, he next records his journey to England via Suez, which journey he computed could be done in the most expeditious manner and in the most favourable season in sixty-five days eight hours. To effect this, he advocated that an agent should be established at Messina with relays of boats to forward despatches to Alexandria; that from thence the consul should forward them by native messengers to Suez; that they should be conveyed from there to Mocha by relays of country-boats, for whose safety armed vessels should be maintained in the Red Sea; and that at Mocha one of the Company's cruisers should be in waiting to sail at once for Bombay.

Such was the quickest means that could be devised a century ago to communicate between England and India; and it must be borne in mind that sixty-five days could only hold good in the most favourable season of the year, and without regard to the numberless delays that might arise where so many changes and different bearers were necessary. For the expenses of this journey for a single gentleman travelling without a servant, Major Taylor found by experience that it could not be done for less than one hundred and fifty pounds. As for letters and packages from India to England, the scale of charges was in 1793 as follows: two ounces, four rupees (eight shillings); three ounces, nine rupees; four ounces, sixteen rupees; five ounces, thirty-five rupees.

But this or any overland route to India was in 1789 practically closed to any but the Livingstones and Stanleys of their day. It was an arduous and difficult undertaking, full, as we have seen, of perils by land and sea from robbers and pirates. It bore no more likeness to the overland route of to-day than did the pillions upon which our great-grandmothers rode to church to Pullman cars. The difference is too great for us of the nineteenth century to draw a parallel. Let the reader who is unacquainted with modern improvements go down to the docks and inspect one of the magnificent Peninsular and Oriental vessels that weekly start for the East. It is absurd to say that they are merely comfortable, for many who travel by them experience more of luxury while on them than they have ever done before. From the electric light to chain mattresses, nothing is wanting to complete the comfort of passengers, and all responsibility for the voyage drops the moment the passenger sets foot on deck until he reaches Bombay.

Of the old sea-route—that is, the ordinary

journey round the Cape—it is needless to speak. Vile accommodation, worse food, and still worse water, and a journey that lasted indefinitely from seven to ten months, formed the sum-total that might be gathered from its logbook. Truly, if the old Company's servants reaped a rich harvest in India and shook the pagoda tree to some purpose, they deserved all they gathered. If, indeed, we are to judge of the future by the past, how shall we prophesy for the year of grace 1989? What will then be our position on the political map? We cannot tell; but no change that can occur will be as perplexing to us, could we then 'revisit the glimpses of the moon,' as would be the changes that have taken place during the last hundred years to our ancestors of 1789.

JEREMY YORK.

CONCLUSION.

EIGHT months have passed, and the scene is now on the broad equinoctial ocean, with the fiery atmosphere of the Antilles in every cat's-paw that tarnishes the polished heaving mirror let the faint air blow whence it will; a sky of copper brightening into blinding dazzle round about the sun, that at his meridian shines almost directly over the mast-heads, and transforms the vast spread of sea into a sheet of white fire, trembling into the blue distance faint with the haze of heat.

There was a small West Indiaman named the *City of Glasgow* that had been lying stagnated on these fervid parallels for hard upon four days. There was no virtue in awnings, in wetted decks, in yawning skylights, in open portholes, and the heels of windsails to render the atmosphere of the 'tween-decks and cabin tolerable to the people aboard the ship. The air was sickly with the smell of blistered paint, the brass-work was fiery hot, and took the skin off the hand that for a moment unconsciously touched it; the pitch was like putty between the seams; the fresh water in the scuttle-butts was warm as newly drawn milk, but quite without dairy fragrance. It was time, indeed, for the wind to blow. The mere detention was nothing in those pleasant times of groping. In cooler climes the mate would have been satisfied to whistle for wind for a month, and go below every time his watch was up with a feeling that he had done everything that was necessary, and that all was well. But the heat made an enforced resting-place off the Cuban heights insufferable.

It was half-past eight o'clock in the morning watch; the hands had come up from breakfast and were distributed on various jobs about the deck. There was not a breath of air; but there was a run of glassy folds from the south-west, which within the past hour had somewhat increased in weight; and upon these long-drawn heavings, the ship, that was a mere tub in form, as all vessels were in those days, saving, perhaps, the piratical *barco longos*, rolled as regularly as a pendulum swings, swelling out her canvas to one lurch, only to bring it in to the masts again at

the next with sounds like the explosions of nine-pounders in the tops.

The captain of the *City of Glasgow* was a small fiery-faced man, with deep-set eyes that glowed like cairngorms under the shaggy thatches of the brows, a nose that not a little resembled a small carrot both in shape and hue, and a mouth with a set of the lips that indicated a highly peppery temper. He walked to the mate, who stood near the wheel fanning himself with a great straw hat.

'When is this going to end, sir?'

'I don't know, sir.'

'Blood, sir! Is there no limit to calms? Thunder and slugs! If this goes on, we must tow—d'ye see, *tow*, I say—get the long-boat over and crowd her with men. What though they frizzle? We must get out of this, or'—

He was probably about to launch into a piece of profanity, but he was interrupted by a cry coming down from aloft, delivered by a man who had been sent on to the mainroyal yard to repair some defect that the vigilant eye of the boatswain had detected: 'Sail ho!'

The little fiery-faced captain started, and looked as if he scarcely credited his hearing; then running to the rail, he thrust his head clear of the awning and bawled up to the fellow, 'Where away?'

'Right astarn,' was the answer of the man, swinging with one hand from the tie as he pointed with the other directly over the taffrail to the gleaming haze of sea-line there.

'Well,' said the skipper, 'that should be a sign there's wind somewhere about.'

'It is some craft,' said the mate, 'that may be bringing a draught of air along with her.'

'Don't talk of a draught of air, sir,' said the captain passionately; 'what we want is wind, sir, a fresh breeze—a gale—a howling hurricane, by thunder! H'an't we had enough of cat's-paws? Draught of air!' he muttered under his breath with a look of loathing in his eyes as he made them meet in a squint upon the compass card.

But the mate was right on one side of his remark, at all events. What the fellow aloft had sighted proved to be a ship climbing the shining slope to the impulse of a breeze; but it was not until her royals were trembling like stars above the horizon, with nothing else under them showing, that the people of the *City of Glasgow* caught sight of the line of the wind darkening the waters in the south-west. In half an hour's time it was blowing into the canvas of the West Indiaman, raising a pretty tinkling sound of running waters all around her; and though it came warm as the human breath, yet, after the long spell of hot and tingling calm, it put a sense of coolness into each fevered cheek turned gratefully to the quarter whence it came. If ever the crew of the *City of Glasgow* desired an illustration of the ponderous sailing qualities of the clumsy old castellated wagon they navigated, they might have found it in the rapid growth of the stranger astern. By noon she had risen to the reefband of her forecourse, with her flying jib yearning fair over the water-line. She was clearly making the same course as the West Indiaman. Indeed, it took rather the form of a pursuit, for, when first seen, she was apparently heading to the north-west; but scarcely had the

West Indiaman to the first of the breeze trimmed yards for the north-east, than the stranger was observed to also haul her wind.

The fiery little captain did not like it. What was she? A Spaniard? A Frenchman? A Dutchman? He packed on studding-sails, but to no purpose, for the fellow astern came along hand over hand, as though her crew were warping her up to a stationary object. Presently she was showing fair on the water, a big yellow craft, with great curling headboards and a double line of batteries. Then, when she was plain in view, puff! blew a white ball of smoke from a forechaser, followed by the dull thud of the distant gun; and a minute after, the mate, who was working away at her through a long perspective glass of the period, cried out that she had hoisted the Union Jack at her fore.

'Well, and what's that to me?' bawled the fiery little captain.—'Anybody observe if that gun was shot?' There was no answer. 'What do they mean by shooting at us? Wounds, but it may be a trap! Hoist away our colours and keep all fast.'

Five minutes later, the stranger fired again; but observing that no notice was taken of the summons, she waited until she was within range, then, yawing, let drive with such good aim as to bring the West Indiaman's mizzen topgallant-mast down with a run. The sight of the wreckage struck a panic into the soul of the little fiery captain.

'Down stun'-sails; man the braces!' he roared; 'bring her to, or he'll founder us.'

In a few moments the *City of Glasgow* lay with her foretopsail to the mast, docilely waiting for what was to happen.

It was not long before the ship had ranged alongside, and she then proved to be a great fifty-gun man-of-war, an Englishman on a West Indian cruise, with crowds of pigtailed heads looking over her bulwarks forward, and a quarterdeck brilliant with the quaint naval uniforms of that day—if, indeed, it can be said that any approach to a uniform was then established. A stout man in a cocked-hat, white silk stockings, handsomely laced coat, and a big white wig, mounting on to the rail of the man-of-war, clapped a huge copper speaking-trumpet to his lips and bawled out, 'Ship ahoy! What ship are you?'

The little peppery captain sprang on to a hen-coop and answered, 'The *City of Glasgow* of London, from Havana.'

'Keep your topsail to the mast; I'll send a boat,' cried the other.

'A boat?' cried the little chap, turning to his mate. 'What does he want to send a boat for? Does he question my papers?—Zounds! if there be any sort of law still agoing in the old country, I'll make him pay for that mess up there;' and he sent a fiery glance at his topgallant-mast.

The boat plunged from the man-of-war's side; a crowd of sturdy fellows armed to the teeth jumped into her; a young marine exquisite, with a hanger on his hip and a cambric pocket-handkerchief in his breast, his laced hat airily cocked upon his head, and a flash of jewels upon his fingers, took his place in the sternsheets, and with a few sweeps of the long oars, the boat was alongside. The dandy lieutenant stepped aboard.

'Why did you not heave to,' he exclaimed in an affected drawl, 'when you were summoned by our cannon?'

'How did I know what you fired for?' cried the irritable captain. 'Look how you've served me,' and he pointed aloft.

'Pon honour!' exclaimed the lieutenant, 'you deserve that we should have sunk you.' He applied the scented pocket-handkerchief to his nose, as though he could not support the smell of the hot pitch and blistered paint rising into the atmosphere from off the Indianman, and exclaimed in a voice as if he should swoon, 'Muster your men, sir, and for the Lud's sake be quick about it.'

The little captain fully understanding the significance of this order, was about to remonstrate, but seemed to change his mind on catching the glance that was shot at him from under the seemingly sleepy lid of the languid, perfumed sea-dandy, and repeated the lieutenant's order to his mate, turning sulkily on his heels afterwards, and starting off into a sharp fiery walk betwixt the binnacle and the mizzen rigging.

The boatswain's pipe shrilled to the silent hollows of the canvas aloft; the men stood along the deck, and the lieutenant with six armed seamen at his back fell to picking and choosing. The man-of-war wanted twenty men to complete her complement, and of these the Indianman must contribute ten. There was no help for it; and the little captain had presently the mortification to witness ten of his best seamen descend the side with their bundles and bags and enter the boat, which forthwith carried them aboard the fifty-gun ship.

One of these ten men was a tall handsome young fellow, whom no one who had before known him could have failed instantly to recognise as Jeremy York, spite of his assumption of the name of Jem Marloe, of his hair being cut short in front and rolled into a tail down his back, and of the hue of it, that had been a sunny auburn, being now whitened as though dusted with powder. He was the second of the ten men to step on board. It was not only that he was the most conspicuous of them all by reason of his stature and beauty—for his frame had long since erected itself into its old manly port out of the stoop and depression of ill health; he was specially noticeable besides for an air of profound indifference. Most of the others glanced insolently and mutinously about them, savagely resentful of this impressment and of their liberty as merchant seamen being abruptly ended without regard to wages, to cherished hopes, to their homes, their wives, their sweethearts, their children ashore. A number of the ship's crew stood near the mainmast watching the new hands as they went forwards marshalled by the boatswain. On a sudden Jeremy York was seen to come to a dead stand with his eyes fixed upon one of these sailors; his bundle fell from his hand, his face turned to a deathlike white, shiver after shiver chased his form, they saw his fingers convulsively working, and his eyes, filled with horror, dismay, incredulity, seemed to start from their sockets with the intensity of his stare. They believed he was seized with a fit, and would fall to the deck in a minute; and amongst those who sprang to his assistance was the fellow on whom his gaze

was riveted. He shrieked out at his approach, and fell upon one knee trembling violently, swaying to and fro, to and fro with his hands pressed to his eyes in the posture of one wild almost to madness.

'Is the man ill?' bawled a lieutenant from the quarter-deck. 'If so, bear him below, and let the surgeon attend him.'

York staggered on to his legs, and looking at the man at first sight of whom he had appeared to have fallen crazy, he cried in a weak faltering voice, 'Your name is Worksop? You were bo'sun of a West Indianman.'

The other, full of amazement, with a slow bewildered stare at York and then round upon his shipmates, answered in a hurricane note, 'That's so: I ain't ashamed. My name's Worksop, and I was bo'sun of a West Indianman, as ye say.'

'Look at me!' cried York. 'O man, look at me! What have I suffered through you! Do not you remember me?'

Any one would have laughed outright to have witnessed the perplexity that lengthened yet the longdrawn countenance of Worksop.

'What's all this?' cried the lieutenant in charge of the deck, coming forward angrily.

'Sir,' shrieked York, 'I have been hanged for the murder of that man!'

'Mad, by Heaven!' cried the lieutenant: 'sun-stroke, no doubt. Take the poor devil below, and see to him.'

'Sir,' cried York, clasping his hands, 'I beg you to listen to me one minute. I am not mad indeed. Mr Worksop there will remember that one night more than eight months ago he gave me a share of his bed at an inn at Deal called the *Lonely Star*.'

Worksop started and looked intently at the speaker.

'I quitted the bed to get some water; when I returned, my companion was gone. Blood was found in the bed; there were bloodstains down the staircase, along the roadway to the beach; there was blood upon my shirt, although, as God is my witness, I knew not how it came there. They found his knife upon me, which I had taken from his pocket whilst he slept to prise open the door with; and also a gold coin belonging to him they found, though how I came by it I vow, before Heaven, I know not; and on this evidence they hanged me!'

He faltered, hid his face, and fell to the deck in a dead faint.

'Hanged him, *hanged him for me!*' shouted Worksop in the voice of a man about to suffocate. 'Hanged him for *me!*' he repeated. 'But, lor bless my soul and body! I was never murdered, mates!' and in a very ecstasy of astonishment, he hooked an immense quid out of his cheek and flung it overboard.

'Rally this poor fellow, some of you,' exclaimed the lieutenant, and hastened aft to the captain to make his report.

A bucket of cold water topped with a dram of rum served to restore York to consciousness; and when he had his wits, he and Worksop were conducted by a midshipman to the captain's cabin.

'What is all this?' inquired the gray-haired commander, levelling a piercing glance at York,

as though he had made up his mind to be confronted by a madman. 'D'ye mean to tell us that you've been hanged for the murder of yonder seaman alongside of you?'

'Yes, sir; I've been hanged as his murderer;' and thus breaking the silence, York proceeded. He told his story in good language, plainly and intelligently, with an occasional catch of his breath and a sob or two when he spoke of his sweetheart.

'You were hanged,' cried the commander, watching him with a fascinated countenance, for the corroborative looks and nods of Worksop as York delivered his tale had soon abundantly satisfied the captain that the poor young fellow was speaking the truth—'you were hanged,' he repeated, 'strung up by your neck in the customary style, I suppose, and left to dangle for the usual time. And yet you are alive!'

'I am coming to that, sir,' said York respectfully. 'Everybody was against me whilst I lay in jail awaiting my trial at the assizes; but after I had been sentenced to be hanged, there came a bit of a change in some folk's minds; not that they doubted my guilt, but they thought it hard, perhaps, that a young fellow should die for a crime he swore he had never committed—that he should suffer death on no stronger evidence than some blood-marks and a knife and a coin, when by rights they should have found the murdered man's money upon him, besides making sure that he *was* dead,' glancing as he spoke at Worksop, 'by the discovery of his body. Sir, my sweetheart got to hear of this feeling and worked upon it, and got a number of young fellows to hang about the gibbet and shore me up, as is often done, I'm told, after the cart had been drawn away. The rope was too long, my feet touched the ground—that's what they told me. It all went black with me soon after I felt the tightness in my throat; and when I recovered my mind, I found myself in a little cottage someway the Deal side of Sandwich, with my sweetheart, Jenny, kneeling by my side, and a Sandwich barber letting blood from my arm. What was then to be done, sir, being a live man, but to get out of the country as fast as I could? Jenny helped to disguise me, gave me all the money she had, having spent what the owners of my ship had sent her on a lawyer to defend me at the trial; and walking as far as Ramsgate I found a vessel there that wanted a man; and coming to the Thames after a coasting trip, I signed for the West Indiaman out of which I have just been pressed. That's the truth of the story, sir, as Heaven hears me.'

Once again he hid his face, and his strong frame shook with a violent fit of sobbing. They waited until he had collected himself, burning as they were with curiosity to hear Worksop's story, for the solution of the amazing mystery must lie in that.

'And now, what's *your* yarn?' says the captain.

Worksop seemed to emerge with his prodigiously elongated countenance out of a very trance or stupefaction of astonishment. He wiped his brow, threw a bewildered look around, dried his lips, and began.

'Your honour,' he said, 'this is how it was; and I do hope Heaven'll forgive me for being the involuntary cause of this poor gentleman's most

tremendous sufferings. He comes to bed on that precious night all right, just as he says, and found me a bit growling and surly, I desay, for the fact was, your honour, that same afternoon, unbeknown to anybody belonging to the *Lonely Star*, I'd called upon a barber that was a stranger to me to let me some blood for an ugly pain I had in the side; and when this poor young fellow came to bed, I was lying very uneasy with the smart of the wound the barber had made. Well, I fell asleep, but was awakened by feeling my side cold and damp. There was light enough coming through the window, as this young man has already told your honour, to throw things out middling visible; and with half an eye I saw that I was bleeding badly, and that if I didn't look sharp, I must lose more blood than I was ever likely to get back again. I dressed myself in a hurry, meaning to run round to the barber's house, that he might strap up the wound he had made in ship-shape fashion, just noticing, whilst I pulled on my clothes, that this young gentleman had left the bed, and was out of the room, though I scarce gave the matter a moment's heed, being too anxious to get the bleeding stopped to think of anything else. I bundled down the staircase, and as I arrived on the pavement, a group of men pounced upon me. They were a pressgang from the first-rate the *Thunderer*, lying in the Downs. I tried to make 'em understand my condition; but instead of listening, they turned to and gagged me, and carried me, dripping as I was, which they wouldn't take much notice of in the dark, down to a bit of a pier on the beach, tossed me into the boat, and put me aboard, where I was properly doctored after the wound came to be looked at. When I'd served two months aboard the *Thunderer*, they transferred me to a sloop, and afterwards drafted me into this here vessel, your honour; and that's the blessed truth,' cried he, smiting the palm of his hand with his fist, 'as I'm alive to tell it.'

'Did you miss the knife?' inquired the commander.

'I did, your honour, when I came to feel in my pockets.'

'And the Spanish gold coin?'

'I did, sir, to my sorrow. I had thirty-six guineas in cash; the money was all right; but I'd have given it four times over to have got that Spanish bit back again.'

'How do you account for your possession of it?' inquired the captain, addressing York.

'Why, your honour, I think I can explain that,' cried Worksop, before the young fellow could answer. 'I've no more belief that I was robbed of it than I have that I'm a murdered man. This will have been it, your honour. The blade of my knife was a bit worn, and there was a vacant length in the hollow of it when clapsed. The coin must have got jammed into that vacancy. It would fit well, sir; mor'n once I have drawn out the knife with the coin stuck in it. There was nothen, I suppose, but the wish to keep that coin away from my other money that allowed me to let it lie in the pocket where my knife was.'

'A wonderful story indeed,' said the captain.

—'What is your name, my man?'

'Jeremy York, sir.'

'It will be my duty to put you in the way of

righting yourself with the law, that has most grievously sinned against you, at the earliest opportunity.—You can go forward, now, both of you.'

The captain of the man-of-war was as good as his word. On the arrival of the vessel at Havana, he sent York and Workop on board a king's ship that would be sailing for home in a few days. Out of his own purse he presented the young man with a handsome sum of money; whilst all hands, from the first-lieutenant down to the loblolly boy, subscribed dollars enough to handsomely tassel the handkerchief of the victim of circumstantial evidence. Further, the captain gave him a letter addressed to a relative of his holding an important official position at the Admiralty, in which he related York's story at large, and begged him so to interest himself in the affair as to contrive that the unfortunate young man should have his character thoroughly re-established, along with such reparation from government as influence could obtain.

The story is one hundred and thirty years old; time has blackened the canvas; one sees the singular picture but dimly, and such sequel as remains must be left to the imagination of the student of this blurred old-world piece. Yet tradition is not wholly unhelpful, for there is reason at least to believe that public emotion was sufficiently stirred by the representations of the broadsheets and prints of those days to result in a sum of money considerable enough not only to enable Jeremy York to marry his faithful sweetheart Jenny Bax, but to free the young man from the obligation of going to sea for a living, and establish them both in a snug business in the neighbourhood of Limehouse.

SWEARING-IN AT HIGHGATE.

ABOUT one hundred years ago the question, 'Have you been sworn at Highgate?' was one very frequently asked in all parts of the country. At that time this interesting ceremony was flourishing in full vigour, and every one had heard of it.

It's a custom at Highgate, that all who go through Must be sworn on the horns, sir; and so, sir, must you. Bring the horns, shut the door; now, sir, take off your hat;

When you come here again, don't forget to mind *that*.

This last line refers to the peculiar password of those initiated at Highgate. If a man emphasised the word '*that*' in conversation, one knew he had been sworn at Highgate. The custom is now quite a thing of the past, even in Highgate itself, and is scarcely known.

Highgate, being near London, in the palmy days of coaching was naturally a great place for taverns. In 1826, when it was not a very large place, there were no fewer than nineteen, the Gatehouse and the Red Lion being the most important. The Gatehouse inn used to extend right across the road to the burial-ground of the old chapel; hence the name. This arch was taken down in 1769, owing to its lowness. These inns derived much support from soldiers in time of war, as Highgate was generally a halting-place.

Imagine, then, a coach—there were sixty passed

a day—to be just stopping at one of the Highgate inns. When the passengers were all crowded into the room for refreshment, the subject of swearing-in was introduced. It was soon discovered as to who had taken the oath before, and who were willing to take it. When some one declared his willingness to be sworn, in came the landlord in a black gown, mask, and wig, accompanied by the clerk, holding the horns, which were fixed on a pole five feet long. Then the oath was administered to the person proposed. The oath was as follows, as nearly as possible: 'Upstanding and uncovered! Silence! Take notice what I now say unto you, for *that* is the first word of your oath, mind *that*! You must acknowledge me to be your adopted father; I must acknowledge you to be my adopted son. If you do not call me father, you forfeit a bottle of wine; and if I do not call you son, I forfeit the same. And now, my good son, if you are travelling through this village of Highgate, and you have no money in your pocket, go call for a bottle of wine at any house you think proper to go into, and book it to your father's score. If you have any friends with you, you may treat them as well; but if you have money of your own, you must pay for it for yourself. For you must not say you have no money, when you have; neither must you convey the money out of your own pocket into your friends' pockets, for I shall search you as well as them; and if it is found that you, or they, have money, you forfeit a bottle of wine for trying to cozen and cheat your poor old ancient father. You must not eat brown bread while you can get white, unless you like the brown better; you must not drink small-beer while you can get strong, except you like the small the best; or you must not kiss the maid while you can kiss the mistress, except you like the maid best; but sooner than lose a good chance, you may kiss them both.—And now, my good son, for a word or two of advice. Keep from all houses of ill repute, and every place of public resort for bad company; beware of false friends, for they will turn to be your foes, and inveigle you into houses where you may lose your money and get no redress; keep from thieves of every denomination.—And now, my good son, I wish you a safe journey through Highgate and this life. I charge you, my good son, that if you know any in this company who have not taken this oath, you must cause them to take it, or make each of them forfeit a bottle of wine; for if you fail to do so, you will forfeit a bottle of wine yourself.—So now, my son, God bless you! Kiss the horns, or a pretty girl, if you see one here, which you like best, and so be free of Highgate.' Hereupon, a woman, if present, was kissed; if not, the horns—an option not allowed formerly. In later times, after this salutation, the following was added: 'Silence! I have now to acquaint you with your privilege as a freeman of this place. If at any time you are going through Highgate, and want to rest yourself, and you see a pig lying in a ditch, you have liberty to kick her out and take her place; but if you see three lying together, you must only kick out the middle one and lie between them.'

The essential point for the neophyte to remem-

ber was *that*. If he forgot it, he was liable to be resworn. By this password, too, he could be known among his fellow-freedmen.

The origin of the practice is doubtful. Some say it was started by a landlord to increase his trade. The following, however, is the most likely explanation. Highgate, being the nearest spot to London where cattle stopped on their way between Smithfield and the North, many graziers put up at the Gatehouse. These being joined in fraternity, disliked admitting others to join them. Finding they could not exclude strangers, they brought round an ox, and made them kiss its horns, as a mark of fellowship, or quit them.

The horns were of different kinds. The Gatehouse, the Mitre, the Green Dragon, the Bell, the Wrestler, the Bull, the Lord Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, the Crown, the Duke's Head, the Rose and Crown, and the Angel had stags' horns. The Red Lion and Sun had bullocks' horns. The Coach and Horses, the Castle, the Red Lion, the Coopers' Arms, the Flask, and the Fox and Crown had rams' horns. In many of the inns the old horns remain, notably at the Gatehouse, where are an immense pair in the hall. Unfortunately, however, none of the registers of the names of those sworn have been preserved. These would probably reveal many names of celebrated men, who deigned to take a part in this jocularity. Lord Byron was one who was sworn here, and refers to the custom in *Childe Harold* (Canto i. stanza 70):

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribboned fair,
Others along the safer turnpike fly;
Some Richmond Hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
Ask ye, Bœotian shades! the reason why?
'Tis to the worship of the solemn horn,
Grasped in the holy hand of mystery,

In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till morn.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE art of cutting ship canals, which has reached such a wonderful development since the opening of that at Suez, is likely to receive an unfortunate check now that the scheme of piercing the Isthmus of Panama has proved so disastrous a financial failure. We feel much sympathy both with the promoter of this great enterprise and with those poor investors who have in many cases contributed to it all their savings. This scheme would most surely have been carried to a successful issue had not unforeseen obstacles presented themselves, the principal of which was the necessity of diverting the rapid waters of the river Chagres. A canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans will probably be made some day; but another route must be chosen, most probably the longer one by way of Lake Nicaragua, which, by the way, was the route advocated by the late Emperor Napoleon.

In the meantime, there comes a proposal to make another important Ship Canal which is to connect the Baltic and the White Seas. This

scheme dates from the time of Peter the Great; but it has remained dormant until the success of similar enterprises has once more aroused attention to this very hopeful project. There seems to be no great engineering difficulty to cope with, and it is quite certain that such a canal would have a strategical as well as an economical value; for such a water-way would open up a very large and fertile territory which suffers from the want of means of transport. The cost of this canal is estimated at ten million roubles; and the surveyors who have visited the district and sent in their Report assert that the difficulties of construction are practically nil. It is probable that the work of constructing this new canal will soon be entered upon.

Although the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888 has now become a thing of the past, we trust that many of the new machines and appliances shown there will not be suffered to sink into oblivion. Among these we call to mind the Collapsible Boat, designed by Mr Charles Henderson of 9 York Street, Glasgow. This boat is constructed of steel and wood combined, the framework having an outer flexible covering, made of a specially prepared canvas, which is both water-proof and rot-proof. This boat, although measuring nearly twenty-nine feet in length, weighs only eleven hundred-weight, and will contain with safety at sea sixty to seventy persons, together with water, provisions, &c., for their maintenance. In a collapsed state the boat only measures eleven inches in depth; and five such boats can be placed on board a vessel, one on the top of the other, and will only then occupy the space on board of an ordinary lifeboat. By means of this invention, therefore, it becomes possible for a large passenger steamer or emigrant ship to carry a sufficient number of boats, to save every life on board in case of emergency. We may mention that experiment shows that the boat can be rendered perfectly rigid and ready to place in the water in one minute; and innumerable trials have shown that the number of persons it will accommodate is not overestimated. In these days of frequent collisions at sea, it is the positive duty of ship-owners to provide a ready means of escape for those whose lives are entrusted to them, and it seems that this new collapsible boat offers a very efficient means of doing so.

Those who have much penwork to do have often very unpleasant experience of a complaint which is known as writers' cramp. This affection manifests itself as a cramp of the fingers, accompanied by great pain in the wrist, and many means have been suggested for mitigating it. We have lately received from Mr McGill of Fraserburgh an instrument which he calls the Brachionograph, which he has invented for the relief of sufferers from writers' cramp. It consists of a gauntlet of soft leather, which is laced on the arm from below the wrist to about three-quarters of the length of the forearm. At its lower part this gauntlet is provided with a short rod, which will carry a steel nib like an ordinary penholder. There also projects from the gauntlet, at a certain angle, a metal rod, terminating in a knob or ball. Both these attachments can be regulated by set screws. The gauntlet having been placed on the writer's arm, where it is almost concealed by the sleeve being pulled over it, he writes with the nib,

while his fingers rest idle on the paper before him. By this means the right hand enjoys complete rest, for all movement is brought about from the elbow. From this it will be seen that the instrument is also applicable to those who have lost or injured the right hand. We have tried this apparatus, and feel certain that it fulfils the object for which it is designed.

It is not often that pontoon bridges are used except for military purposes, but those of our readers who have visited the Rhine scenery may remember that there is such a bridge for general use between Coblenz and Ehrenbreitstein. One of the same kind has recently been opened on the Missouri River, at Nebraska City, and it accomplishes a scheme which has long been under discussion, but which had not been carried out previously owing to the rapid current of this river and the opposition offered by the steamboat Companies using the water-way. But both these difficulties having been overcome, the bridge is now in use; and a very curious structure it is. Its total width is twenty-four feet, and it has a roadway for vehicles in the centre, and a pathway on each side for foot-passengers. It is V-shape in form, the point of the V being directed down stream. By very clever mechanism, the bridge opens at this point, when a vessel needs to pass along the river, the action of the tide separating the two halves of the bridge, which then leave an unobstructed channel of five hundred and twenty-eight feet. The current, too, is made the means of closing the bridge, when the vessel has passed; the whole mechanism being put in action by one pair of hands. It is possible that similar bridges will, on account of their cheapness, be constructed on other streams.

The very successful series of Exhibitions which have taken place in London during the last few years are to be continued this year by the establishment of a Spanish Exhibition upon the site of the late American and Italian Exhibitions. And from the extensive preparations which are being made for this important show, it is almost sure to be successful. It is intended to gather here representative collections of articles from the chief centres of industry; and as Spain is not so much visited as other continental countries, English people no doubt will take this opportunity of learning more about it. As in the case of previous Exhibitions, national life will be illustrated by the erection of streets, occupied by citizens in their picturesque costumes, and engaged in their various employments.

Two novel vessels have recently been constructed in America, the first of which can be described as a steamboat, although it is very different from those of the ordinary pattern. It contains a boiler and engine at the stern of the boat, but the method by which this boiler is heated is entirely novel. The fuel is kerosene, which is vaporised by means of heat in a coiled tube, and is then driven out into the furnace and mixed with air. This mixed vapour will burn, it is said, without any smoke or smell, and without any fouling of the boiler tubes. Steam can be got up to working-pressure in three or four minutes, a circumstance which alone is very favourable to this type of vessel.

The other vessel to which we call attention has lately been described in the *New York Herald*.

This is still more of a novelty, in that the working parts are without motion, and therefore there is at once a guarantee that no power is lost by friction. Vaporised petroleum is here the active power in propelling the vessel, but instead of feeding the engine, the vapour is forced from a tank into cylinders, and is ignited by an electric spark. These cylinders are open to the water; and the continual and successive explosions of the vapour act upon that water, rocket-fashion, so that the boat is propelled by the various blows upon the resisting water caused by these constant explosions. The inventor, Mr John H. Secor, claims the following advantages for this boat. The supply of fuel is automatic, and this fuel is consumed directly it is introduced to the cylinders. There is instantaneous conversion of heat into power; and as the functions of the usual modern engine are performed by the combustion chambers, the room occupied by the ordinary machinery is almost altogether saved. We are not informed whether this new boat has been submitted to practical test.

We some time ago announced that M. Pasteur had proposed a novel method of grappling with the rabbit-pest in Australia and New Zealand. This method consisted in infecting the food of the rabbits with microbes of chicken cholera; and the experiments in this country had shown the method to be successful. But the experimental tests which have lately been carried out in New South Wales have to a certain extent failed. Rabbits which actually ate of the food prepared for them did die of the disease; but it is said that they did not carry it to other rabbits. In other words, there were no signs of contagion. It is noteworthy in referring to this subject that the colonists of these rabbit-ridden districts are compensated to a certain extent by the immense export of rabbit-skins which has taken place since the rabbit-plague became the question of the day. From New Zealand alone, during the past ten years, there have been sent out seventy million skins, valued at three-quarters of a million sterling; and during the same period, nearly half that quantity has been exported from Victoria. A large quantity of these skins reach the English market, where cony wool, as it is called, is valued at seven shillings per pound. Many of the cheaper kinds of furs which are used for the linings of coats and cloaks, although supposed to belong to more valued animals, really come from the despised bunny of the antipodes.

Dr Crookes, whose Radiometer astonished the scientific world a few years ago—an instrument, we may remind our readers, which shows the direct change of light into motion, and the phosphorescence of electrified molecules in high vacua—has presented to the Department of Science and Art his collection of instruments, including the first radiometer ever constructed. Some of these instruments are not only of great scientific value, but of intrinsic value also, for they contain collections of rubies, diamonds, and other precious stones for exhibiting the phenomena of phosphorescence. These instruments will be of great value also from an educational point of view, and will be kept for permanent exhibition in the Science Galleries of the South Kensington Museum.

‘Who shall decide when doctors disagree?’ says

the poet Pope. And surely we may quote this line in referring to that remarkable substance called saccharine, among the latest of the many by-products of the gas manufacture. Some doctors tell us that it is a valuable remedy in certain diseases, that it might usefully take the place of sugar, because it does not interfere with the digestive processes, and that it is in every way innocuous. But their French confreres are of quite the opposite opinion, and warn people against the use of saccharine, as if it were actually a poison.

The propulsion of street tramway cars by means of electricity, although it has been tried in this country, has not, in general, so far succeeded. In New York it appears to be different, for the Julien Electric Promotion Company of that city are now running three cars, apparently with very satisfactory results. These vehicles are driven by means of accumulators or storage batteries, and whereas it used to be necessary to charge these batteries after each trip of twelve miles, they will now run for double that distance without recharging; and the Company hope shortly to make arrangements by which the motors will run thirty-six miles with a single charge from the stationary dynamo-machine.

The medical editor of a certain London paper, who advocates a vegetarian diet, certainly seems to have the courage of his opinions, for he has undertaken to live for an entire month on nothing but whole meal and distilled water. This meal he grinds himself, mixes it with cold distilled water into a batter, and bakes it for an hour and a half. He allows himself one pound of meal and two pints of water daily. The result of this interesting experiment will be looked forward to both by vegetarians and flesh-eaters, and cannot fail in any case to throw light upon many physiological points which are open to question.

The great telescope at the Lick Observatory, California, seems to answer all the expectations of those who were concerned in its establishment. It has already been used for photographic purposes; and we have just had an opportunity of seeing a very marvellous photograph of the moon five inches in diameter, which has been taken by its aid. But big telescopes seem to be somewhat like big guns in the desire which they generate for something bigger still, and it is said that the university of Southern California intends to rival the telescope at the Lick Observatory altogether by constructing one on a far larger scale. Whereas the object-glass of the latter instrument measures three feet across, the contemplated instrument is to have one of forty inches. But it is one thing to contemplate the construction of such an object-glass, and a different thing to complete that construction, not that there is so much difficulty in the work as in producing a plate of glass free from striæ and other defects. However, it is said that the well-known firm of A. Clark & Co. has been requested to undertake the work.

Although we have no white ants in this country to eat away our woodwork and to leave but a thin shell behind them, we have a destroyer of wood which is in many cases almost as bad. We refer to dry-rot, which often will render a sound piece of timber as soft as pith. The question has lately been discussed whether this dry-rot is contagious; and it has been asserted that the germ of this

disease in wood may be communicated to sound timber by tools which have previously been used where dry-rot exists. The suggestion is plausible, and it would not seem unnatural that contagion should be possible under such circumstances, and therefore it is a matter that should be submitted to experts.

The invention of the microscope has usually been credited to a Dutchman, who lived towards the end of the sixteenth century. Some doubt has recently been thrown upon the correctness of this statement in a paper presented to the Academy of Sciences, Paris, by M. Govi. He does not claim for one of his own countrymen the honour of having invented this marvellous instrument, but traces its discovery to Galileo, who, although not the inventor of the telescope, is certainly the first man who used it for astronomical research. M. Govi supports his views by certain letters from Galileo which speak unmistakably of magnified images of minute objects, such as parts of insects, &c. We are inclined to think that the discovery of the microscope can hardly be credited to any one man. We know that the use of a lens was known many centuries before the time of Galileo, and by the natural process of evolution the microscope was bound to follow it. But the instrument did not reach its development until late in the present century, and we must certainly look among men of our own times for those to whom the most credit is due.

A train on the Midland Railway has during the past two winters been fitted with a heating apparatus known as the Foulis Patent Railway Carriage-heater. The apparatus consists of a small boiler, which is placed above the ordinary roof-lamp of the carriage, communicating with which are two pipes which serve to circulate the water, and which in turn are connected with a heater below the seat of the carriage. The plan is effectual, and has the merit of being quite free from danger. At the same time it will be observed that the heat used costs nothing.

The whole of Great Britain and Northern France were during the month of December almost constantly enveloped in fog, and this fog was of course felt in its greatest intensity at London, where smoke abatement is a thing at present only talked about. An unusual feature of this fog was the saturated state of the atmosphere, and the leafless branches of the trees testified to the fact by their constant dripping. It is pointed out by the *Times* that this species of wet fog is not nearly so dangerous to life as the dry variety, by which, a few years back, many of the beasts at the London Cattle Show were suffocated. Nothing of the kind occurred during the late show, although the darkness was sometimes that of night. It is suggested that it would be an interesting subject for study to investigate the two conditions under which fog is presented to us, and the reason why one should be so much more harmful than the other.

We are glad to observe that the Zoological Society have secured three living specimens of Pallas's sand-grouse, the interesting stranger from Asia which lately in large flocks paid a visit to the British Isles. On the appearance of any rare feathered creature, it is the custom to use every endeavour to shoot it; and we are glad, therefore,

of evidence that at least three of these birds escaped. In the island of Møen (Denmark) lately, a *rara avis* had not so lucky an escape, for it was shot at sight. This bird was a specimen of the Isabelline Courser (*Cursorius Isabellinus*), a native of the Desert of Sahara, which has only twice before been seen in Europe.

THE FORTH BRIDGE AND THE NOVEMBER GALES.

THE severity of the gales in November last, as measured by the recording instruments at the Forth Bridge, affords ample evidence of the intensity of one of the most prolonged storms that have been felt in Scotland for many years. The worst of these gales was that which began early on the morning of the 16th and continued with but little intermission into the morning of the 17th. The wind blew from the south-west; and those in charge of the Forth Bridge believed that, though blowing very hard on Friday, the gale was if anything more severe in the early hours of the following morning.

The Forth Bridge wind-gauges, situated on the old castle of Inchgarvie—a familiar object to all visitors to Queensferry—are three in number. The large gauge presents an area of three hundred square feet to the wind, and is fixed parallel to the centre line of the Forth Bridge, being specially designed and erected to test the pressure of wind over a larger area than that of the gauges commonly in use. This gauge registered at 9 A.M. on the 17th November, for the previous twenty-four hours, a maximum pressure of twenty-seven pounds per square foot. The small revolving gauge, which has an area of only one and a half square feet, and by means of a vane is always at right angles to the direction of the wind, indicated a pressure on the same day of thirty-five pounds per square foot; whilst the gauge of similar dimensions, but rigidly fixed with its face parallel to the centre line of the bridge, registered on the same date forty-one pounds per square foot, a pressure corresponding to a velocity of wind exceeding ninety miles per hour.

It will be noted that the pressure per square foot on the large gauge is considerably less than on the smaller gauges; this reading corresponds with all previous experience at the Forth Bridge, and would seem to indicate that the pressure on the small gauges must be due to 'threads of air' of limited area and high velocity, which, when integrated over a large surface, produce an average pressure of considerably reduced intensity. The inference deduced—namely, that the greater the surface the less the resultant average pressure per square foot, is favourable to the stability of large structures with reference to wind-pressure.

The severity of the gale was evidenced by the numerous casualties in different parts of the country; the Forth itself was the scene of several shipping disasters; and Leith harbour, crowded with vessels which had put in to repair, abundantly testified to the duration and intensity of the gale. Under these circumstances, it is satisfactory to add that neither the permanent erection nor any of the temporary steel structures of the Forth Bridge in any way suffered from the gale;

some slight damage to timber-stagings, some minor injury to wooden huts, and the shifting of loose planking, being the only loss sustained. The Forth Bridge has behaved precisely as its designers knew it would do, and public confidence in the stability of the giant cantilevers has received material support from this severe and prompt testing.

SUNWARDS.

DAZZLING track of woven beams,
Stretching to the farthest verge,
Where blue sky in blue sea seems
Scarce perceptibly to merge,
Art thou not a lustrous band
Linking Earth to Wonderland?

Oh, if mortal man might pass
Like a god across the brine,
Where between two planes of glass
Lies the fiery liquid line,
Marvels on yon path of gold
Would his dazzled eyes behold.

He might gaze on either side
Down into the deepest deep,
Where untouched of storm or tide,
Monsters heave in dreamless sleep;
Glimpses catch beneath the foam
Of the mermaid's coral home.

He might tread the watery ways,
Meeting none but phantom ships,
Pass into the golden haze,
Where the sun reluctant dips;
Would he find yon pathway curled
Down towards the under-world?

Nay, perchance beyond our view
Leaps the bright path into space,
Leads through leagues of filmy blue
To a far, delicious place,
In the sparkle of some star
Where all fair enchantments are.

Thither should the traveller win
O'er the clear crystalline track,
Once those fairy realms within
Would he evermore wend back?
Never! Who, from yonder pale
Would return to tell the tale?

L. J. G.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

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A SNOW-SCENE.

WHEN I drew up the blind this morning, my eyes were dazzled by the radiant purity of a heavy fall of snow. For days, a 'black frost' had bound the earth, and the cold was too intense to allow the heavy clouds to discharge their fleecy burden; but cunning Nature took advantage of a weak link in the iron frost-chain, and in the darkness of the wintry night she has spread this carpet, spun of captive rain. And now again there is a keen frost; and the wind, which is in the north, makes itself felt, not by the foreboding gusts that heralded the snow, but by that stealthy keenness which is the characteristic sign of a real winter day.

It is the very best of afternoons for a brisk walk; there is a stimulus even in the crunch of the feet upon the snowy road that takes me past the ancient church and graveyard of Abbots-hall, wherein lies the dust of Sir Walter Scott's quaint and delightful girl-friend 'Pet Marjorie.' Who that has read it can ever forget that exquisite picture, portrayed by the sympathetic pen of Dr John Brown, of burly Sir Walter hastening through the wintry streets of Edinburgh, through slush and fast-falling snow, in search of his little friend, to cheer him when his novel refused to unfold its plot, or he was 'aff the fang'? See how he strides onward, a veritable man of the hills, until, reaching the door of the home which holds his treasure, he takes his key, and letting himself and his faithful hound into the tiny lobby, proceeds to follow the dog's example of shaking himself free from the powdery snow. Then 'Marjorie, Marjorie! where are ye, my bonnie wee croodlin' doo?' he cries; and in swift response to the breezy call, the little maid of seven springs into his arms with impetuous caresses. Nor does he rest content until he has wrapped the beaming little lass warmly within his 'plaid neuk,' and, in spite of Mrs Keith's protest against carrying Marjorie through such an 'on-ding o' snaw,' he has taken her in his strong arms through

the dark street until they have reached the cosy shelter of Sir Walter's own room. Then what a carnival of frolic and laughter was there! The old Edinburgh house rang with their laughter.—Enough! Why should I spoil the racy tale, which has thus suddenly flashed upon me from the palimpsest of memory while I passed the old churchyard where Marjorie sleeps?

This is a day stamped with Winter's kingly signet, and I gaze upon the familiar road winding among the austere bare trees with half a feeling that I am the pioneer to an undiscovered country, for mine are the only footprints visible upon the radiant snow. I could easily imagine that the ghostly silence of night has taken a visible form in this soft whiteness of muffled day. The sky is luminously blue, and the wintry sunlight falls with dazzling effect upon the distant sheet of water, whose uniformly white expanse is broken by three parallel burnished bars of steel-gray ice. These are the curlers' rinks; but I am too far away from the lake to catch the jovial shouts which I know to be ringing up into the frosty sky from the eager knights of the broom.

Snow acts upon the landscape in a truly dramatic fashion, accentuating and exaggerating every light and shadow; the dark bare trees look doubly dark as their intricate outlines of branch and bough stand out in bold relief against the snowy rocky uplands where garrulous echo dwells. I can see from the far hills the ethereal blue smoke of a woodland fagot-fire, its delicate columns rising straight into the rarefied azure sky. How exquisite is the purity of the snow-shadows, tinged as they are with the divinest blue, tipped with the most fleeting suggestion of rosy colour, amid which the frozen crystals shimmer like scattered diamonds! Every leafless tree, every bending twig of the stiffened hawthorn hedges, is decked with twinkling jewels, for lance-like icicles gleam and scintillate in thousands, every one holding an iridescent prism of shifting colour within its minute compass.

I pass an avenue of stately snow-encrusted

trees, each intent upon the winter's task of hardening its wood now that the sweeter toil of leafage is past. All is silent and snow-laden here; every chance sound assumes an undue significance in this far-stretching glade, and falls upon the ear clear yet muffled in the crisp silence: a bough from an elm is suddenly snapped by the frost, and it creaks dolefully for an instant ere it falls with a dull thud upon the frozen snow: the alert 'Caw, caw!' of a passing crow strikes with startling clangour from above; and as I look involuntarily upward I catch a glimpse of his black form as he wings—I had almost said elbows!—his vigorous way westward.

Red Robin's cheerful ditty breaks the enchanted silence of the woods, for this little winter chorister is as much a matter of course in a snow-scene as is a ghost in an ancient castle. The harsh wintry cry of a flock of fieldfares on their way to some secluded meadow is heard overhead; a few thrushes rustle the dead leaves lying in sheltered hollows of the hedge; while an impulsive flock of chattering sparrows, alighting hurriedly upon the snow-laden hedge, send the fleecy particles to the ground as they pause for a moment to revile a hawk disappearing over the distant woods. Now that the eager little disputants have discovered that I am near, off they hurry in the midst of a cloud of disturbed snow-flakes, and I can hear them from the safe distance of the next field shrilling forth sundry seemingly derogatory phrases; but the chattering dies faintly away, and once more the silence is unbroken except for an occasional metallic 'Ching, ching!' which is the winter song of the bright little chaffinch.

As I walk onward, I begin to trace in the snow many an otherwise secret footprint. Here, for instance, are the bold hieroglyphics of the starling and the blackbird; here the careless zigzag of the hurrying chaffinch, and the filigree snow-embroidery wrought by the tiny mouse and the timid hare. This sharply chiselled track is the witness of a marauding squirrel's nocturnal raid: let us hope that his store of nuts will outlast the winter, for he is an independent and hardy little fellow, the Rob Roy of the animal kingdom, who adopts

The simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

The gamekeeper's masterful hobnails are also printed here, and so are the honest footpads of his faithful collie. An adventurous couple—of lovers, shall we say?—have left their trace, but the charming fair one has unwittingly patented upon the snow the hideous fact that she wears high-heeled boots; her footprints are all 'out of drawing,' and they present a humiliating contrast to the truthful impressions of Nature's silvan folk.

But now I must retrace my way, for the snow

has drifted into deep wreaths in this more unfrequented part of the woodland path, and it is much too deep and powdery for pleasant walking; besides, the short winter day is drawing to a close, and the sun is growing redder as he sinks behind the trees.

'Tis the low sun makes the colour,

and the western sky is gorgeous in its graduated tinting of orange, yellow, and rosy pink—and my shadow slanting across the snow has a faint yellow aureole round its head, which is the only crown—and who could desire a better?—that I am likely to wear in this world.

Nature is asleep to-day. I feel it with a sudden awe and chill, as if I stood in the presence of the dead. The time of snow is her resting-time; let us not disturb her sleep. Why should she be aroused to whom time is nothing—whose time is counted by ages—whose ages merge into eternity? Deep-eyed Nature never hastes—it is only man with his pathetic threescore years and ten who is constantly in a hurry. When shall we learn of Nature this secret of immortal youth? When shall we find in her solitudes her blessed gift of healing? For Nature's solitude never curses the heart with that dreary sense of loneliness that abides in the busy haunts of the crowded city, where men scarcely remember that there is a sky brooding silently overhead.

As I pursue the sloping homeward way, the sun sinks red and broad behind the dark masses of the trees, and the rosy flood of colour quite obliterates their delicately-bare pencilled outlines. How black the fluttering starlings look, and how restlessly they clamour as they seek their hereditary home in the ancient elms!

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,
Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER VI.

THE difference between your big Napoleon who curses a continent, and your little Napoleon who makes life intolerable for somebody in a mere corner of the world, is not at all a difference in will or spirit, but only in brains. At bottom in either case there is a sublime conviction that the earth and the fulness thereof are for him, and not for other people; that the good things of this life in the possession of another are misplaced, and that on him they are naturally and fittingly bestowed; that there is somehow vested in him an inherent right to everything, and that the ownership of property or the exercise of will on the part of any other creature under heaven is more or less of an injury to him.

Mr Robert Snelling was mentally a very small creature by the side of the grand Napoleon, but morally he was a very faithful copy. If young

John's hairs had been estates, his cupidity would have had stomach for them all. Mr Snelling looked reasonably at things. For instance: here was this puling boy, who cried if he had a geographical question closely pressed upon him, and whose head was as soft as a boiled turnip—a mere infant, who knew nothing of the value of money or the use of lands—and there on the other side was he, Robert Snelling, keen to enjoy the possession of property, an excellent man of business, in the prime of life and the full possession of his faculties. Now, to whom, in the name of Justice and Common Sense, would it be reasonable to suppose that the property ought to fall? To the puling boy? Ridiculous! To Robert Snelling? Assuredly! A wayfaring man, though a fool, could not go by the question in a hurry without being able to decide it.

By the great rights of Reason and Propriety, John's property ought to have belonged to Robert Snelling. Absurdly enough, it belonged to John, and there was John to claim it. One of those irritating, ridiculous, and unescapable positions the Napoleonic order of mind is compelled to gird at, and if there be no means of curing it, to endure. After all, were there any means of curing it? Perhaps there were.

Now, if things to the full as abominable and villainous were not done every day, it would be pleasant and satisfactory to hope that they were never done at all; but the plain English is that Mr Snelling had determined to hold John's property by the simple expedient of keeping John in such a mental condition that he should never be fit to hold it. Of course he never said that plainly to himself, because it is one of the unfailling characteristics of a mean villain never to confess himself to his own soul. He disguised his intent under the formula that he meant to do his duty by his charge. He was going to do that duty fearlessly and justly. He did not mean to let any foolish consideration for the boy's fads and fancies come in between him and the wishes of the boy's dying father. John was going to be educated—pitilessly. And monstrous as it seems, and monstrous as it is, in the contemplation of the slow crushing and destruction of the boy's mind with the clear understanding that Robert Snelling would profit by it in the end, he did actually throw a veil of virtue over his intended scoundrelism, and persuaded himself, clearly enough for all practical purposes, that in that way and in that way only he would be doing his duty.

If he had dared to let his own ugly purpose stand there naked, and had had the hardihood to look at it and acknowledge it every day, it would have been there no whit more clearly. The disguise he put upon it no more hid it from his intelligence than a bandage on a wound will hide pain from the nerves. The crookback Richard owned openly, 'I am determined to be a villain,' but then the crookback had a sense of humour, and made that fell avowal in a biting, wicked jocularity which left it earnest. Mr Robert Snelling had no sense of humour, and so was compelled to cloak himself from himself, and to look respectable to his own interior eye.

John Vale the elder had been widely known and respected, and a large following of old friends saw him to the grave; but John the younger was his only real mourner. John the younger, in a puzzled nightmare, followed the body to the churchyard, seated in a sombre coach with Uncle Robert and two neighbouring farmers, and watched the ceaseless rain and the wildly waving boughs of trees and hedges, which tossed in the wind with the expression of just such a despair as slumbered somewhere in the recesses of his clouded mind. No more, no more; grief unspeakable—grief, grief, grief beyond hope or solace. The howling wind and plunging rain and tortured leafless branches spoke for the dumbness of his heart; but he could find no voice to answer them.

He saw the body committed to the earth, and did not cry or make a sign of grief. He went back to the chill house which had been home, and sat at table with the funeral party, who ate heartily, and without being more barbarous than other funeral parties, talked pretty loudly after dinner, and smoked long pipes round the table over the heavy decanters of port and sherry, and the steaming glasses of hot brandy-and-water. They had respected the dead man in his time, and they were there to show it. The elder John Vale himself had made one of such a party in his day, and had assisted in the decorous jollification which followed on the funeral.

Snelling sat at the head of the table, and the local solicitor, who had drawn up Vale's will, sat at the foot, and before the pipes were lit, the farmer's simple last testament was read.

'It's a heavyish charge to be left upon a man,' said Snelling, with his slow deliberate drawl; 'and for what is to be done for the lad, a thousand pound is no great payment. If I was to look at it in that way, I should feel a right to be disappointed. But I knowed John's intentions; and if his turn came first, I was willing to bear the burden. It's only putting the two fortunes into one basket, for I make no secret of it that young John'll have everything that I can leave him. I'm a lonely man, and he'll naturally come in for everything.'

'That's how to look at it, Mr Snelling,' said Farmer Day from half-way down the table.

'That's how I look at it,' answered Snelling. 'I shall do my duty by the lad. He's got to be educated, and I shall see as his education isn't neglected. Education's come to mean more than it did in our young days, gentlemen, and no man can afford to neglect it.'

One man near at hand was of opinion that this here education was too much run after, but Snelling came down upon him ponderously. 'You're behind the time, Mr Tonks; you're behind the time, sir.—And whatever I might think about the question, gentlemen, I haven't got to consult my own desires alone. It makes little difference to me that my desires happen to go in the same way with poor John's, for whatever his might have been, I should have thought it a sacred duty to see his wishes carried out. "I look to you," he said to me the day he died—"I look to you, Robert, to carry out my wishes, and to do your duty by the child." His wish was that young John should receive a first-rate education; and a first-rate education I shall make a

point of giving him.' He was paving the way towards his own justification, and his appeal to the dead man's last words gave him no qualm of conscience.

'Young John,' said Farmer Day, 'don't look to me as if he'd do credit to a lot of educating. Since he got that crack on the side of the head, he's been a bit stupid and mythered, like.'

'I'm afraid that's so,' Snelling answered. 'But the best must be made of such material as there is to work upon. If four mile an hour will do twenty mile in five hours, three mile an hour will do one-and-twenty mile in seven.'

Two or three of the funeral guests were impressed by this, and said that that was how to look at it.

'Depend upon it, gentlemen,' said Snelling, 'that is how to look at it. Make the best of your material. What speed can't do, application may. You've heard the story of the hare and the tortoise? I shall have to make that my motto with my nephew, I'm afraid. But I shall see his father's wishes carried out; and as far as in me lies, and as far as in him lies, I shall try to make a scholar of him.'

This declaration met with general approval; and the one man who did not approve of education was in so marked a minority that he felt impelled to say that Snelling was most likely in the right. He had never bothered himself much about these things. Educating hadn't come up much in his young days, and he didn't know as he was much the worse for it. He was as warm as here and there one, and had contrived to carry his cup upright. His lad Jabez could read handwriting like print; and since there was more handwriting going about than there used to be, that was no doubt a convenience.

Before this conversation had begun, John had stolen away to the little room in which he had been used to sleep, and curling himself up on the bed, had found relief from the heavy stupefaction of his sorrow in tears. He cried until he fell asleep; and lay there forgotten and alone until the guests began to call for their traps, and to struggle into their overcoats, and to unpin from their hats the heavy black silk streamers with which they had been decorated for the funeral. Like careful saving people as they were, they carried these home for their wives, who saved them up for dresses. The black silk of a farmer's wife would sometimes represent in its voluminous folds a score of dead acquaintances, more or less.

Whilst the good-byes were going on, Snelling called for Isaiah, who came in from the kitchen, where he had been regaling with other servitors. 'Find Master Vale,' said Snelling, 'and tell him to get ready. Then harness the trap, and find the lad something to put over his shoulders will keep him dry. We shall have a wettish drive.'

This carefulness for young John's welfare was born of the presence of the guests; and when it seemed to be accepted as a matter of course, and excited no comment, the tender creature added: 'The poor little chap'll want taking care of. He's little likely to be able to take care of himself, I fancy.'

'It's lucky for him as he's fell into the hands of one of his relations,' said one bluff

kindly-faced farmer, 'and not into them of a stranger.'

'Ah!' Snelling replied magnanimously, 'it's a sore loss for the lad, and I mustn't grumble at the bit of trouble.'

The early winter evening was falling fast, and candles were lit already. Isaiah, peering hither and thither about the darkening house, and failing to find young John, took a light at length and mounted to the upper story. He walked into two or three deserted rooms, all of which seemed to have the new chill of loneliness and loss upon them, and at last entered the chamber in which the boy lay asleep. The sense of solitude and awe impelled him to go on tiptoe; and when he had pushed the door gently open and had caught sight of the figure on the bed, he moved yet more softly, and shaded with his hand the light he carried. John's eyelids were red with tears, and reddened channels were clearly to be seen on his pale cheeks. His lashes were still moist, and a shivering sob now and again broke the level cadence of his breathing. He was fast asleep; and Isaiah, still shading the candle, bent close over him and peered into his face. The man's inexpressive visage showed little, but he shook his head at intervals, and sighed once or twice, as if in pity.

His master's voice awoke him from a day-dream, and he answered, 'Coming.' The call awoke John, who sat up on the bed with a forlorn and wondering air.

'Come along, Master John,' said Isaiah. 'We're agoing home.' John began to cry again, and Isaiah looked at him in a wretched perplexity, scratching his head rather viciously the while. 'Crying won't mend it, you know,' he said at length. 'It was to be, and it was. All the crying in the world won't fetch him back again.'

There was no denying the philosophy; but it was cold comfort, and young John's tears seemed to fall the faster for it.

'Isaiah!' cried Snelling from below in a tone of angry impatience.

'Come along, Master John,' said Isaiah. 'There's the gaffer acalling, and we must go home.'

'It isn't home, Isaiah,' John answered with a burst of tears; 'this is home.'

Snelling shouted again from below stairs, and came after his call with a heavy footstep, solid, slow, and purposeful, like his voice and manner. The light gleaming through the open door guided him to the chamber.

'Am I to wait here all night, Isaiah?' he demanded.

'What do you want?' asked Isaiah snappishly, glad of a chance to relieve his sensations by a brush with his employer. 'Do you want me to take the orphan by the scruff o' the neck and chuck him down-stairs? Or would you rather as I should wait for him a bit till he gets ready?'

Snelling contented himself with a wrathful glance, which had as much effect upon Isaiah as it would have had upon the wall.

'Come, come, my lad,' he said, addressing John, 'we must be going. There's no use in idle tears, though you was to sheed enough to fill a pond.'

Isaiah had offered the same wretched consola-

tion; but there are ways and ways of saying things, and the man's voice had sounded kindly, while the master's sounded pitiless and hard. For one reason or another, the harsh voice had the greater effect; and John, stifling his sobs, took the hand which Uncle Robert extended to him, and suffered himself to be led from the room.

'Now get the trap ready, Isaiah, and look sharp about it,' said Snelling when they reached the kitchen. 'Everybody's gone, and there's nothing left but to follow 'em, and lock up.' Isaiah went into the rain with a loose sack thrown over his shoulders, and Snelling, still holding young John's hand, sat down. He was not utterly unfeeling—nobody is—and John's distress made him angry. 'I thought I'd asked you to give over crying,' he said therefore. 'You'd better do as you are bid, or else I may give you something to snivel for.' This speech showed so clearly that he had more to cry for than he had hitherto guessed, that John, who had been struggling hard against his grief, broke out afresh.

'Very good, John,' said Uncle Robert—'very good. We shall know how to tame this disobedient spirit by-and-by.' With that he released him, and a wheel of dull pain began to whirl in the boy's head. It acted like a narcotic, stilling all thought and emotion; and before Isaiah came back to say that the trap was ready, John had ceased to cry, and had fallen into mere vacuity and dullness. Snelling thrust a candle towards his face and bent forward to scrutinise him. The face he looked at was troubled with recent tears, but except that it was sad and helpless, bore hardly any expression. It was obvious to the mind of the observer that this was the way to take with him, and he said with a calm and weighty decision, by way of keeping the veil of respectable intention over the ugly figure in his mind: 'One of my duties is to teach you obedience, John, and you may rely upon it as I shan't forget it.'

Isaiah appearing to announce that all was ready, was bidden to prepare John for the journey, and obeyed in silence.

'Safe bind, safe find,' said Uncle Robert, locking the door and pocketing the key. He turned to look at the house, when he was half-way down the path, and stood a moment or two in the pouring rain, thinking already that the desirable freehold tenement and farm-lands surrounding and adjoining were as good as his. At the sight of John seated in the trap, his gorge rose; he meant so vilely by him that he could not do less than hate him, and he began to hate him at that instant. What right had he to be in the world at all, blocking up Robert Snelling's way to prosperity? It was abominable in him even to be there to be disposed of, soiling a man's conscience. Though, when Mr Snelling caught himself at that fancy, even for a second, he wrenched himself wrathfully away from it, and fixed his single eye on duty. He was going to educate that boy and do his duty by him; but he knew beforehand that the boy would so ill repay his cares that he would be good for nothing all his lifetime.

The sick wheel of dull pain ran round in

John's head until it ran down of itself, and he fell asleep again in the rain and darkness, with the tears of the mournful night upon his face.

THE EXCISE DEPARTMENT AND ITS OFFICIALS.

As is probably well known, the department of Inland Revenue is that which is responsible for the collection of the duties granted by parliament on exciseable commodities, such as beer, spirits, &c.; as also for the income tax, house duty, land tax, and the various stamp and license duties. It is thus distinguished from the other great revenue department of the Customs, which deals exclusively with the taxation of goods imported from abroad.

The Inland Revenue department, which is controlled by a Board, consisting of a chairman, deputy-chairman, and three commissioners, is divided into two sections: (1) The Excise department, responsible for the collection of the duty on beer and spirits, the various license duties, and the assessed taxes. (2) The department of Stamps and Taxes, responsible for the collection of the stamp duties, the income tax, land tax, and inhabited house duty. There are likewise several subdivisions; but these are generally of a purely departmental character, between which the barriers are being gradually broken down, apparently with the object of forming the entire department into one compact whole.

It is proposed to deal with the first-named of these divisions, the Excise department and its officials, which officials are divided into several grades, the highest being that of secretary, the lowest that of second-class assistant. The character of the department itself is purely democratic, inasmuch as every official in that department, from the secretary downwards, has commenced his career in the capacity of second-class assistant, his subsequent promotion having been the reward of his own merit and ability, not that of extraneous influence or patronage. The designations of the various grades have recently been somewhat altered by the authorities, but are here retained, as being more expressive of the duties performed by the several officials.

The position of an officer of Excise offers many inducements, more especially to a young man. The mere prospect of passing for the first few years of his career a somewhat bohemian existence is not without its charms; the duties, although in many respects harder, are yet more varied and responsible than those of an ordinary commercial clerk. The initial salary and prospects of promotion are tolerably good; and there is in addition that feeling of absolute security of office, which security but few commercial appointments can confer.

Twice a year, competitive examinations are held at various centres, which examinations are duly advertised in the leading newspapers. The subjects comprised are: Handwriting, Dictation, English Composition, Elementary Arithmetic (including Vulgar and Decimal Fractions), Higher Arithmetic (including Mensuration), and Geography (more especially that of the British Isles). The first four of these subjects are obligatory, a

high percentage of marks on each being absolutely necessary; the latter two are by courtesy termed optional; but it may be safely asserted that no candidate has yet been successful by whom either subject has been omitted.

Having been successful in the competitive examination, the young man is in due course instructed to report himself at the office of a certain collector of Inland Revenue. By that gentleman he is transferred, as a pupil, to the guardian care of a division officer, who is required to furnish him with practical instruction in the various branches of his future duties, and who will for the next six weeks act towards him in the capacity of guide, philosopher, and friend. As a thorough practical knowledge of the mode of working adopted in both a brewery and a distillery forms the very alphabet of an Excise officer's official education, the pupil will pass the greater portion of his time in observing and noting the various operations incidental to these two branches of industry. In most cases the matter will be arranged by the division of the probationary period into two sections, one of which will be occupied in rendering himself familiar with the practical working of a brewery, the remaining portion being passed in a distillery.

The first feeling of the pupil will probably be one of extreme veridancy. At the outset, the brewery or distillery will present itself to him as a confused mass of coppers, mash-tuns, pipes, &c., of the nature and use of which he has not even the most remote idea. To the pupil the term of probation will be no term of idle leisure. During that period he is required to make occasional surveys on his own account; to keep a set of books in the same manner as an ordinary officer; to learn the practical working both of a brewery and of a distillery; to become an adept at gauging; and likewise to become versed in the several uses of the thermometer, hydrometer, and saccharometer. His evenings will be occupied in grinding away at the various books of official regulations with which he has been provided, and in comparison with which the driest treatise on political economy may be regarded as light and entertaining reading.

At the expiry of the six weeks' instruction, the pupil is required to pass a somewhat severe technical examination at the hands of the collector. When this examination has been undergone and passed, he is in due course furnished with a parchment document headed with the royal coat of arms, and addressed to 'All persons to whom these presents shall come, greeting, &c.,' which document informs such aforesaid persons, in the roundabout way peculiar to documents of a legal nature, that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have appointed William Jones to be their surveyor, gauger, and officer. Upon receipt of this commission our friend becomes a full-fledged Second-class Assistant of Excise; and at this stage of the proceedings he will probably be transferred from the 'collection' in which he received his education to another in which the staff of second-class assistants has fallen below the required number.

For the next three or four years the career of Jones will be of the knock-about description. His duty is that of officiating for 'ride' and 'division' officers when absent from their stations on

account of sickness or vacation. As a general rule, he is not in one place for more than a few weeks at a time; and if he be placed in a collection which covers a large area of country, he will not officiate many times in the same station. It may even be his lot during his term of office as a second-class assistant to be employed in two, three, or even in four different collections. When officiating for an officer, the duties and responsibilities of the assistant are precisely the same as those of an officer, the nature of the duties varying according to the station in which he is placed.

As a second-class assistant, Jones, on the whole, is not badly off; and his salary, if not large, is sufficient to satisfy his moderate wants, even if not much margin be left for saving. In some collections which cover no larger area than the town in which the office is situated, his life may be of a more settled character; but, as a general rule, he will during his assistantcy gain vast experience both in the matter of lodgings and of landladies. His term of office as a second-class assistant will last for three or four, sometimes five years. At the end of that time he will receive a nominal promotion, and will then become a First-class Assistant.

As a first-class assistant the life of Jones will be of a more settled description. He will be stationed either at a brewery, distillery, or bonded warehouse where a tolerably large staff of officers is necessary. With and alongside these officers he will work, the difference in the duties performed by him and by them being more apparent than real. This appointment he will generally hold until such time as he receives his next promotion; but in some cases he will be liable to be removed from one collection to another. This is more especially the case in the small Highland distilleries, which, as a general rule, cease operations during the summer months; and thus the first-class assistants stationed on these distilleries must perforce at the end of the spring seek fresh fields.

To the ambitious among the assistants, the Excise department offers a free education in practical chemistry. A certain number of students are attached to the Inland Revenue laboratory at Somerset House, and, as vacancies arise, they are filled up by those who have been successful in a competitive examination. The students obtain a practical analytical training at the laboratory for two years, free admission to the lectures at South Kensington, and likewise a monetary allowance for the purchase of their books, &c. At the termination of their term of training they are again drafted into the ranks of the outdoor service.

An assistant can also, if he should so wish, receive an indoor appointment. There is a large staff of clerks at London and at the offices of the various collectors of Inland Revenue, whose numbers are recruited from among the members of the outdoor service, principally from among the assistants. By the acceptance of one of these posts, the assistant, it is true, avoids a certain amount of unpleasant and arduous work; but, on the other hand, a great sacrifice has to be made. By remaining in the office, the highest position to which he can aspire is that of chief or superintending clerk—equivalent to that of

supervisor—inasmuch as the appointments of collector and inspector are reserved for those officers who have passed their official career in the performance of the practical work of the department.

At the end of five or six years from the time of his entry to the service, Jones will again obtain promotion, receiving the designation of Ride-officer. A certain district of country, more or less extensive, is allotted to him for the collection of the revenue in which he is responsible. His duties consist in the survey of breweries, the collection of the license duties and the assessed taxes. Many 'rides' are so extensive, that in order to perform his duties it is necessary for the officer to provide himself with a horse and trap, a pecuniary allowance being granted by the Board for the expenses of horse-keep. Even those rides which do not necessitate the use of a vehicle entail a considerable amount of pedestrian exercise; and in all rides, an ardent bicyclist or tricyclist will find ample opportunity for making his favourite hobby of practical utility.

In spite of minor drawbacks, the years which Jones passes as a ride-officer will be the most pleasant and enjoyable of his official career. His salary is moderately good, and as he lives in the country it is of more real value than a larger income in a town; the duties being of an outdoor nature, tend to better health; and being stationed in a village or small town, if he do not occupy a high place in the regard and esteem of its inhabitants the fault in most cases will be with himself. When promotion comes, it is accepted with some regret; and this feeling of regret is so strong, that many officers, disregarding the incentives of ambition, decline to advance to the higher branches of their profession, preferring to pass the remaining years of their career in the performance of their favourite duties, among the scenes and people which have become so dear to them.

The period passed in a ride is from five to six years, at the end of which Jones will become a Division officer. Promotion from a ride to a division does not follow as a mere matter of course—although the general run of officers are so promoted—but is consequent upon the survey books and the general work, &c., of the officer having been found satisfactory upon examination at Somerset House.

As a division officer, Jones will now be stationed in a large town, at either a brewery, distillery, bonded warehouse, or at what is known as a general business station. Not only will there now be the sudden change from a country to a town life, but there will be for a time at least a certain feeling of restraint. As an assistant, but more especially as a ride officer, Jones—so long as his work was properly done—was not bound down to the exact hours in which such work should be done. Now, everything is altered, and for the future he will be to a certain extent the slave of a time-table. His present duties are of a more responsible nature than any which he has hitherto performed, inasmuch as there will be a far greater amount of revenue at stake. If stationed at a brewery, his work consists in supervising and checking the various operations of the brewer, gauging the contents of the various tuns, testing the strength of the worts (beer), and con-

ducting the personal investigations necessary to ensure the security of the revenue from fraud in any shape or form. At a distillery, his duties will be practically the same as at a brewery, although the details of the survey will somewhat vary, on account of the difference in the nature of the operations. At a bonded warehouse he will be responsible for the security of the wines and spirits contained therein, and also for the payment of duty on all goods which are removed for consumption. He has to gauge the various casks, and to test the strength of their contents when received into the warehouse; to supervise and take due note of the operations of blending, racking, and bottling performed in the warehouses by the merchants themselves; to gauge the casks and test the strength of the spirits prior to their despatch from the warehouse; to keep the necessary books, ledgers, &c., and to ensure the general security of the revenue. At a general business station the officer will be responsible for the various license duties in a certain district, which district will generally comprise several breweries, and occasionally a small bonded warehouse.

The next grade to that of division officer—in the upward scale—is that of Supervisor, promotion to which is gained by success in a quasi-competitive technical examination. A division officer, if desirous of further promotion, must present a petition to the Board for permission to enter as a competitor at one of these examinations. At the end of a certain term of service—generally five or six years—his books, &c., are examined at Somerset House; and if they be considered satisfactory, he will be called upon to undergo a literary examination of a severe technical nature, into which the character of competition enters to a certain—though not to an entire—extent. If this examination be successfully undergone, the officer receives the title of Examiner, and at once obtains brevet rank as Supervisor.

This examination forms the parting of the ways in the officer's future career; for the question of success or non-success means either subsequent promotion to the higher branches of the profession, possibly even a staff appointment; or, on the other hand, a permanent stay among the numbers of the rank and file. Now begins that gradual compression, selection, and rejection by means of which the ultimate chiefs of the service are chosen from among the number of their colleagues. The examination for the post of Supervisor forms the threshold to the higher appointments, and if Jones be not successful in this examination, a division officer he must remain until the end of the chapter. It will have been noticed that when passing from the ride to the division we left behind us a few colleagues who were unwilling to accompany us further on our way. Now we leave behind us a far greater number—in fact, about two-thirds of our colleagues—not on this occasion from want of desire for further promotion, but, on the contrary, from the sheer force of adverse circumstances. The comparatively few men who still continue the onward march are being gradually selected; and as they are fewer in number, their conduct and abilities will be now brought under a criticism much more keen and much more severe than any to which they have hitherto been subjected.

Upon appointment as Examiner, the officer has again to enter upon a somewhat bohemian existence, which for the staid domesticated middle-aged man will not have the same charms as it probably had in former days for the unsophisticated and unfettered youth. During the period of his examinership, his headquarters will be at Somerset House, from which place he is sent to various parts of the United Kingdom in order to officiate for Supervisors who may from various causes be absent from their districts. By seniority he will in his turn obtain promotion, and at the expiry of about two years will himself receive a district.

The United Kingdom is divided for revenue purposes into about five hundred districts, each placed in the charge of a supervisor. To one of these districts the newcomer is appointed. His duty will—as his official designation implies—consist in the supervision of the work of the officers whose stations are included in his district, and for the proper performance of whose duties he is held responsible. Periodically, he visits the various officers' stations, checks their survey and other books, and tests the correctness of their general work by himself making, at unfixed and uncertain periods, a personal survey of the breweries, &c., under their charge, in order to verify or otherwise the results at which they have previously arrived. The incidental details involved are of a manifold description; the hours of labour are protracted, and in many cases the work itself is of an extremely arduous and fatiguing nature.

At the end of a certain term of service, the supervisor, if he have previously petitioned the Board for promotion, and his books and work have been found in a satisfactory condition, is permitted to enter for another semi-competitive technical examination, the nature of which is in its general outlines the same as that previously undergone by the division officer, but of a much more difficult character. The reward of success in this examination is the immediate promotion to the rank of Assistant-Inspector, and the subsequent appointment of Collector of Inland Revenue, the most responsible and lucrative in the service, and which is regarded by the average assistant in the same light as a judgeship by a Temple student.

The great majority, however, of those who have attained to the rank of supervisor do not seek for further promotion, a fact which is not under the circumstances surprising. The supervisor, even if he progress no further, is in possession of a salary which will compare favourably with that of other professional men, and also occupies a position which is at the same time one of great responsibility, and likewise one which will be certain to ensure for him a considerable amount of respect.

The assistant-inspector, immediately upon his promotion, has again to enter upon a life of a somewhat knockabout description. Until, by seniority, he receives a fixed appointment, he will officiate in various parts of the kingdom for collectors who may be temporarily absent from their posts. At the end of this probationary period, which is of two or three years' duration, he will in his turn be appointed to a Collectorship, and will be for the future ensconced in that

'arm-chair' which forms the Mecca of the Excise officers' weary pilgrimage.

In the United Kingdom there are about ninety Inland Revenue 'collections' of varying degrees of importance. In each of these districts the chief revenue officer is the collector, who is responsible to the Board of Inland Revenue for the due collection of the various taxes, duties, and licenses placed under his control, as also for the conduct, &c. of his subordinate officers. To one of these districts which is considered as of comparatively small importance, the quondam assistant-inspector will now be appointed, and will receive, according to seniority and merit, future promotion to collectorships of a more important and likewise of a more lucrative character.

Of superior rank to the collector of Inland Revenue there now remain only the ten Inspectors, the Chief Inspector, and the Secretary. In order to obtain promotion from the collector's chair to one of these staff appointments, no further examination has to be undergone, promotion being the reward of combined merit, ability, and seniority. The power of making these appointments is vested absolutely in the hands of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue; the reasons which influence them in making such appointments are never disclosed, but kept, as it were, cabinet secrets.

The chief inspector is the responsible head of the outdoor service; while the secretary is, under the Board, the chief officer of the entire department. Higher promotion than that of secretary has, it is believed, been obtained in only one instance, when the gentleman referred to became Deputy-Chairman of Inland Revenue. The position of Chairman has never yet been occupied by a gentleman who has risen from the ranks of the Excise service. Perhaps the future may see the practical fulfilment of a consummation so much to be wished.

THE LOST DIAMONDS OF THE ORANGE RIVER.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

I.

MANY are the stories told at the outspan fires of the South African transport riders, some weird, some romantic, some of native wars, some of fierce encounters with the wild beasts of the land. Often as I travelled with my friends up-country we stopped to have a chat with these rugged people, and some strange and interesting information was obtained in this way. The transport rider—the carrier of Africa—with his stout wagon and span of oxen travels year after year over the rough roads of Cape Colony, and far beyond, in all directions, and is constantly encountering all sorts and conditions of men, white, black, and off-coloured; and in his wanderings or over his evening camp-fire he picks up great store of legend and adventure from the passing hunters, explorers, and traders.

One night, after a day's journey through the Bush-veldt, we lay at a farmhouse near which was a public outspan. At this outspan two transport riders were sitting snugly over their evening meal. They seemed a couple of cheery good fellows, one an English Africander, the other an Englishman,

an old University man, and well read, as we afterwards discovered, and nothing would suit them but that we should join them and take pot-luck.

Supper finished, some good old Congo (the best home-manufactured brandy of the Cape, made in the Outshoorn district) was produced, pipes lighted, and then we began to 'yarn.' For an hour or more we talked upon a variety of topics—old days in England, the voyage to the Cape, the Colony, its prospects, and its sport.

'Tis strange,' said one of our number, 'how little is known of the Orange River—at all events west of the Falls. I don't think I ever met a man who had been down it. One would think the Colonists would know something of their northern boundary; as a matter of fact they don't.'

'Ah! talking of the Orange River reminds me,' said the younger of the transport riders, the ex-Oxonian and the more loquacious of the two, 'of a most extraordinary yarn I heard from a man I fell in with, some years back, stranded in the "thirst-land" north-west of Shoshong. Poor chap! he was in a sorry plight. He was an English gentleman, who for years had, from sheer love of sport and a wild life, been hunting big game in the interior. That season he had stayed too late on the Chobe River near where it runs into the Zambesi, and with most of his people had got fever badly. They had had a disastrous *trek* out, losing most of their oxen and all their horses; and when I came across them they were stuck fast in the *doorst-land* (thirst-land), unable to move forward or back. For two and a half days they had been without water; and from being in bad health to begin with, hadn't half a chance; and if I had not stumbled upon them, they must all have been dead within fifteen hours. I had luckily some water in my *vatjes*, and managed to pull them round; and that night, leaving their wagon in the desert, in hope of being saved subsequently, and taking as much of the ivory and valuables as we could manage, and Mowbray's (the Englishman's) guns and ammunition, we made a good *trek*, and reached water on the afternoon of the next day. I never saw a man so grateful as Mowbray. During the short time I knew him I found him one of the best fellows and most delightful companions I ever met. I dosed him with quinine, and pulled him together till we got to Shoshong; but before we had got half-way down to Griqualand, Mowbray grew suddenly worse, and died one evening in my wagon just at sunset. We buried him under a *kameel-doorn* tree, covering the grave with heavy stones, and fencing it strongly with thorns, to keep away the jackals and hyenas.

'Many and many a talk I had with poor Mowbray before he died. One evening in particular, as we sat before the camp-fire on the dewless ground, where I had propped him up, and made him comfortable, he told me a most strange story, a story so wonderful that most people would look upon it as wildly improbable. He began in this way:

Felton, you have been a kind friend to me—kind and tender as any woman, and I feel I owe you more than I am ever likely to repay. Yet, if you want wealth, I believe I can put it in your way.—Do you know the northern bank of the

Orange River between the Great Falls and the sea?—No, I don't suppose you do, for very few people have ever trekked down it; still fewer have ever got down to the water from the great walls of desolate and precipitous mountain that environ its course; and except myself and two others, neither of whom can ever reveal its whereabouts, I believe no mortal soul upon this earth has ever set eyes upon the place I am going to tell you about. Listen!

In 1871, about the time the Diamond Fields were discovered and people began to flock to Griqualand West, I was rather bitten with the mania, and for some months worked like a nigger on the Fields. During that time I got to know a good deal about stones. I soon tired of the life, however, and finally sold my claim and what diamonds I had acquired, fitted up a wagon, gathered together some native servants, and trekked again for those glorious hunting-grounds of the interior, glad enough to resume my old and ever-charming life. Amongst my servants was a little Bushman, Klaas by name, whom I afterwards found a perfect treasure at spooring and hunting. Like all true Bushmen, he was dauntless as a wounded lion and determined as a rhinoceros, which is saying a good deal. I suppose Klaas had had more varied experience of South African life than any native I ever met. Originally, he had come as a child from the borders of the Orange River, where he had been taken prisoner in a Boer foray, in which nearly all his relations were shot down. He had then been 'apprenticed' in the family of one of his captors, where he had acquired a certain knowledge of semi-civilised life. From the Boer family of the back country he had subsequently drifted farther down into the Colony, and thence into an elephant-hunter's retinue. The western Orange River and its mysteries—for it is a mysterious region—he knew, as I afterwards discovered, better than any man in the world. Well, we trekked up to Matabeleland, and after some trouble got permission to hunt there; and a fine time we had, getting a quantity of ivory, and magnificent sport among lions, elephants, buffalo, rhinoceros, and all manner of smaller game.

Klaas, who was sometimes a bit too venturesome, got caught one day in the open by a black rhinoceros, a savage old bull. The old brute charged and slightly tossed him once, making a nasty gash in his thigh, but not fairly getting his horn under him; and was just turning to finish the poor little beggar, when I luckily nicked in. I had seen the business, and had had time to rush out on to the plain, and just as *Boréle* charged at poor Klaas, to finish him off as he lay, I got up within forty yards, let drive, and, as luck would have it, dropped him with a .500 express bullet behind the shoulder. Even then, the fierce brute recovered himself, and tried to charge me in turn; but he was now disabled, and I soon settled his game. After that episode, Klaas proved himself about the only grateful native I ever heard of, and seemed as if he couldn't do enough for me.

Sometime after he had got over his wound, he came to me and said: 'Sieur! you said one day that you would like to know whether there are diamonds anywhere else than at New Rush (as Kimberley was then called). Well, sieur, I have

been working at New Rush, and I know what diamonds are like, and I can tell you where you can find as many of them in a week's search as you may like to pick up.'

'What do you mean, Klaas?' said I, turning sharply round, to see if the Bushman was joking. But, on the contrary, Klaas's little weazened monkey-face wore an expression perfectly serious, and apparently truthful.

'Ja, sieur, it is truth. If ye will so trek with me to the Groot [Orange] Rivier, three or four days beyond the Falls, I will show you a place where there are hundreds and hundreds of diamonds, big ones, too, many of them, to be found lying about in the gravel. I have played with them, and with other *mooi steins* too, often and often as a boy, when I used to poke about here and there up and down the Groot Rivier. My father and grandfather lived near the place I speak of; and I know the way to the valley where these diamonds are, well, though no one but myself knows of them; for I found them by chance, and, selfish-like, never told of my child's secret. I will take you to the place, if you like.'

'Are you really speaking truth, Klaas?' said I severely.

'Ja, ja! sieur; I am, I am!' he earnestly and vehemently reiterated.

'Well, Klaas,' said I at last, 'I believe you; and we'll trek down to the Orange River, and see this wonderful diamond valley of yours.'

Shortly after this conversation, we came back to Shoshong, where I sold my ivory; and then, with empty wagon and the oxen refreshed by a good rest, set our faces for the river. From Shoshong in Bamangwato we went straight away across the south-eastern corner of the Kalahari in an oblique direction pointing south-west. It was a frightfully waterless and tedious journey, especially after passing the Langeberg, which we kept on our left hand. Towards the end of the journey we found no water at a fountain where we had expected to obtain it, and thereby lost four out of twenty-two oxen (for I had six spare ones); and at last, after trekking over a burning and most broken country, we were beyond measure thankful to strike the river some way below the Great Falls. Klaas had led us to a most lovely spot, where the ground slopes gradually to the river—the only place for perhaps thirty or forty miles where the water, shut in by mighty mountain walls, can be approached—and where we could rest and refresh ourselves and our oxen. Here we stopped four days. It was a perfect resting-place. Down the banks of the river, and following its course, grew charming avenues of willows, mimosa, and bastard ebony. Two or three islands densely clothed with bush and greenery dotted the broad and shining bosom of the mighty stream. Hippopotami wallowed quietly in the flood, and fish were plentiful. The mimosa was now in full bloom, and the sweet fragrance of its yellow flowers everywhere perfumed the air as we strolled by the river's brim.

I had some old scraps of fishing-tackle with me; and having cut myself a rod from a willow-tree, I employed some of my spare time in catching fish, and had, for South Africa—which, as you know, is not a great angling country—capital sport. The fish captured were a kind of flat-

headed barbel, fellows with dark greenish-olive backs and white bellies; and I caught them with scraps of meat, bees, grasshoppers, anything I could get hold of, as fast as I could pull them out, for an hour or two at a time.

After the parching and most harassing trek across the desert, our encampment seemed a terrestrial paradise. The guinea-fowls called constantly with pleasant metallic voices from among the trees that margined the river, and furnished capital banquets when required. Other feathered game and small antelopes were plentiful. At night, as I lay in my wagon contentedly looking into the starry blue, studded with a million points of fire, and mildly admiring the glorious effulgence of the greater constellations, I began to conjure up all sorts of dreams of the future, of which the bases and foundations were piles of diamonds culled from Klaas's wondrous valley.

Having recruited from the desert journey, and all, men and beasts, being in good heart and fettle, we presently started away down the river for the valley of diamonds. I had, besides Klaas, four other men as drivers, *voer-loopers*, and after-riders, and they, naturally enough, were extremely curious to know what on earth the 'Baas' could want to trek down the Orange River for—a country where no one came, and of which no one had ever even heard. I had to tell them that I was prospecting for a copper mine; for, as you probably know, there are many places in this region where that metal occurs. As we were doubtful whether we should find water at the next fountain that Klaas knew of, owing to the prevalence of drought, I filled the water *vatjes* and every other utensil I could think of; and then, all being ready and the oxen inspanned, we moved briskly forward.

We had now to make a *détour* to the right, away from the river, and for great part of a day picked our painful footsteps over a rough and semi-mountainous country. Towards evening, we emerged upon a dreary and interminable waste that lay outstretched before us, its far horizon barred in the dim distance by towering mountains, through which we should presently have to force our passage. That evening we outspanned in a howling wilderness of loose and scorching sand, upon which scarcely a bush or shrub found subsistence. Next night, more dead than alive, we halted beneath the loom of a gigantic mountain range, whose recesses we were to pierce on the following morning. Half a day beyond this barrier lay the valley of diamonds, as Klaas whispered to me after supper that night with gleaming excited eyes.

That night as we lay under the mountain was one of the most stifling I ever endured in South Africa, where, on the high tablelands of the interior, nights are usually cool and refreshing. Even the moist heat of the Zambesi Valley was not more trying than this torrid empty desert. The oven-like heat cast up all day from the sandy plain seemed to be returned at night by these sun-scorched rocks with redoubled intensity. Waterless we lay, sweltering in our misery, with blackened tongues and parched and cracking lips. The oxen seemed almost like dead things. Often have I inwardly thanked Pringle, the poet of South Africa, for his sweet and touching verse, written with the love of this strange wild land

deep in him, and for his striking descriptions of its beauties and its fauna. As I lay panting that night, cursing my luck and the folly that brought me thither, I lit a lantern and opened his glowing pages. What were almost the first lines to greet my gaze? These!

A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot:
And here, while the night-winds around me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave alone,
'A still small voice' comes through the wild
(Like a father consoling his fretful child),
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear,
Saying—Man is distant, but God is near.

We hailed the passage of the mountains next morning with something akin to delight. Anything to banish the monotony of these last two days of burning toil. Klaas, as the only one of us who knew the country, directed our movements; and with hoarse shouts and re-echoing cracks from the mighty wagon-whip, slowly our caravan was set in motion. Our entrance to the mountains was effected through a narrow and extremely difficult pass, strewn with huge boulders, and overgrown with brush and underwood.

It would be tedious to relate all the labours of the trying trek among these awful mountain passes; but on the third day we had overcome the chief difficulties, and had outspanned for a final rest before completing our work, if to complete it were possible. Shading my eyes from the fierce sunlight, I looked upward at the long slope of mountain, broken here and there, and occasionally shaggy with bush. Over all the fierce atmosphere quivered, seething and dancing in the sun-blaze. I looked again with doubt and dismay at the gasping oxen, many of them lying foundered and almost dead from thirst and fatigue, and my spirits, usually brisk and unflagging, sank below zero. Klaas had told me previously of a most wonderful pool of water that lay on the crown of a mountain, where we should outspan finally before entering upon the portals of the diamond valley. Now he came to me and said, pointing upwards: 'Sieur, de sweet water lies yonder, *op de berg*. It is a beautiful pool, such as ye never saw the like of; if we reach it, we are saved, and the oxen will soon get round again. Ye must get them up somehow, even without the wagon.'

The tiny, yellow, blear-eyed Bushman, standing over me as I sat on a rock, pointing with his lean arm skywards, his anxious dirt-grimed face streaming with perspiration, was hardly the figure of an angel of hope; and yet at that moment he was an angel to me; for we had tasted no water to speak of for close on three days, and had had besides a frightfully trying trek.

We lay panting and grilling for an hour or more; and then I told my men that water in any quantity lay at the mountain top, and that we must at all hazards get the oxen up to it. Only a mile of ascent, or a little more, lay before us; but so feeble were the oxen, that we had the greatest difficulty to drive the bulk of them to the top, even without the encumbering wagon.

Three utterly refused to move, and were left behind. At last we reached the *krantz*, and after a hundred yards' walk upon its flat top, we came almost suddenly upon a most wonderful and, to us, most soul-thrilling sight.

A dense bush of mimosa-thorn and other shrubs grew around, here and there relieved by wide patches of open space. The oxen getting the breeze, and scenting water, suddenly began to display a most extraordinary freshness; up went their heads, their dull eyes brightened, and they trotted forwards to where the jungle apparently grew thickest. For a time they found no opening; but after following the circling wall of bush, at length a broad avenue was disclosed—an avenue doubtless worn smooth by the passage of elephants, rhinoceroses, and other mighty game; and then there fell upon our sight the most refreshing prospect that man ever gazed upon. Thirty yards down the opening there lay a great pool of water, about two hundred feet across at its narrowest point, and apparently of immense depth. The pool was circular, its sides were of rock and quartz, and completely inaccessible from every approach save that by which we had reached it. It was indeed completely encompassed by precipitous walls, about thirty feet in height, which defied the advent of any other living thing than a lizard or a rock-rabbit.

How the poor beasts drank of that cool pellucid flood, and how we human beings drank too! I thought we should never have finished. The oxen drank and drank till the water literally ran out of their mouths as they at last turned away. Then I cast off my clothes and plunged into the water. It was icy cold and most invigorating, and I swam and splashed to my heart's content. After my swim and a rest, I directed my men to fill the four buckets we had brought; and then, leaving the horses in charge of one of their number, we drove the cattle, loth though they were to leave the water, back to the wagon, going very carefully, so as not to spill the water. At length we reached the valley, only to find two of our poor foundered bullocks lying nearly dead. The distant lowing of their refreshed comrades had, I think, warned them of good news, and the very smell of the water revived them; and after two buckets apiece of the cold draught had been gulped down their kiln-dried throats, they got up and shook themselves and rejoined their fellows.

We rested for a short time, and then inspanned and started for the upland pool. The oxen, worn and enfeebled though they were, had such a heart put into them by their drink, and seemed so well to know that their watery salvation lay up there, only a short mile distant, that they one and all bent gallantly to the yokes, and dragged their heavy burden to the margin of the bush-girt water. We now outspanned for the night, made strong fires, for the spoor of leopards was abundant, stewed some bustards, ate a good supper, and turned in.

I suppose we had not been asleep two hours when I was awakened by the sharp barks and yelping of my dogs, the kicks and scrambles of the oxen, and the shouts of the men. Snatching up my rifle and rushing out, I was just in time to see a firebrand hurled at some dark object that sped between the fires.

'What is it, Klaas?' I shouted. 'Allemaghte! it is a tiger [leopard], sieur,' cried the Bushman, 'and he has clawed one of the dogs.'

True enough, on inspecting the yelping sufferer, Rooi-Kat, a brindled red dog, and one of the best of my pack, I found the poor wretch at its last gasp, with its throat and neck almost torn to ribbons. Cursing the sneaking cowardly leopard, I saw that the replenished fires blazed up, and again turned in.

It must have been about two o'clock in the morning—the coldest, the most silent, and the dreariest of the dark hours, that fatal hour betwixt night and day when many a flickering life, unloosed by death, slips from its moorings—when I was again startled from slumber by a most blood-curdling yell. Hunters, as you know, sleep light, and seem instinctively to be aware of what passes around them, even although apparently wrapped in the profoundest sleep. I knew in a moment that that agonised cry came from a human throat; and I rushed out. What a din was there, from dogs, men, and oxen, and above all those horrid human screams. I had my loaded rifle, and rushing up to a confused crowd struggling near the firelight, I saw what had happened. The youngest of my servants, a mere Bechuana boy, was hard and fast in the grip of an immense leopard, which was tearing with its cruel teeth at his throat. Klaas, bolder than his fellows, was lunging an assegai into the brute's ribs, seemingly without the smallest effect; others were thrashing it with firebrands; and the dogs were vainly worrying at its head and flanks. All this I saw instantaneously. Thrusting my followers aside, I ran up to the leopard, and, putting my rifle to its ear, fired. The express bullet did its work at once; the fiercest and most tenacious of the feline race could not refuse to yield its life with its head almost blown to atoms; and loosening its murderous hold, the brute fell dead. But too late! The poor Bechuana boy lay upon the sand, wounded to the death. After these horrors, sleep was banished, and as the gray light came up, we prepared for day.

The morning broke at length in ruddiest splendour; and as the *terrain* was slowly unfolded before my gaze, I realised the desolate magnificence of the country. Mountains, mountains, mountains of grim sublimity rolled everywhere around! Far away below, as I looked westward, a thin silvery line, only visible for a little space, told of the great river flowing to the sea, inexorably shut in by precipitous mountain walls that guaranteed for ever its awful solitude.

Klaas stood near, and as I gazed, he whispered, for my men were not far away: 'Sieur, yonder straight in front of you, five miles away, lie the diamonds. If we start directly after breakfast, we shall have four hours' hard climbing and walking to reach the valley.'

'All right, Klaas,' said I. 'Breakfast is nearly ready, and we'll start as soon as we have fed.'

Breakfast was soon over, and then I spoke to my men. I told them that I intended to stay at this pool for a few days, and that in the meantime I was going prospecting in the mountains bordering the river. I despatched two of them to go and hunt for mountain buck in the direction we had come from; the others

were to see that the oxen fed round about the water, where pasture was good and plentiful, and generally to look after the camp. For Klaas and myself, we should be away till dusk, perhaps even all night; but we did not wish to be followed or disturbed; and unless those at the camp heard my signal of four consecutive rifle-shots, they were on no account to attempt to follow up our spoor. My men by this time knew me and my ways well, and I was convinced that we should not be followed by prying eyes; and indeed, the lazy Africans were only too glad of an easy day in camp after their hard journey.

LOLLIPOPS.

WHEN some time since the announcement went the rounds that chemical science had lighted upon a new product named 'saccharine,' three hundred and sixty times sweeter than sugar, the statement was received with elation by the whole consuming community, housewives and young folks alike. But a distinct 'damper'—to employ, appropriately in this connection, a metaphor of the kitchen—was put on the general jubilation when a little later it was ascertained that the cost of producing the new substance rendered it unable to compete in the domestic circle with its older and more firmly established rival. It was sufficiently disillusionising to learn that the new product was a derivative of coal-tar; but when it was declared for this reason to be an active antiseptic, and hence thoroughly innocuous, the last ray of joy disappeared, at least from the more juvenile section of those interested in such matters.

Natural as may be the taste for sugar, one shared by humanity with all the higher animals, the element of unwholesomeness would seem to play no small part in the fascination which is exercised by sweets over their consumers. If fashion has come to dethrone the lollipop of the schooldays of our fathers for the more refined *bonbon* of to-day, the favour enjoyed by both is founded on a taste common to the two generations; for there are fashions in lollipops as in other matters. Though the succulent hard-bake, the luscious brandy ball, and the ever triumphant toffee of half a century back, still proudly hold their position beside the more modern inventions of French confectionery, other sugary favourites of our fathers' youth have ceased even to be known by the names which to a generation gone by caused an involuntary handling of spare coppers in the disengaged pocket, and an aqueous deliquescence in the region of the salivary glands.

It speaks of an age gone by to hear of sweets which bore names of such portent as 'Napoleon's Ribs.' Who now knows the subtle secret of their careful confection, though the recollection of their flavour lingers yet in the memory of oldsters still happily among us? The inexorable decrees of fashion have dethroned 'Napoleon's Ribs' for the more modern chocolate cream, cocoa-nut ice, and the army of tempting caramels, *fondants*, *dragées*, and what not, which fill the sweet-shops in our city thoroughfares. Every reader of Thackeray remembers how dear old Colonel Newcome horrified his nephew by consuming an orange in genuine old-fashioned style in a box at Astley's; and so it is with the taste in lollipops, which by

that name are known no longer. Peppermint is voted 'low;' brandy balls plebeian and 'taboo,' except in the privacy of home; while there is nothing but what is essentially within the complicated canons of 'good form' in the consumption of chocolate creams.

As a nation, it is clear that we are growing in a taste for lollipops, and soon the sweet-shop will assume with us as much the dignity of a national institution as does the 'candy' store across the Atlantic. Candy and ice-cream, among a few other temporary enjoyments, such as tobogganing, sleighing, and base-ball, constitute the earthly paradise of the youthful American of both sexes; 'candy' being a comprehensive term, including the whole sweep of sugary products known in the old country as 'sweets.' In more homely transatlantic circles, a 'candy-pulling,' the simple entertainment accompanying the production of that form of goody known as 'cream-candy,' is one of the most popular of domestic dissipations. In its fun it decidedly compares favourably with the usually surreptitious manufacture of toffee by the younger members of an English household, generally carried out with the connivance of the servants. Yet toffee is as much a national sweet with English people as candy is with Americans. On the Continent, strange to say, toffee is unknown in any of its forms; yet our neighbours across the Channel possess their own national *bonbons*, and ill advised would be any one who disdained the fascinations of the skilfully constructed *fondant* or the artfully prepared *dragée*, which the beneficent, rather perhaps more correctly, the benevolent action of the lately much-discussed sugar bounties enables English consumers to purchase at every grocer's shop at a fourth the cost at which precisely the same article can be found in the very expensive *confiseries* of the Paris boulevards.

It is of course due to the cheapness of sugar that we have come to be so much larger consumers of lollipops than formerly. Sweets which once were made by some good old dame in the quiet of her back kitchen, are now 'manufactured' by machinery; they fill up whole windows in piles which surpass the wildest dreams of the childhood of a generation gone by. Lollipops which used to be purchased by the ounce are now retailed by the pound. This is indeed a revolution. Perhaps, however, like most revolutions, it will produce its own reaction, and cloy that insatiable craving for sweets against which parents are so loud in their denunciations. It is a process which never fails in its application, that when a grocer engages a new shopboy he is usually allowed by his employer to help himself freely to the tempting stores of sweet stuff placed within his reach. By the unfailing influence of that equilibrium which science informs us Nature never fails to restore whenever it is disturbed, the new apprentice finds within a week, amidst the surrounding occupations of his lot, that philosophic calm which can ill be understood by those unacquainted with the painful process of education through which the humble stoic of the counter has successfully passed.

It is easy to see the objections which parents bring against the consumption of sweets. Apart from the purely side issues of danger from adulteration and poisonous colouring matter,

the action of sweets is to interfere with the healthy appetite for nutritious food, on which the growth of childhood so largely depends. It was a shrewd knowledge of this simple physiological fact which, it will be remembered, was put to such use by Mrs Squeers in her generous administration of brimstone and treacle to the pupils at Dotheboys Hall. It is not till children have received some severe lesson from an unwise indulgence in a variety of sweets, topped off perhaps by a surfeit of ginger beer, as manufactured for the juvenile market, that an experience is gained, the results of which suffice for the rest of their natural life. There are none the less people who retain their taste for sweets far into advancing years, but it will be chiefly found to be those who indulge in no stimulants. This is the reason why men usually hold sweets in such pitying detestation, while women at all ages retain their youthful love of 'goodies.' Of late years, however, the medical profession has joined the ranks of those who declaim against sweets. Indeed, so successfully has the injurious action of sugar been explained, that it is surprising how many persons nowadays, even children, refuse sugar in their tea. But though doctors may declaim against the effects of sugar and of sweets generally, in the case of those suffering from the many forms of eczema now so prevalent, we may feel sure that the taste for lollipops will long continue, founded as it is on one of the instinctive cravings of human nature.

THE OROTAVA MURDER.

As the murder occurred while I was on a visit to my friend the English vice-consul in Orotava, I took an interest in it that was both personal and professional. Alonso, the victim, was an agreeable boy. He had done me various kindnesses. He possessed the engaging suavity of manners that characterises the Spanish race; and he was the English vice-consul's clerk. Thus, when it was surmised that he had been put out of the way, we had good reason to think of him with regret.

I will tell the tale as circumstantially as possible. To an Englishman familiar with the English criminal courts, it will not seem remarkable. But it made a sensation in Tenerife, where murder is rare, notwithstanding the hot blood that may be supposed to run in the veins of the descendants of those rough old warriors of Spain who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries colonised the Canary Islands. A thick octavo volume on the subject was written and printed; and locally, the Orotava murder is still mentioned with serious looks and soft tongues.

It was the evening of an April day; we had just finished dinner, and the vice-consul and I were smoking on the roof of the house in the dry warm atmosphere, when there came a ring at the door. Canarian doors are so made that, when pushed, several little bells tinkle one after the other or all at once; and this sound floated up to us from the inner court.

'Who is there?' called the vice-consul from the roof.

'*Gente de paz*' (a peaceful person) was the conventional reply, in a woman's voice.—'Is my son here, señor?' she continued.

'What! Alonso? Has he not got home yet? He left the vice-consulate at four o'clock, and it is now seven.' This my friend shouted to the woman, who had nothing to say in rejoinder.

'I do not know, señor. He has not come. Ave Maria! the boy was never so late before.'

'There must be something wrong,' remarked the vice-consul to me. 'I do not suppose Alonso has really gone off in the steamer outside the port; but he might have done so. I gave him a bag with five hundred old dollars in it, to take to Don Carmon, never dreaming that there was any risk.'

'Oh!' said I to this; and immediately a long vista of grim or serious possibilities rose up in my imagination. I had not a word of comfort to offer to my friend.

Well, we descended to the orange and lemon trees in the court, and then returned with the woman to her house. But no Alonso was there. From the boy's house we walked to Don Carmon's. Don Carmon was a rich merchant with a taste for curios. The vice-consul had promised to save for him all the old Spanish dollar pieces he could lay hands upon. Two days ago, he had been paid a bill almost wholly in these obsolete coins, and this money with the other accumulations was what Alonso the clerk had been bidden to take to the merchant.

'No; he has not been here,' said Don Carmon, when he was interrogated. '*Caramba!* it has a bad look.'

We all agreed in this. However, for the poor woman's sake, we tried to make light of the boy's disappearance, and spoke of his return home as a thing of course. Nevertheless, Alonso was never afterwards seen alive; nor were the five hundred dollars recovered.

Of course, the Orotava police were requisitioned to unravel the mystery that environed the matter. But they were so unused to criminal cases, real or supposititious, of this kind, that they did nothing. 'What would you have?' they asked of the vice-consul, when he blamed them because no elucidation was offered. 'Without doubt, the boy has turned into a thief. Five hundred dollars is much money, and with it he might go to America, or England, or where you please, to make his fortune.'

This was true. In their customary Spanish neglect of method, they had allowed several transatlantic steamers to leave Santa Cruz before it occurred to them that it might be well to subject all island passengers on these ships to a police inspection. Of course the boy had gone. There was nothing left to do except get a new clerk, and bid the boy's mother thank Heaven she was never more likely to see the face of her wicked and unfilial son. But the woman was firm in maintaining Alonso's integrity. 'God knows he was good,' she said. 'He could not steal. He is dead, and some one has killed him.'

A month passed, and Alonso was fast being forgotten, when, by a chance incident, the boy's mother was proved to be just in her asser-

tions and suspicions. Donna Concepcion Varda y Ro, the rich widow of an advocate, who had retired to Orotava to spend his last days in peace and comfort, died, and had to be buried. There was a great crowd at the funeral. Many people could not get into the little cemetery, and had to stand outside, looking at the swaying fronds of the palm-trees that grew among the graves within the walls. With those who were able to follow the coffin was a certain old beggar-man. He was blind, and was led by a little girl. The old man had received much charitable help from the advocate's widow, and now meant to show his esteem for her. But the child to whom he was tethered soon became restless when they were in the cemetery, and finally guided him to a secluded corner where he could sit down awhile in safety by himself. She then ran away to join the crowd and watch the undertakers fill Donna Concepcion's coffin with quicklime, as is the custom in Spanish countries.

In the meantime, the old man became sensible of a very nauseous smell in his vicinity. He tried to move away, but only succeeded in tumbling down and hurting himself. He could not escape the bad odour. It came from a dead body—there was no question about that. But as all regular interments like Donna Concepcion's were accompanied by the heaping of quicklime over every part of the body, in order to counteract the fumes of slow putrefaction, the old man naturally wondered. When the child returned to him, he bade her look about and see if she could see anything to which the smell might be attributed. 'I should not be surprised,' he remarked half jokingly, 'if young Alonso is here, after all.'

The girl had no difficulty in localising the smell. It came from a square stone vault, which had hitherto been empty and neglected for a long time. A swarm of blue-bottle flies buzzed round the wide fissures of the tomb. The child peeped inside, and then, much frightened, told the blind man that she could see a body in its clothes lying in a heap at the bottom of the vault.

'Oh, it is Don Alonso without doubt,' said the beggar, as they moved away and out of the burying-ground.

At first, no credence was given to the light talk of this poor mendicant. But when it reached the ears of Alonso's mother, she took the matter up, and formally petitioned that an investigation might be made. It was made: and the body was at once recognised as that of Alonso. The skull had been beaten in, and marks of stabbing were found in different parts of the trunk. It was therefore unmistakably a case of murder. Moreover, the absence of blood-stains in the vault or the cemetery itself seemed to imply that the murder had been committed elsewhere, and that only as an afterthought had the body been carried into the cemetery. Of course, the money was not to be seen. Thus, the motive of the crime was sufficiently manifest.

The police were greatly excited over this discovery. They had ridiculed the blind man's tale until it was verified, and had treated the words of Alonso's mother as so much senile maundering. They had it upon their honour, therefore, to atone for their errors by unexampled sagacity in tracking the murderers.

Now, in the whole community of Port Orotava there were but two rogues whom all the world held to be rogues. They were José Zamorra, a mason, and Pedro Martinez, a baker's assistant. The police thought they could not do better than arrest these men without loss of time. The priests shook their heads at Zamorra and Martinez; no young girl would walk with them; and had they not been clever workmen, though dissolute men, their employers would have joined the others in ostracising them. But when it came to evidence, there was none. The men had been away from their work at the supposed time of the murder; but then they never worked after five. They had not been seen in the streets of the town either; but the streets of Orotava are always desolate, and this was no evidence. Their wives spoke for them, swearing to everything that seemed favourable to them, though with a quenched and hangdog demeanour and a constant mutter of religious expletives that appeared odd. And lastly, to complete the proof of their innocence, it was shown that these two men were in the Casino by the seashore before six o'clock. Witnesses remembered the clean shirts worn by the men on this occasion and the reckless oaths they used; and it was asked, how could men who had killed another man and carried him off to the cemetery, by any human endeavour be at the club as they were, and behave as they did, with such a tedious piece of crime on their hands, and such a devil's weight upon their consciences? In short, Zamorra and Martinez met their examiners with a bold face, and were dismissed from the court stainless as to the murder.

Two or three weeks later, the investigation entered upon a new phase. One of the police was accustomed to ramble along by the seashore, where the rough edges of the black lava rocks stand sharply towards the water. During his promenade one evening, he noticed the blue and white enamel plate of a house-number lying on the top of a flat piece of stone. In his absorption and displeasure—for he was thinking about the murder, and wondering whom he could arrest—he kicked the piece of enamel as far as he could, and sat down on the rock. The following evening he took the same walk, and to his confusion he found the enamelled number which he had spurned away replaced on the rock. Then he seated himself and thought awhile. What was the meaning of it? He could not say. However, he pocketed the number. As he was about to go home, the fancy came to him to overturn the stone on which he had been sitting. He did so, and was much gratified to find that the reverse side of the slab was broadly dyed with what could not be other than blood-stains. He was then convinced that he had two vital links in the chain of criminality that was to garrote somebody.

The enamel plate was curiously illustrative of the dislike which one Spaniard has personally to bring another into trouble. A certain man had been an involuntary witness of the murder. Would he admit this before all the world? For many reasons, no. Nevertheless, he wished the murderers to be punished. To attain this end, he abstracted the doorplate from the house of one of the felons, and placed it where it might bear silent but adequate testimony for the first

intelligent passer-by to make more of. Upon the evidence of his doorplate—for it was his—Martinez was rearrested. Zamorra shared his fate, and they were both incarcerated in separate cells in the city prison.

It was terribly humiliating to the strong arm of the law when it transpired that even with the help of the doorplate there was not a sufficiency of evidence against these men. No one doubted that they had killed the boy, and yet they could not be made to pay the penalty. In this dilemma, recourse was had to a plan much favoured by the old Inquisition, but which a sheriff of England might well be aghast at. The prison officials were bidden to tell each of the felons that the other had confessed the whole story, and that only by similar confession could any hope of mercy be anticipated. Martinez then straightway declared that Zamorra had done the killing: he had only helped Zamorra to bury the body. Zamorra, on his part, swore that it was by accident he met Martinez, when Martinez had completed the murder, and wanted an assistant to hide the signs of his crime. Such were their respective tales at the outset. After a while, however, when each realised that there was no hope, a general confession was made, that they might at anyrate begin their long spell of purgatory unshackled by those latest lies.

This was the gist of their story: They had wanted money to pay their debts, contracted at cards and cock-fights. They had intelligence of Alonso's movements on the evening of his death. Martinez seduced the boy towards the lava beach, where Zamorra joined him in stunning and stabbing the poor fellow. They then dragged the body towards the sea, hoping that the tide would eventually float it away from Tenerife. This done, they recognised the need of an *alibi*, if it came to the worst; and, parting, they hurried home, changed their clothes, and presented themselves at the club, behaving in such a manner that the other members would be able to recall their presence on that particular evening. Early on the following day they returned to the beach, and found the body still there. They then chose their time for taking it to the cemetery, where they threw it into the disused vault by which the old blind man had seated himself. After this, all they had to do was to turn the stone upon which Alonso's body had lain during the night, and face the world with what effrontery they could muster. It had to be confessed that they had schemed with fair success up to the time when Martinez's doorplate was used against him.

The last scene in the tragedy was acted one July morning about three months after the murder. I joined the vice-consul, who in his official capacity formed one of the procession attendant upon the two felons on their way to execution. We passed through the Orotava streets, over their slippery grass-grown cobbles, and under the tearful gaze of many a native woman standing at the door of her house. The priest murmured a litany for the dead; and the half-dozen acolytes, all in black, who echoed the responses, laughed and chatted with the ease that is characteristic of them at a funeral. Thus we continued until we reached the seashore and the exact spot where it was surmised the boy Alonso

had come to his end. Here the heavy wooden chair of the garrote was already in its place, and ropes and a thick stave lay on the ground close by. The executioner was a strong fellow, though nervous. Martinez was the first to die. It was a disagreeable spectacle, and one I do not wish to repeat. A quite indescribable cry gurgled from the man's throat when the executioner twisted the rope; then his eyes started from their sockets, and he was dead, though quivering. Zamorra followed him, and died in the same way.

A NEW SUBSTITUTE FOR GLASS.

The introduction of a material combining all the advantages of glass with none of the corresponding disadvantages arising from its brittleness will be hailed with interest by every class of the public, who suffer daily in one form or another from the fragile nature of the article it is now sought to supersede. The transparent wire-wave roofing, which is translucent, pliable as leather, and unbreakable, has for its basis a web of fine iron wire, with warp and weft threads about one-twelfth of an inch apart. This netting is covered on both sides with a thick translucent varnish, containing a large percentage of linseed oil. The process of manufacture is conducted by dipping the sheets into deep tanks containing the composition until the required thickness is obtained; the sheets are then dried in a heated chamber, and after being stored for some time till thoroughly set, are ready for use. The sheets can be made any colour desired, and range from amber to pale brown. The roofing is very pliable; and bending backwards and forwards without any injury, readily adapts itself to curves or angles in roofing. The new material is not only waterproof, but is unaffected by steam, the heat of the sun, frost, hail, rain, or indeed atmospheric changes of any kind. Being a non-conductor, buildings, winter-gardens, and similar structures remain cool in summer and warm in winter. Owing to its lightness as compared with glass—only half a pound per square foot—considerable economy in the iron or timber framing designed to carry it can be secured, whilst saving in carriage is obtained in addition to safety.

Turning now to the question of cost. Wire-wave roofing is more expensive in first cost than ordinary glass; but the many advantages, both in erection and maintenance, already set forth will, in the opinion of those interested in the question, more than counterbalance the primary additional outlay. A material that requires no glazing, can be cut with scissors and fixed with zinc nails, is an economical one to erect. For churches, passages, staircases, special coloured varieties to simulate glass similarly prepared are manufactured. Both the Admiralty and the War Office have availed themselves of the advantages to be derived from the employment of the new roofing material; whilst it may be added that the Royal Aquarium at Westminster is entirely covered with it.

A list of the many and varied uses to which the wire-wave roofing may be applied would be a

long one; amongst others, may be mentioned: Roofs of cotton mills, explosive and other factories, workshops of all classes, breweries, printing-works, railway stations, exhibitions, cricket pavilions, lawn-tennis courts, verandas, porches and covered ways, boathouses, engine-room skylights, conservatories, ferneries, garden-frames and summer-houses, kiosks, stables, loose-boxes for horses and cattle, barns, cowhouses and shepherds' houses, pheasantries, poultry-runs, fowl-houses and kennels, skylights, markets, schools, laundries, portable buildings, temporary structures, hospital and military huts, and all other buildings requiring to be light and dry.

WARFARE.

I.

My hand has lost its cunning and its power;
I cannot fight;
My arm hangs helpless, like a wounded flower,
Killed by a blight!
My tendons, once of steel, are limp and shrunk—
Each yields, and bends;
My iron frame is like the blasted trunk
That lightning rends!

II.

And where my armour? Is it also gone?
I wake to find
That I am standing here, disarmed, alone—
With youth behind—
And strength, and beauty, and all else that dies,
Locked chill in death—
Gone! like a vision of the night, that flies
At Morn's first breath!

III.

What has my warfare brought me? What great gain?
How much renown?
Where are my trophies? Where my conquered slain?
And where my crown?
What are my victories, that I should share
The victor's seat?
I fought as one who vainly beats the air,
And gained—defeat!

IV.

And this the end is! this the climax grand!
The acme won—
The final downfall of a house of sand,
The last rood run!
And what my profits are, I ask in vain,
For none are shown;
Nothing is left that I can count as gain,
Or call my own.

V.

I toyed with shadows, while the sands of Time
Rolled swiftly on;
And said not, 'This is youth,' until its prime
Was past and gone!
And now, in shame, before the Head Supreme,
With garments rent,
I crave for grace, that I may yet redeem
The time misspent!

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.

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THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

NOT more than one hundred and thirty years ago, the roads of England were pronounced the worst in Europe, and not a single mile of canal—as canals are now understood—had been made. The wonderful growth of commerce and the industrial arts from about that time received its first and greatest impulse from the construction of the Bridgewater Canal, between Manchester and Liverpool; and Manchester may fairly claim the proud distinction of being the pioneer in opening up this country to commerce and manufactures by means of improved internal communications.

From the day on which the Bridgewater Canal was opened, the cost of carriage of goods was reduced by three-fourths, and immediately, as if by magic, the change began. The trade of Manchester and the surrounding district grew by leaps and bounds, until, instead of receiving the bulk of our supplies from the Continent, as formerly, the habitable world has been ransacked to find new markets for our productions; and within the following fifty years three thousand miles of canal were made at a cost of fifty million pounds sterling.

Fifty years after the opening of the Bridgewater Canal, Manchester entered on a second enterprise of a similar kind and for a similar purpose; and the first really successful railway was made: the pioneer of a system of iron roads surpassing all that the world has ever seen. Strangely enough, one of the principal objections to railways was, that the canals, made after so much trouble and expense, would be ruined; and it was gravely proposed by an eminent engineer to fill up the canals and convert them into railways; but the canals have more than proved that they can compete successfully with railways; and for raw material and the heavier class of goods are a far less costly means of conveyance than any other in existence.

The enormous expansion of commerce within this century has been in no small measure due

to canals. Without the means of distribution, commerce cannot exist, for facilities create trade. Until very recently, this country, from her manufacturing skill, and as the inventor and maker of the finest machinery in existence, has controlled the carrying-trade of the world, and competition outside of these islands was scarcely thought of. But we have found, somewhat to our surprise, that our competitors have been working diligently; that they have got and now make our best machines, and that their operatives work more hours in the day for much less remuneration. By more active canvassing for orders, by studying the requirements of customers, and by paying less for the carriage of goods, the foreigner, we find, is competing with us on more than favourable conditions. The English manufacturers and merchants have had to learn that not only abroad, but also in the home market, they were being undersold, and they began to inquire into the reason. In addition to the causes enumerated, it was found that the internal carrying-trade of the country was entirely monopolised by the railways, including carriage by canal; and a comprehensive Report, published by the Associated Chambers of Commerce in 1885, showed that the rates for carriage of goods in this country were on an average fully twice as much as those paid by our continental rivals.

But in addition to this keen competition, Manchester and the surrounding districts are suffering from obstructions which they have long complained of and sought to mitigate, but hitherto in vain, and which were thus characterised recently in the *Times*: 'Five millions and a half of people are at the mercy of a combination, holding a pass between them and the rest of the human race, and making the same use of their coign of vantage as the medieval barons did in the embattled toll-gates thrown across the world's highways. City, port, dock, and railway vie in extortion, and levy duties to the extent of human forbearance. Many millions of tons of material and manufactures pass annually to and fro between the port and the industrious region at

the back; and on every ton, Liverpool has its profit.' This is a heavy indictment of Liverpool; but the fact is, in the past, and under the prosperous times long enjoyed by that port, responsibilities were accepted, reasonable enough at the time, but found to be now, under more stringent conditions, to say the least, burdensome.

Liverpool is not a manufacturing city; she is the result of the great industrial centre behind; but, unfortunately, owing to the responsibilities of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, it is impossible for that trust to make such concessions as regards their existing tariffs as will satisfy Manchester, and which that city is convinced will be secured by the Ship Canal. The railways also, with all the intermediate carriers, porters, &c., must have their profit. Mr George Findlay, Manager of the London and North-western Railway, stated before parliament, that out of 9s. 2d. per ton for carriage of a certain class of goods to Manchester, his Company received 1s. 9d., recently reduced to 1s. 2d., the remainder going for charges and dues in Liverpool. But whatever the cause may be, the contention of Manchester is, that goods are brought from the farthest ends of the earth to within a few miles of their destination, and then the heaviest portion of the expense and delay begins. It was clearly shown, during the parliamentary inquiry into the merits of the Ship Canal, that where there is a difference of several days in the length of a voyage, no extra charge is made, even when that difference amounts to so much as ten days; therefore it ought to cost no more for carriage by water to Manchester than it does now to Liverpool. Besides this saving, there are various other economies contemplated by the advocates of the Ship Canal scheme. As the largest vessels will be able to enter or leave the canal at any state of the tide, one of the principal causes of delay is avoided, as also the expense of 'breaking bulk' and transshipment to railways, with the risk of damage or deterioration.

There is no doubt that Manchester is amply justified in her contention that the canal will give her a new lease of prosperity, and the power to maintain her high position in the industrial world. The construction of the canal is now in progress, and is being pushed forward with great energy and vigour by the contractor, Mr Walker of London, a gentleman who has shown a rare combination of judgment and skill in the selection of plant for carrying on the work; and by means of which it can be seen how effectually steam-machinery can be made to do work of this kind. The work has now been going on for over twelve months, and it is confidently stated that Mr Walker is well forward with the proportion of work expected to be executed within that time. The canal is to be thirty-five miles in length, and is being constructed in sections, some of which are nearly ready to be connected in such a way as will facilitate the work by

laying continuous railway tracks. There are no great engineering problems to be solved, not even such—comparing a large enterprise with a much smaller one—as Brindley had to overcome with his limited means and experience, in the making of the Bridgewater Canal last century. It is undoubtedly a gigantic undertaking, even in these days of great schemes; yet what particularly astonishes the visitor is the absence of the large armies of men which are usually seen on great works of a similar description. On one of the sections near Manchester about twelve hundred men are employed, distributed over the section, about four miles in length, with three large docks in progress. But in place of employing manual labour for the excavations, five powerful 'steam navvies' of various nationalities can be seen at work from one place; besides a large 'steam-dredger,' similar to what may be seen dredging at the entrances to harbours, mounted on a large truck, on rails laid along the side of the cutting. This machine is said to be the most powerful excavator in existence. It lifts and empties into a truck four cubic yards of clay every minute, and twenty trucks are filled and removed in ten minutes. The machine is continually moving forward. Steam-machinery seems to be adapted to all kinds of work, and the men are chiefly engaged in attending to it, or performing such labour as is unworthy of its attention. On all hands, steam is the universal servant: a perfect network of rails covers the ground, reminding us of a great railway terminus; while locomotives, steam-navvies, steam-cranes, and steam-pumps at full work, present a scene of activity and energy seldom witnessed. On the different sections there are fifteen thousand horsepower at work in the various forms of steam-machinery, which will at least represent the work of one hundred thousand men; and when we consider that the amount of material to be excavated and removed is forty-eight million cubic yards of clay and six million cubic yards of rock, the gigantic character of the undertaking will be appreciated.

But such large quantities in figures convey only an imperfect meaning of their vastness to ordinary readers; perhaps it will be better understood by stating that the quantity named would make a wall round the earth, on the equatorial line, about six feet high and two feet thick. Up to the present time fully one million cubic yards of soil have been removed per month. It is calculated that one of the 'navvies' removes between sixty and seventy thousand cubic yards in the same time.

While agencies so powerful are in operation excavating this enormous quantity of material, we may glance at the work to be done in detail. The canal is not a very long one, being, as we have said, thirty-five miles. Its sectional dimensions will be three hundred feet wide on the surface—or nearly twice the width of the Suez

Canal; the bottom one hundred and twenty feet wide; with a depth of twenty-six feet. The starting-point is at Eastham, on the river Mersey; and the sill of the entrance dock is eleven feet below the level of the deepest dock in Liverpool, thus making the canal independent of the state of the tide. The speed of vessels passing through it is estimated at five miles per hour; and all the usual causes of delay being avoided, the largest steamer may reach Manchester while another is waiting for the tide to enter the docks in Liverpool.

On entering the tidal dock at Eastham there is a rise of twenty-two feet from low-tide by means of a lock. Twenty-two miles farther, the second lock, with a rise of sixteen feet, is reached, at Latchford. Seven miles more brings the third lock, which again lifts fourteen feet, at Irlam. Two miles, a fourth lock, fourteen feet. Old Trafford is the next lock, four miles distant, with a rise of sixteen feet, or a total height above the Mersey of sixty feet. These sections or divisions will have at each terminus three locks, parallel to each other, and of dimensions suited to the various sizes of vessels. By this means unnecessary labour and waste of compensation water will be avoided.

The canal may be almost considered one long continuous dock; and with the exception of the north bank, between Eastham and Runcorn, a distance of twelve miles, which is bounded by the Mersey, the whole of the two banks may be made available for quayage accommodation, equal to a distance of fifty-eight miles, and at any point of which vessels may be loaded or discharged. The facilities that are offered in this way are sure to draw a large number of new industries, for manufacturers are certain to seek advantageous situations. The Canal Company have very wisely secured at a moderate price a large portion of the land along both banks of the canal, chiefly with a view to this demand, and this land is certain to increase in value when the canal is completed. In this connection, greater facilities will be afforded than any mere tidal river or arm of the sea can give; and during the last few years, many large industries which have hitherto been carried on successfully in the mid-land counties have been removed to the coast, to secure advantages similar, though inferior, to those offered by the Ship Canal.

The docks are intended to occupy a large area, placed at different stations, but especially at Old Trafford—a suburb of Manchester—and at the Pomona Docks, which are situated near the heart of Manchester. There are three very large docks at Old Trafford, the largest of which is seventeen hundred feet long, by two hundred and fifty wide. The remaining two are smaller, and with the exception of the walls, are not far from completion. The newest and best arrangements for loading and discharging vessels will be provided. The dock walls are on such a scale as would be in

themselves a large contract. They are to be made of concrete, and will be on an average fifteen feet thick, to be faced with cement, and covered with large blocks of granite weighing several tons each. The walls will thus be practically one solid mass, several miles in length. All the walls, including those for the several locks, and the entrance dock of the river Mersey, will be constructed in the same way. The stone used in the building of the walls is nearly all obtained from the excavations at the entrance dock.

There will probably be twelve thousand men employed in a short time on the works, besides boys; and this implies a great increase in the excavating machines, as, notwithstanding the progress made in the past, the contractor is determined to push on the work with still greater speed. Mr Walker, in connection with the completion, has undertaken to pay one hundred pounds for every day that he requires after the stipulated time; and the Company on the other hand will pay him a like sum for every day he can finish the canal before the time agreed on. The Ship Canal is truly a work of great interest and importance. We have only glanced at the quantity of work to be done, besides which there are deviations of the lines of railways and of the course of rivers to be made—no small amount of work in themselves. Already there is a prospect of new canals being constructed, with improved details, connecting those districts with the Ship Canal which are at present outside of canal accommodation, all of which will serve as feeders for the main artery leading to the sea.

It is pleasing to record that Mr Walker has shown a fine spirit in dealing with his employees. At all the different sections are schools, lecture and mission halls. Social meetings and temperance lectures are held regularly. At each section a clean and well-ventilated hospital, with matrons and trained nurses, is established. Fortunately so far the work has made great progress with but very few accidents, considering the large quantity of powerful machinery in operation and the inexperience of the men at the beginning of the work.

A great deal of the opposition to the canal scheme arose from want of a clear understanding as to the basis of calculation on which is founded the prospect of its being a remunerative investment. It is quite evident that neither the Mersey Harbour Board nor the railways, bound as they are, can make such reduction on their rates and charges as will give the relief required, or as it is anticipated will be obtained from the Ship Canal. The promoters base their calculations on the present average tonnage, with charges equal to one half of what are now being paid to Liverpool and for carriage between the two cities. It is maintained that the Ship Canal, while conferring advantageous benefits on the populous centres which it will accommodate, will do so without injury to existing interests. Throughout the severe parliamentary contest, it was urged by the promoters that its operation must improve rather than prejudice the development of the port of Liverpool, and the great carrying Companies interested will have in addition the collection and distribution of the enormous traffic brought forward by the greater facilities and cheapness

offered by the Ship Canal. The effect of the creation of a new port in the most populous district and in the heart of the kingdom will be to increase new industries and enlarge commerce.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER VII.

HOWEVER fully Mr Robert Snelling was bent upon doing his duty by his orphan charge, he was not able to set all his benevolent machinery at once in motion. The Christmas holidays stretched a merciful interval between John and schooldays, and Uncle Robert had too righteous a fear of public opinion to begin immediately to press the boy with home lessons to such an extent as to make life an actual burden to him. The boy's state of mind was critical and curious, and Uncle Robert was not quite the man to understand it. But as no intimate knowledge of the art of watch-making, for instance, is needed to enable any clumsy fellow to spoil for good and all the most delicate mechanism, so no great power of penetration was necessary to Snelling's plan. It was part of his method to have John a good deal on evidence, and to draw pitying attention to his moaning vacant ways.

'Upon my word,' he would say, 'I don't know what I shall make o' the lad at all. I'm sore afraid he'll never be good for much. It would ha' been a grief to his father to have seen him i' this state; and it's my belief he gets worse every day.'

He had found, dull as he was, that an ostentatious pity had more effect upon the boy than the most open bullying, and this discovery pleased him greatly. Nature played into his hands. Knowing—in spite of the hourly renewed veil of respectability which he hung between his motive and himself—what a thorough-going villainy he was bent upon, he was naturally very careful of public opinion, and it was so much safer to pity than to bully, that in a little while he gave himself wholly over to that course.

'Dear, dear!' he would say, when once he had blundered on the use of this unexpected weapon. 'It's a dreadful pity you got that knock on the head, John; I'm afraid it's made next door to a fool of you for life.—D'ye feel it anywhere? What is it? What's it like?'

This sort of thing was doubly effective before strangers, because it threw John into a dreadful state of helpless vacancy, and at the same time helped to establish Uncle Robert's reputation for gentleness of heart, and showed how sad he was over the boy's misfortune. But Mr Snelling expected schoolmaster Macfarlane to be of great assistance to him, and looked forward anxiously to the re-opening of the school. A day or two before the time appointed for that event, his business led him by Macfarlane's residence, and he made a call upon him. 'I've called,' he said, when he had taken his seat in the schoolmaster's little parlour, 'to have a word or two about this poor young nephew of mine, Mr Macfarlane. I'm afraid as of late he has been a bit back'ard in his studies.'

'That is certainly the case, Mr Snelling,' said Macfarlane; 'but I must ask you to take into

consideration the fact that the late Mr Vale particularly desired that the boy should not be pressed forward too rapidly.'

'Please, understand,' Snelling answered with a wooden condescension, 'that I am not ablaming you, sir. I am fully aware of Mr Vale's desire. But the youth is now in my hands, and I am desirous to see him pushed forrad a little faster. I am now his guardian, and I feel the responsibility hang upon me pretty heavy.'

'That is quite natural, Mr Snelling,' returned the schoolmaster.

'I don't want to be told, sir, whether it is natural or no,' said Snelling. 'Maybe everybody would feel the responsibility as heavy as I do; maybe they would not. That, sir, is neither here nor there. The point with me is, as I do feel the responsibility, and as I desire to discharge it.'

'Exactly so,' replied Macfarlane.

Mr Snelling looked as if he would have liked to contradict him, but on reflection seemed to think better of it. 'Having had the b'y,' he proceeded heavily—'having had the b'y under my care sence a considerable while before his father's death, I have been able to come to a bit of a judgment upon his character.'

'Precisely,' said the schoolmaster.

Again Mr Snelling looked as if he would like to defy the schoolmaster, and again, not seeing his way to it, he suppressed himself. 'His father's opinion was,' he continued, his solemn drawl and decisive snap growing more solemn and more decisive, 'as the condition of the b'y's mind was such as would not bear with pressure.'

'Just so,' said Macfarlane, and this time Snelling saw his chance and stopped him.

'No, sir; it is not just so. It is not just so, nor anything like just so, if my opinion is to be took at any value.'

'If you should counsel the pursuit of another method, Mr Snelling'—

'If I should counsel the pursuit of another method,' Snelling broke in, 'you can hear what I've got to say in case you should care to listen to it. If not, I daresay I shall be able to find a place where the lad can learn as much maybe as you could teach him.'

'I beg your pardon, Mr Snelling,' said the schoolmaster submissively; 'I simply intended to signify my general agreement with the principles you were laying down.'

'You can signify your general agreement, sir,' Mr Snelling answered with his own dull dignity, 'when you know what them principles amount to.'

Macfarlane could not afford to quarrel with his visitor, and was, indeed, as a general thing, too discreet to quarrel with people who were stronger than he was, or who could in any way be either of damage or service to him. He kept silence, therefore, and listened, smilingly attentive, whilst Snelling expounded his views.

'As a teacher of youth,' that ponderous personage continued, 'you are likely to be acquainted with the fable of the hare and the tortoise. My newew has become a bit of a tortoise, in consequence of the smack on the side of the head he got in the meadows on Scott's Hills in the course of last summer. But that's no reason why, if he's pushed judicious—I say judicious, mind you

—he should not at the end of the year be on level terms with them that has greater advantages. If five hour at four mile an hour will enable a b'y to do twenty mile, seven hour at three mile an hour will enable that same b'y to do one-and-twenty mile.'

The schoolmaster made a motion of assent, and Snelling paused.

'I beg your pardon; I thought you was going to make a observation.'

'I simply intended to signify my entire agreement, Mr Snelling.'

'The b'y,' pursued Mr Snelling, 'has took shelter, as a b'y is apt to do, under his father's weakness. The b'y—as most b'ys are—is inclined to take it easy, if he gets the chance. In short, sir, he has grown lazy with indulgence. That is what's mainly the matter with him; he has grown lazy with indulgence. Now, what I wish, sir, is that that their perclivity should be conquered in him. The last words his father said to me before the coroner's inquest was held upon his body was these: "Robert," he said, "I look to you to do your duty by the b'y. I know," he said, "that it is and will be a arduous task; but," he says, "I look to you to do it. I shall expect you," says he, "to be a second father to him, and I repose full confidence in you."—Now, sir,' continued Mr Snelling, with a bullying air, 'I intend to be worthy of them words, and to do my duty in the spirit as it was confided to me. I desire John to be pushed forrad, and though I shan't ask you to exercise any undoo severity, I shall look for results from this here conversation.'

He was so portentously slow, that Macfarlane, who was glib of speech and warm of temperament, felt inclined to hurry him. 'I grasp your idea, sir,' he said when he was quite sure that his visitor had finished, 'and I will do my best to carry out your instructions. I have had backward boys in my charge before to-day, Mr Snelling, and I think I may say that I have been tolerably successful with them.'

'We shall see, sir,' returned Snelling—'we shall see. You will find him inclined to wander, and you may be took in by that, as I was took in by it, unless you are forewarned. He has been allowed to wander, and that's wheer the mischief has come in. His mind must be kep' upon his task; he must be shown as he will not be allowed to wander.'

'I will bear your instructions in mind, Mr Snelling,' said the schoolmaster. 'I have observed that tendency in John.' He took a retrospective look. 'I have observed that tendency, and but that his father's instructions were emphatically towards leniency—I may say towards indulgence—I think I should have been able to correct it.'

Mr Macfarlane was a survival, and not a very late survival either, of those days when a man who had failed in every other walk of life was still held good enough to be a schoolmaster. There was not a country town in England at that time which did not own one pedagogue to whose care the welfare of a score or two of boys was confided, without his having either special training or special learning or special temper. A brass plate and a prospectus were stock-in-trade enough to start with; and if the

man who displayed these essentials to the world had not the others, they were supposed perhaps to come with practice, or perhaps their presence or absence was not supposed to matter much. Macfarlane wrote a copper-plate hand, spelled accurately, and was dreadfully distinct and anxious about his aspirates, so that he passed with the easy-going Castle-Barfield folk not merely as a scholar but a person of high-breeding. When a man not only breathed hard on 'him' and 'whom,' but was actually compelled by his sense of responsibility to the language to wedge a laborious aspirate into 'we-heelbarrow,' it was evident that he was a person of no common training. The homely folks would have felt that in anybody but a schoolmaster a care so constant would have something too much of a reproach for common people who had something more than their *hs* to think about; but in a preceptor of youth it was excellent, and gave him just that happy difference from other men which a white tie gave the parson.

Whether the idea were born with him, or inspired into him, or whether it grew merely as a result of habit and custom, and was confirmed by experience, Macfarlane's educational fetich was the bamboo cane. Without bodily suffering, he really did not see how boys were to learn anything. He was quite honest in this belief, as many worthier men than he had been before him; and since he was so, it was well for him, if not for the urchins who lived beneath his rule, that he felt as much pleasure in inflicting punishment as some men do in spreading happiness. The enjoyment of other people's pain is like the habit of dram-drinking or opium-taking—it grows with practice, and nature demands an increasing dose. The schoolmaster had enjoyed twenty years of arbitrary power, and to make some young soul wretched, or some young body to smart and tingle, had grown into a daily necessity with him. To have at the back of his keenest relish a firm and rooted belief that he was doing an imperative duty whilst he enjoyed himself, was delightful.

All that Snelling knew or cared about him was that he was a strict disciplinarian, who, being led to suspect that a boy shammed dullness, would be likely to be hard with him. For his own part, he had said nothing that the most affectionate and dutiful of uncles and guardians might not have said of a child whom he wished well from the bottom of his heart; but turning over the theme in his dull mind, he thought he saw a chance of protecting himself against possible suspicion, and took it, not without some inward tremors.

'You see, sir,' he said to Macfarlane, 'their's a thing that lays a extry anxiety upon my shoulders. This b'y is heir to a very considerable property, and I am his sole guardian. I am his sole relative; and if his education should be neglected, and he should live to grow up as soft as he is now, their's them in Castle-Barfield as is quite low enough in their minds to say as I neglected him with a eye to my own interest. Therefore, I feel it needful to be severe with him, and to push him forrad harder than I should do.'

'I think I may say,' replied Macfarlane, rising as his visitor rose, and escorting him to the

door, 'that I fully appreciate your anxiety. The boy needs a firm hand.'

'That is what he needs,' said Snelling—'a firm hand.'

'He will find it here, Mr Snelling; he will find it here.—Good-morning, Mr Snelling.'

It happened that John went to school at the opening day of the new year's business there in unusually good spirits, and that he joined in a romp with his schoolfellows with something of his old abandon and jollity. Macfarlane, tying on his black satin stock at a bedroom window which overlooked the playground, observed this, and stored it up for use. It is not doing the good man any injustice to admit that he felt eager to begin the cultivation of his patch of boyhood, or to acknowledge that he resolved that if the bamboo had anything to say to it, John should advance as rapidly as his comrades. The bamboo was not the end, but only the means of culture, a plough which prepared the ground for the reception of the seed of learning. Tickle the boy with bamboo, and he laughed with a harvest of verbs and moods and tenses.

Above the awful desk of state at which he sat, Macfarlane had a board which moved upon a hinge. It bore on one side the word 'Work,' and on the other the word 'Leisure,' each legibly printed in black letters on a white ground. It displayed one side or the other in obedience to the tug of a cord which lay within easy reach of the schoolmaster's hand, and either in rising or falling it struck a circular spring from which a bell was suspended. The bell rang, and dead silence or wild clamour of tongues succeeded.

The boys were already marshalled to their desks when the master entered, and took his customary place amidst a deafening hubbub. The cord was pulled, the bell rang, the board showed the dire legend 'Work,' and the labours of the schoolboy year began.

'You may have heard, boys,' said Mr Macfarlane, who, bereft of authority during the month of holiday, and forced to abdicate from his throne, felt all the happier on coming back again, and was gifted at such times with a dreadful jocularly—'you may have heard, boys, that it is a practice amongst Her Majesty's judges, when they visit a town at which criminals are ordinarily brought before them to be tried, and when, contrary to the general rule, they find that no breach of the laws has been committed, to assume a pair of white gloves. Now, I should very much like at the end of the present session to be able to assume a pair of white gloves myself. I should be proud and pleased if for once in my dealings with you I should find it unnecessary to inflict punishment upon one of your number.—Crowther! stand up, sir! What do you mean, sir, by those hideous contortions?'

'Kenrick's put a pea in my ear, sir, if you please, and I can't get it out, sir.'

'Indeed,' said Mr Macfarlane. 'Thus early in the history of the half-year—even upon its threshold, I find my hopes dashed to the ground.—Kenrick, I will ask you to be good enough to report yourself to me after morning school-hours. These little ebullitions of holiday feeling must be checked, Kenrick; they must be checked, Kenrick, and you may rely upon it that they

shall be checked, and sternly. There is always one misdemeanant who must be the first to suffer in any half-year of work upon which we may enter, and you, Kenrick, have promoted yourself to that bad eminence.'

Being thus early assured of any fear he may have had of getting out of practice, Mr Macfarlane descended from his desk and marched among his forces, and every boy who felt him hovering over his shoulder would have run for shelter, as chickens run from the shadow of a hawk, if he had had any protecting wing to fly to. The laborious tongue which followed the up and down stroke was withdrawn from sight—for it was a playful trick of Mr Macfarlane's to chuck the chins of offenders in this respect—and the pen faltered woefully under that cruel eye. The passing shadow of the master's presence scared the toiler at the rule of three, and shook with polar chills and equatorial burnings the student of geography.

What a blessing it is that the memory of a boy is so short, and the memories of men are so illusive! Men reared under the cruellest training look back to their youthful days with kindness, and remember even their tyrants with no bitterness of heart. It is well for the world at large that this is so; but it is none the better for the tyrants, but rather the worse, for it is well for no man to escape the just punishment of his offences. There are fewer impostors in the noble scholastic realm than used to walk there. There are fewer rages in innocent helpless hearts, and fewer and less bitter tears shed by childish eyes, than in those bad old days, but the tears are remembered somewhere, and the provoked offences of the innocent are not forgotten. And there are still professors enough of the harsh school to make it worth while to ask how much the better they are for the heart-hardening regimen which made their childhood bitter.

Mr Macfarlane was a dutiful man, and had had young John especially recommended to his faithful care. Poor John had forgotten what his elder very well remembered; they had parted with bad blood between them, and only the accident of his being called away from school had saved John from a flogging for that hysterical sacrilegious laugh when Jenvey had given his mad denial to the schoolmaster's pet formula.

In the course of his strollings hither and thither, Macfarlane kept his eye upon his specially recommended pupil. The specially recommended pupil was apparently diligent, and was seated with his head in both hands and his eyes bent upon his book.

'Vale,' said the schoolmaster, coming up with him and laying a hand upon his shoulder, 'your uncle is very little pleased with the progress you have been making, and I have promised to devote particular attention to your studies. Little birds that can sing and will not sing will have to be made to sing. I shall have to see that you keep full pace with your comrades. You have had ample consideration on account of your accident, and you will now begin in earnest. You understand me, sir?'

'Yes, sir,' John answered.

'It will be well for you if you do,' Macfarlane responded, 'for I shall visit severely any tendency I may observe in you to shirk your lessons.'

At this the wheel began to turn in John's head, but he made shift to answer: 'I beg your pardon, sir. I'll try; but I'm afraid I can't learn as fast as the other boys. It makes my head turn, if you please, sir; it's turning now.'

'I have no doubt,' replied Macfarlane, with a relish how much superior to that he would have got out of a retort to a creature of an equal size!—'I have no doubt we shall make it turn to some purpose before we have done with it.'

It began to turn to some purpose now, and turned so industriously that John sat in a sick whirl until it came to his turn to be examined, by which time his mind was as blank as Sahara, and Mr Macfarlane found it necessary to test the stimulative powers of the bamboo. But weeds of confusion and tares of helplessly rebellious pain were all that grew beneath it, and the end of the first day found the boy sullenly empty.

'The lad's head's a waste,' said Uncle Robert to Isaiah that evening. 'I'm sore afraid he'll never come to be anything but a fool as long as their's breath in his body.'

He thought in his heart what an able unconscious ally Macfarlane was likely to be, and looked over his cousin John's accounts later in the evening with an enjoying relish.

THE FINDING OF 'CRUSOE.'

WHEN Captain Woodes Rogers, in 1708, arranged for his privateering expedition to the South Seas, he doubtless expected to encounter many strange experiences and adventures. He never imagined, however, that one incident in his celebrated voyage would be the origin of what is undoubtedly the most popular and wide-read piece of romantic fiction. It is generally allowed that Alexander Selkirk, the Scottish mariner, was the original of Defoe's immortal castaway; but it is only a few readers—comparatively speaking—who are aware of the real facts concerning the rescue of the lonely colonist. In 1712 Captain Rogers published his *Journal of a Cruising Voyage round the World*, and this has now been reprinted, with notes and illustrations, by Mr Robert C. Leslie, under the title of *Life Aboard a British Privateer in the Reign of Queen Anne* (London: Chapman & Hall).

It was on the 2d of August 1708 that Captain Rogers' expedition left Bristol roads, and it consisted of the *Duke*, burden about 320 tons, having 30 guns and 117 men; and the *Duchess*, burden about 260 tons, 26 guns and 108 men; both well furnished with all necessaries on board for a distant undertaking.

The Cove of Cork was reached on the 7th, and here the ships were subjected to a thorough overhaul preparatory to departing on their lengthened and adventurous enterprise. Here, also, several seamen were shipped in place of some who had come from Bristol, 'who being ordinary fellows and not fit for our employment,' were summarily dismissed. During the stay at Cork, Captain Rogers complains of his men 'continually marrying,' and mentions one instance of a match

between a Dane and an 'Irish woman,' when the services of an interpreter had to be called in. In this case the parling was a sad one, 'the fellow continued melancholy for several days after we were at sea;' while the others parted in the best of spirits on either side.

The ships' companies included several who had already seen service in the same kind of expeditions, notably 'William Dampier, pilot for the South Seas, who had been already three times there, and twice round the world;' and some others of the famous Captain Dampier's crews and officers. The crews numbered in all 333 men, and at the best were a somewhat 'mixed multitude,' as the narrator informs us there were included 'tinkers, taylors, haymakers, pedlers, fiddlers, &c., one negro, and about ten boys. With this mixed gang we hoped to be well manned, as soon as they had learnt the use of arms and got their sea-legs, which we doubted not soon to teach 'em, and bring them to discipline.'

We quote this merely to show the difficulties these old explorers had to contend with, and as an instance of the daring shown in attempting these adventurous and dangerous expeditions. The officers were double the number usually carried, in order to provide for casualties and probable mutinies.

On September 1st, the expedition at last departed in company with some other vessels bound to foreign parts; but on the 6th, Captain Rogers parted company with the rest of the fleet, and set sail for Madeira. Here it was intended to lay in a supply of wines, as 'our men were but meanly clad, yet good liquor to sailors is preferable to clothing!' Difficulties with the motley crews were soon apparent. A mutiny broke out on the 11th because they were not permitted to plunder a Swedish barque they overhauled. This was speedily suppressed, and the ringleaders punished. On the 18th they made their first prize off Grand Canary; this was a small Spanish ship with forty-five passengers on board, including four 'fryars.' One of the latter, we are told, was 'a good honest old fellow,' who waxed merry drinking King Charles III.'s health; 'but the rest were of the wrong sort.' Abstainers were evidently not approved of in those days. The wine and brandy on board were confiscated; and on arrival at Orotava, negotiations for the ransom of the barque and prisoners were with some difficulty arranged, and the expedition continued its course.

The equator was crossed a few days later, and the usual dues paid to Neptune by the novices. About sixty of the crew were ducked three times overboard, others preferring to pay a fine of half-a-crown. This ducking 'proved of great use to our fresh-water sailors, to recover the colour of their skins, which were grown very black and nasty.'

We have not space to follow the various fortunes of the expedition, so will hurry on to the more immediate subject of this article.

After touching at St Vincent and one or two other places, the coast of Brazil was reached, and Captain Rogers enters upon a lengthy disquisition on that country and its history. Nothing very important transpired for the next few weeks.

Cape Horn was safely doubled, and on January 15th, 1709, the ships entered the South Sea. Several of the men were now suffering from scurvy, and it was determined to make with all speed for the island of Juan Fernandez. Of its exact position, however, they were unaware, none of their charts agreeing as to its latitude or longitude, and being a small island, they were in great fears they might miss it. Their usual luck did not in this instance desert them, and on January 31st, at seven o'clock in the morning, they made the island, on which they found Alexander Selkirk. We think it best to give the account of Selkirk's rescue in the pithy and quaint language of Captain Woodes Rogers himself:

February 1.—About two yesterday in the afternoon we hoisted our pinnace out; Captain Dover with the boat's crew went in her to go ashore, tho' we could not be less than four leagues off. As soon as the pinnace was gone, I went on board the *Duchess*, who admired our boat attempted going ashore at that distance from land. As soon as it was dark, we saw a light ashore; our boat was then about a league from the island, and bore away for the ships as soon as she saw the lights. We put out lights aboard for the boat, tho' some were of opinion the lights we saw were our boat's lights; but as night came on, it appeared too large for that. We fired our quarter-deck gun and several muskets, showing lights in our mizzen and fore-shrouds, that our boat might find us, whilst we plied in the lee of the island. About two in the morning our boat came on board; we were glad they got well off, because it begun to blow. We were all convinced the light is on the shore, and design to make our ships ready to engage, believing them to be French ships at anchor, and we must either fight 'em or want water, &c.

Febr. 2.—We stood along the south end of the island in order to lay in with the first southerly wind, which Captain Dampier told us generally blows there all day long. The flaws came heavy off the shore, and we were forced to reef our topsails when we opened the middle bay where we expected to find our enemy, but saw all clear, and saw no ships in that nor the other bays. We guessed there had been ships there, but that they were gone on sight of us. We sent our yawl ashore about noon, with Captain Dover, Mr Frye, and six men all armed. Our boat did not return, so we sent our pinnace with the men armed, to see what was the occasion of the yawl's stay; for we were afraid that the Spaniards had a garrison there, and might have seized them. We put out a signal for our boat, and the *Duchess* showed a French ensign. Immediately our pinnace returned from the shore, and brought abundance of crawfish, with a Man clothed in goatskins, who looked wilder than the first owners of them. He had been on the island four years and four months, being left there by Capt. Stradling in the *Cinque-Ports*. His name was Alexander Selkirk, a Scotch man, who had been Master of the *Cinque-Ports*, a ship that came here last with Capt. Dampier, who told me that this was the best man in her; so I immediately agreed with him to be a mate on board our ship. 'Twas he that made the fire last night when he

saw our ships, which he judged to be English. During his stay here, he saw several ships pass by, but only two came in to anchor. As he went to view 'em, he found 'em to be Spaniards, and retired from 'em; upon which they shot at him. Had they been French, he would have submitted; but chose to risk his dying alone on the island rather than fall into the hands of the Spaniards in these parts, because he apprehended they would murder him, or make a slave of him in the mines, for he feared they would spare no stranger that might be capable of discovering the South Sea. The Spaniards had landed before he knew what they were, and they came so near him that he had much ado to escape; for they not only shot at him, but pursued him into the woods, where he climbed to the top of a tree, where they halted and killed several goats just by, but went off again without discovering him. He told us that he was born at Largo, in the county of Fife, in Scotland, and was bred a sailor from his youth. The reason of his being left here was a difference betwixt him and his captain; which, together with the ships being leaky, made him willing rather to stay here than go along with him at first; and when he was at last willing, the captain would not receive him. He had been in the island before to wood and water, when two of the ship's company were left upon it for six months till the ship returned, being chased thence by two French South Sea ships. [From this it will be seen that Selkirk was not the first involuntary inhabitant of Juan Fernandez.]

He had with him his clothes and bedding, with a firelock, some powder, bullets, and tobacco, a hatchet, a knife, a kettle, a Bible, some practical pieces, and his mathematical instruments and books. He diverted and provided for himself as well as he could; but for the first eight months had much ado to bear up against melancholy, and the terror of being left alone in such a desolate place. He built two huts with pimento trees, covered them with long grass, and lined them with the skins of goats, which he killed with his gun as he wanted, so long as his powder lasted, which was but a pound; and that being near spent, he got fire by rubbing two sticks of pimento wood together upon his knee. In the lesser hut, at some distance from the other, he dressed his victuals, and in the larger he slept and employed himself in reading, singing psalms, and praying; so that he said he was a better Christian while in this solitude than ever he was before, or than, he was afraid, he should ever be again. At first he never ate anything till hunger constrained him, partly for grief, and partly for want of bread and salt; nor did he go to bed till he could watch no longer; the pimento wood, which burnt very clear, served him both for firing and candle, and refreshed him with its pleasant smell.

He might have had fish enough, but could not eat 'em for want of salt, except crawfish, which are there as large as lobsters, and very good. These he sometimes boiled, and at others broiled, as he did his goats' flesh, of which he made very good broth, for they are not so rank as ours. He kept an account of five hundred that he killed while there, and caught as many more, which he marked on the ear and let go. When his powder failed, he took them by speed of foot; for his way of living and continued

exercise of walking and running cleared him of all gross humours, so that he ran with wonderful swiftness thro' the woods and up the rocks and hills, as we perceived when we employed him to catch goats for us. We had a bulldog which we sent with several of our nimblest runners to help him in catching goats; but he distanced and tired both the dog and the men, caught the goats, and brought 'em to us on his back. He told us that his agility in pursuing a goat had once like to have cost him his life; he pursued it with so much eagerness, that he caught hold of it on the brink of a precipice, of which he was not aware, the bushes having hid it from him; so that he fell with the goat down the said precipice a great height, and was so stunned and bruised with the fall that he narrowly escaped with his life; and when he came to his senses, found the goat dead under him. He lay there about twenty-four hours, and was scarce able to crawl to his hut, which was about a mile distant, or to stir abroad again in ten days.

He came at last to relish his meat well enough without salt or bread, and in the season had plenty of good turnips, which had been sowed there by Capt. Dampier's men, and have now overspread some acres of ground. He had enough of good cabbage from the cabbage-trees, and seasoned his meat with the fruit of the pimento trees, which is the same as the Jamaica pepper, and smells deliciously.

He soon wore out all his shoes and clothes by running thro' the woods; and at last being forced to shift without them, his feet became so hard that he run everywhere without annoyance; and it was some time before he could wear shoes after we found him; for not being used to any so long, his feet swelled when he came first to wear them again.

After he had conquered his melancholy, he diverted himself sometimes by cutting his name on the trees, and the time of his being left and continuance there. He was at first much pestered with cats and rats, that had bred in great numbers from some of each species which had got ashore from ships that put in there to wood and water. The rats gnawed his feet and clothes while asleep, which obliged him to cherish the cats with his goats' flesh; by which many of them became so tame that they would lie about him in hundreds, and soon delivered him from the rats. He likewise tamed some kids, and to divert himself would now and then sing and dance with them and his cats; so that by the care of Providence and vigour of his youth, being now about thirty years old, he came at last to conquer all the inconveniences of his solitude and to be very easy. When his clothes wore out, he made himself a coat and cap of goat-skins, which he stitched together with little thongs of the same that he cut with his knife. He had no other needle but a nail; and when his knife was wore to the back, he made others as well as he could of some iron hoops that were left ashore, which he beat thin and ground upon stones. Having some linen cloth by him, he sewed himself shirts with a nail, and stitched 'em with the worsted of his own stockings, which he pulled out on purpose. He had his last shirt on when we found him on the island.

At his first coming on board us, he had so much forgot his language for want of use, that

we could scarce understand him; for he seemed to speak his words by halves. We offered him a dram; but he would not touch it, having drank nothing but water since his being there, and 'twas some time before he could relish our victuals.

Such is the simple but interesting account of the discovery and rescue of Selkirk; and it was no doubt the reading of this which first inspired Defoe to plan his most famous literary conception, *Robinson Crusoe*.

Besides the two sailors mentioned previously as living alone on Juan Fernandez, there are others mentioned by other writers. Ringrose, in his account of the voyage of Captain Sharp, the buccaneer, mentions one man who was the only survivor of a wreck and who lived here quite alone for five years. Captain Dampier also tells of a Mosquito Indian left here by mistake, and remaining for three years, till rescued by Dampier in 1684. In Selkirk's case his exile was not without its advantages, for the ship he left was shortly afterwards lost and only a few of the crew escaped.

After Selkirk got over the melancholy feelings engendered by his loneliness at first, he seems to have become tolerably reconciled to his solitary condition; and as Captain Woodes Rogers quaintly observes: 'We may perceive by this story the truth of the maxim, that Necessity is the mother of Invention, since he found means to supply his wants in a very natural manner, so as to maintain his life, tho' not so conveniently, yet as effectually as we are able to do with the help of all our arts and society. It may likewise instruct us how much a plain and temperate way of living conduces to the health of the body and the vigour of the mind, both which we are apt to destroy by excess and plenty, especially of strong liquor, and the variety as well as the nature of our meat and drink; for this man, when he came to our ordinary method of diet and life, tho' he was sober enough, lost much of his strength and agility.'

With which highly sensible moral disquisition we will take leave of our gallant author and privateersman and the rescued 'Crusoe.'

THE LOST DIAMONDS OF THE ORANGE RIVER.

II.

TAKING some dried flesh, biscuits, and a bottle of water each, and each shouldering a rifle, Klaas and I started away at seven o'clock. The little beggar, who, I suppose, in his Bushman youth had wandered baboon-like over all this wild country till he knew it by heart, showed no sign of hesitation, but walked rapidly down hill to a deep gorge at the foot, that led half a mile or so into a huge mass of mountain that formed the north wall of the Orange River. This kloof must at some time or another have served as a conduit for mighty floods of water, for its bottom was everywhere strewn with boulders of titanic size and shape, torn from the cliff-walls above. It took us a long hour of the most laborious effort to surmount these impediments; and then, with torn hands and aching

legs, we went straight up a mountain whose roof-like sides consisted of masses of loose shale and shingle, over which we slipped and floundered slowly and with difficulty. I say we; but I am bound to admit that the Bushman made much lighter of his task than I, his ape-like form seeming, indeed, much more fitted for such a slippery break-neck pastime.

At length we reached the crest; and then, after passing through a fringe of bush and scrub, we scrambled down the thither descent, a descent of no little danger. The slipping shales that gave way at every step, often threatened, indeed, to hurl us headlong to the bottom. At last this stage was ended, and we found ourselves in a very valley of desolation. We were almost completely entombed by narrowing mountain walls, whose dark-red sides frowned upon us everywhere in horrid and overpowering silence. The sun was up, and the heat, shut in as we were, overpowering. Moreover, to make things more lively, I noticed that snakes were more than ordinarily plentiful, the bloated puff-adder, the yellow cobra, and the dangerous little night-adder, several times only just getting out of our path.

The awful silence of this sepulchral place was presently, as we rested for ten minutes, broken by a company of baboons, which, having espied us from their krantzes above, came shoggling down to see what we were. They were huge brutes and savage, and *quah-quahed* at us threateningly, till Klaas sent a bullet among them, when they retreated pell-mell. We soon started again, and pressed rapidly along a narrow gorge some fifty feet wide, with perfectly level precipitous walls, apparently worn smooth at their bases by the action of terrific torrents, probably an early development of the Orange River when first it made its way through these grim defiles. Presently the causeway narrowed still more; and then turning a sharp corner, we suddenly came upon a pair of leopards sauntering coolly towards us. I didn't like the look of things at all, for a leopard at the best of times is an ugly customer, even where he knows and dreads firearms. The brutes showed no intention of bolting, but stood with their hackles up, their tails waving ominously, and their gleaming teeth bared in fierce defiance. There was nothing for it—either we or they must retreat; and having come all this frightful *trek* for the diamonds, I felt in no mood to back down even to *Felis pardus* in his very nastiest mood. Looking to our rifles, we moved very quietly forward until within thirty-five yards of the grim cats. They were male and female, and two as magnificent specimens of their kind as sun ever shone upon. The male had now crouched flat for his charge, and not an instant was to be lost. The female stood apparently irresolute. Noticing this, and not having time to speak, we both let drive at the charging male. Both shots struck, but neither stopped him. The lady, hearing the report, and apparently not liking the look of affairs, incontinently fled. With a horrid throaty grunt, the male leopard flew across the sand, coming straight at me, and then launched himself into air. I fired too hurriedly my second barrel, and, for a wonder, clean missed, for in those days I seldom failed in stopping dangerous game; but these beggars are like lightning once they are charging. In a moment,

as the yellow form was flying through space straight at my head, I sprang to one side, and Klaas firing again, sent the leopard struggling to earth, battling frantically for life amid sand and shingle with a broken back. Lucky was the shot, and bravely fired, or I had probably been as good as dead. Klaas soon whipped the skin off the dead leopard and hid it under some stones; and we then proceeded, the whole affair having occupied but twenty minutes.

Another mile of this canal-like kloof brought us to a broad opening where the wall of mountain on our left stood up straight before the hot sunlight, a dark reddish-brown mass of rock, I suppose some five hundred feet in height, and then sloped away more smoothly to its summit, that overlooked the river, as I should judge, about a mile distant. As we came out into the sunshine, Klaas, pointing to the cliff, ejaculated in quite an excited way: 'The Pearl! the Pearl! Look sir, look.' Looking upwards at the mass of rock, my eye was suddenly arrested by a gleaming mass that protruded from the dead wall of mountain. Half dazzled, I shaded my eyes with my hand and looked again. It was a most strange and beautiful thing that I beheld, a freak of nature the most curious that I had ever set eyes on. The glittering mass was a huge egg-shaped ball of quartz of a semi-transparent milky hue, flashing and gleaming in the radiant sunshine with the glorious prismatic colours that flash from the unlucky opal. But yet more strange, above 'de Paarl,' as Klaas quaintly called it, and overhanging it, was a kind of canopy of stalactite of the same brilliant opalescent colours. It was wonderful! Klaas here began to caper and dance in the most fantastic fashion, and then suddenly ceasing, he said: 'Now, sieur, I will soon show you the diamonds—they are there,' pointing to a dark corner of the glen, 'right through the rock.'

'What made you call that shining stone up there "de Paarl"?' said I, as I gazed in admiration at the beautiful ball of crystal.

'Well, sieur, I was once with a wine Boer at the Paarl down in the old Colony, and a man told me why they called the mountain there "de Paarl"; and he told me, too, what the pretty gems were that I saw in the young *vrouw's* best ring when she wore it; and I then knew what a pearl was, and that it came from a fish that grows in the sea. And I remembered then the great shining stone that I found up here when I was a boy on the Groot Rivier, and I thought to myself: "Ah, Klaas, that was the finest pearl ye ever saw, that up in the cliff near where the pretty white stones lay." I mean the diamonds yonder, sieur.'

At last, then, we were within grasp of the famous stones concerning whose reality I had even to the last had secret misgivings. It was a startling thought. Just beyond there, somewhere through the rock-walls, whose secret approach at present Klaas only knew, lay 'Sindbad's Valley.' Could it be true? Could I actually be within touch of riches unspeakable, riches in comparison with which the wealth of Cræsus seemed but a beggar's hoard?

I sat down on a rock and lit a pipe, just to think it over and settle my rather highly strung nerves. The Paarl, as I could now see, was

a unique formation of crystal-spar, singularly rounded upon its face. It and the glorious canopy of hanging stalactite above it must have been reft bare by some mighty convulsion that had anciently torn asunder these mountains, leaving the ravine in which we stood.

As we drank from our water-bottles and ate some of the dried flesh and biscuits we had brought with us, I noticed Klaas's keen little eyes wandering inquiringly round the base of the precipice in our front. He seemed puzzled; and as we finished our repast and lit our pipes again, he said: 'The hole in the rock that leads from this kloof to the diamonds should be over there'—pointing before him; 'but I can't quite make out the spot, the bushes have altered and grown so since I was here as a boy years and years ago.'

We got up and walked straight for the point he had indicated, and reached the foot of the precipice. The Bushman hunted hither and thither in the prickly jungle with the fierce rapidity of a tiger-cat; but, inasmuch as he was sometimes prevented from immediately approaching the rock-wall, he appeared unable to hit off the tunnel that led, as he had formerly told me, to the valley beyond. Suddenly, after he had again disappeared, he gave a low whistle; a signal to approach, to which I quickly responded. Quietly pushing my way towards him, I was astonished to see within a small clearing a thick and high thorn-fence, outside of which Klaas stood. Inside this circular kraal was a low round hut, formed of boughs and branches strongly and closely interlaced. Klaas was standing watching intently the interior of the hut, which seemed to be barred at its tiny entrance by a pile of thorns lying close against it.

What could it mean, this strange dwelling, inaccessible as it seemed to human life? Klaas soon found a weak spot in the kraal fence, and pulling down some thorns, we stepped inside and approached the hut. Here, too, Klaas pulled away the dry mimosa-thorns from the entrance, and was at once confronted by a tiny bow and arrow, and behind that by a fierce little weazened face. Instantly, my Bushman poured forth a torrent of his own language, redundant beyond expression with those extraordinary clicks of which the Bushman tongue seems mainly to consist. Even as he spoke, the bow and arrow were lowered, the little head appeared through the entrance, and the tiniest, quaintest, most ancient figure of a man I had ever beheld stood before us. Ancient, did I say? Ancient is hardly a meet description of his aspect. As he stood there blinking like an owl in the fierce sunlight, his only covering a little skin *kaross* of the red rhe-bok fastened over his shoulders, he looked indeed coeval with the rocks around him. I never saw anything like it. Poor little oddity, dim though his eyes were waxing, feeble though his shrivelled arm, dulled though his formerly acute senses, he had, with all the desperate pluck of his race, been prepared to do battle for his hearth and home!

In his own tongue, Klaas interrogated this antediluvian Bushman, and then suddenly, as he was answered by the word 'Ariseep, a light flashed across his countenance. Seizing his aged countryman by the shoulders, he turned him round and carefully examined his back. Lifting the skin

kaross and rubbing away the coating of grease and dirt that covered the right shoulder, Klaas pointed to two round white scars just below the blade-bone, several inches apart. Then he gave a leap into the air, seized the old fossil by the neck, and shrieked into his ears the most wonderful torrent of Bushman language I have ever heard. In his turn the old man started back, examined Klaas intently from head to foot, and in a thin pipe jabbered at him almost as volubly.

Finally, Klaas enlightened me as to this comical interlude. It seemed incredible; but this old man, 'Ariseep by name, was his grandfather, whom he had not set eyes on since long years before the Boer *commando* had broken into his tribal fastness, slain his father and mother and other relatives, and carried himself off captive. The old man before us had somehow escaped in the fight, had crept away; and after years of solitary hiding in the mountains around, had somehow penetrated to this grim and desolate valley, where he had subsisted on Bushman fare—snakes, lizards, roots, gum, bulbs, fruit, and an occasional snared buck or rock-rabbit: these and a little rill of water that gushed from the mountain side hard by supplied him with existence. Here he had lingered for many years, alone and isolated.

After nearly an hour's incessant chatter, during which I believe Klaas had laid before his monkey-like ancestor an epitomised history of his life, he told the old man we wished to get through the mountain, and that he had lost the tunnel of which he had known as a boy. 'Ariseep, who, it seems, in the years he had been there had explored every nook and cranny of the valley, knew at once what he meant, and quickly pointed out to us, not one hundred paces away, a dense and prickly mass of cactus and euphorbia bush. Here, after half an hour's hewing and slashing with our hunting-knives, we managed to open a pathway; and at last a cave-like opening in the mountain, about seven feet in diameter, lay before us. The old man, however, gave us warning that snakes abounded, and might not impossibly be encountered in the twenty minutes' crawl which, as Klaas had told me, it would take to get through. This opinion was not of a nature to fortify me in the undertaking, yet, rather than leave the diamonds unexplored, I felt prepared to brave the terrors of this uncanny passage.

It was now three o'clock; the sun was marching steadily across the brassy firmament on his eastward trek, and we had no time to lose.

'In you go, Klaas,' said I; and, nothing loth, Klaas dived into the bowels of the mountains, I at his heels. For five minutes, by dint of stooping and an occasional hands-and-knees creep upon the flooring of the tunnel, sometimes on smooth sand, sometimes over protruding rock and rough gravel, we got along very comfortably. Then the roof of the dark avenue—for it was pitch dark now—suddenly lowered, and we had to crawl along. It was unpleasant, I can tell you, boxed up like this beneath the heart of the mountain. The very thought seemed to make the oppression a million times more oppressive. Even Klaas, plucky Bushman though he was, didn't seem to relish the adventure, and spoke in a subdued and awe-stricken whisper. Sometimes since, as I have thought of that most gruesome passage, I have burst into a sweat nearly as profuse, though not

so painful as I endured that day. At last, after what seemed to me hours and hours of this painful crawling and Egyptian gloom, we met a breath of fresher air; the tunnel widened and heightened, and in another five minutes we emerged into the blessed sunlight. Little Klaas looked pretty well 'baked,' even in his old leather *crackers* (leather trousers) and flannel shirt. As for myself, I was literally streaming; every thread on me was as wet as if I had plunged into a river. We lay panting for a while upon the scorching rocks, and then sat up and looked about us.

If the Paarl Kloof, as Klaas called it, whence we had just come had been sufficiently striking, the mighty amphitheatre in which we lay was infinitely more amazing. Imagine a vast arena almost completely circular in shape, flat and smooth, and composed, as to its flooring, of intermingled sand and gravel reddish yellow in colour. This arena was surrounded by stupendous walls of the same ruddy-brown rock we had noticed in Paarl Kloof, which here towered to a height of close on a thousand feet. In the centre of the red cliffs, blazing forth in splendour, ran a broad band of the most glorious opalescent rock-crystal, which flashed out its rays of coloured light as if to meet the fiery kisses of the sun. This flaming girdle of crystal, more beautiful a thousand times than the most gorgeous opal, the sheen of a fresh-caught mackerel, or the most radiant mother-of-pearl, I can only compare in splendour to the flashing rainbows formed over the foaming falls of the Zambesi, which I have seen more than once. It ran horizontally and very evenly round at least two-thirds of the cliff-belt that encircled us. It was a wonderful, an amazing spectacle, and I think quite the most singular of the many strange things (and they are not few) I have seen in the African interior.

Well, we sat gazing at this crystal rainbow for many minutes, till I had somewhat feasted my enraptured gaze. Then we got up, and at once began the search for diamonds. Directly I saw the gravel, especially where it had been cleansed in the shallow channels by the action of rain and flood, I knew at once we should find 'stones.' It resembled almost exactly the gravel found in the Vaal River diggings, and was here and there strongly ferruginous and mingled with red sand, and occasionally lime. I noticed quickly that agates, jaspers, and chalcedony were distributed pretty thickly, and that occasionally the curious *band-doom* stone, so often found in the Vaal River with diamonds, and indeed often considered by diggers as a sure indicator of 'stones,' was to be met with. In many places the pebbles were washed perfectly clean, and lay thickly piled in hollow water-ways. Here we speedily found a rich harvest of the precious gems. In a feverish search of an hour and a half, Klaas and I picked up thirty-three fine stones, ranging in size from a small pigeon's egg to a third of the size of my little finger-nail. They were all fine diamonds, some few, it is true, yellow or straw coloured, others of purest water, as I afterwards learned; and we had no difficulty in finding them, although we wandered over not a twentieth part of the valley. I could see at once from this off-hand search that enormous riches lay spread here upon the surface of the earth; beneath, probably was contained fabulous wealth. I was puzzled at

the time, and I have never had inclination or opportunity to solve the mystery since, to account for the presence of diamonds in such profusion. Whether they were swept into the valley by early floodings of the Orange River through some aperture that existed formerly, but had been closed by volcanic action; or whether, as I am inclined to think, the whole amphitheatre is a vast upheaval from subterraneous fires of a bygone period, is to this hour an unfathomed secret. I rather incline to the latter theory, and believe that, like the Kimberley 'pipe,' as diggers call it, the diamondiferous earth had been shot upwards funnel-wise from below, and that ages of floods and rain-washing had cleansed and left bare the gravel and stones I had seen upon the surface.

From the search we had had, I made no doubt that a fortnight's careful hunting in this valley would make me a millionaire, or something very like it. At length I was satisfied; and as the eastering sun was fast stooping to his couch, with a light heart and elastic step I turned with Klaas to depart. The excitement of the 'find' had quite banished the remembrance of that awful tunnel-passage so recently encountered.

'We'll go back now, Klaas,' said I, 'sleep in your grandfather's kraal, and get to the wagon first thing in the morning.'

At half-past five we again entered the tunnel. It was a nasty business, when one thought of it again, but it would soon be over. As before, Klaas went first, and for half the distance all went well. Suddenly, as we came to a sandy part of the tunnel, there was a scuffle in front, a fierce exclamation in Bushman language, and then Klaas called out in a hoarse voice: 'A snake has bitten me!' What a situation! Cooped up in this frightful burrow, face to face with probably a deadly snake, which had already bitten my companion. Almost immediately, Klaas's voice came back to me in a hoarse guttural whisper: 'I have him by the neck, *sieur*: it is a puff-adder, and his teeth are sticking into my shoulder. If you will creep up and lay hold of his tail, which is on your side of me, we can settle him; but I can't get his teeth out without your help.'

Crawling forwards, and feeling my way with fright-benumbed fingers, I touched Klaas's leg; then softly moving my left hand, I was suddenly smitten by a horrible writhing tail. I seized it with both hands, and finally gripped the horrid reptile, which I felt to be swollen with rage, as is the brute's habit, in an iron grasp with both hands. Then I felt, in the black darkness, that Klaas took a fresh grip of the loathsome creature's neck, and, with an effort, disengaged the deadly fangs from his shoulder. Immediately, I felt him draw his knife, and, after a struggle, sever the serpent's head from its body. The head he pushed away to the right as far out of our course as possible; and then I dragged the writhing body from him, and shuddering, cast it behind me as far as possible.

At that moment I thought that for the first time in my life I must have swooned. But quickly I bethought me of poor faithful Klaas, sore stricken; and I called to him in as cheerful a voice as I could muster: 'Get forward, Klaas, for your life as hard as you can, and, please God, we'll pull you through.' Never had I admired the Bushman's fierce courage more than now.

Most men would have sunk upon the sand and given up life and hope. Not so this aboriginal. 'Ja, sieur ; I will loup,' was all he said.

Then we scrambled onward, occasionally halting as the deadly sickness overtook Klaas. At last the light came, and as my poor Bushman grew feebler and more slow, I found room to pass him, and so dragged him behind me to the opening. Here I propped him for a moment on the sand outside with his back to the mountain, and loudly called 'Ariseep!' while I got breath for a moment.

The sun was sinking in blood-red splendour behind the mountains, and the kloof and rock-walls were literally aglow with the parting blush of day. Nature looked calm and serenely beautiful, and hushed in a splendour that ill accorded with the agitating scene there at the mouth of the tunnel. All this flashed across me as I called for the old man. Klaas was now breathing heavily, and getting dull and stupefied. I took him in my arms and carried him to 'Ariseep's kraal, whence the old man was just emerging. At sight of his grandfather, Klaas rallied, and rapidly told him what had happened; and the old man at once plunged into his hut for something. Then Klaas's eyelids drooped, and he became drowsy and almost senseless. In vain I roused him, and tried to make him walk, and so stay the baleful effects of the poison, now running riot in his blood. He was too far gone. 'Ariseep now reappeared with a small skin-bag, out of which he took some dirty-looking powder. With an old knife he scored the skin and flesh around Klaas's wound, and then rubbed in the powder. I had no brandy or ammonia to administer, and therefore let the old Bushman pursue his remedy, though I felt somehow it would be useless. So it proved; either the antidote, with which I believe Bushmen often do effect wonderful cures, was stale and inefficacious, or the poison had got too strong a hold. My poor Klaas never became conscious again, though I fancied eagerly that he recognised me before he died, for his lips moved as he turned to me once. At last, within an hour and a half from the time he was bitten, he lay dead.

So perished my faithful and devoted henchman, the stoutest, truest, bravest soul that ever African sun shone upon. We placed him gently in a deep sandy hollow, and over the sand piled heavy stones to keep the vermin from him. Then laying myself within 'Ariseep's kraal, I waited for the slothful dawn. As it came, I rose, called 'Ariseep from his hut, and bade farewell to him as best I could, for we neither of us understood one another. I noticed, by-the-bye, that no sign of grief seemed to trouble the old man. Probably he was too aged, and had seen too much of death to think much about the matter.

The rest of my story is soon finished. I made my way back to camp, told my men what had happened, and, indeed, took some of them back with me to Klaas's grave, and made them exhume his body, to satisfy themselves of the cause of death; for these men are sometimes very suspicious. Then we covered him again securely against wandering beasts and birds.

I trekked back to the old Colony, sold off my things, and went home. The diamonds I had brought away realised in England twenty-two thousand pounds. I have never dreamt of going

to the fatal valley again. Nothing on earth would tempt me, after that ill-starred journey, heavy with the fate of Klaas and the Bechuana boy Amazi. As for the tunnel, I would not venture once more into its recesses for all the diamonds in Africa, even if they lay piled in heaps at the other end of it. Part of the twenty-two thousand pounds I invested for some relatives; the balance that I kept, sufficed, with what I already possessed, for all possible wants of my own. Then I came back to my dearly loved South Africa for the last time; and a few years later made the journey to the Chobe River, from which you rescued me in the thirst-land.'

Such was the story related to us by the transport rider. Our narrator wound up by telling us that Mowbray had further imparted to him the exact locality of the diamond valley; but he added: 'I have never yet been there, nor do I think that for the present it is likely I shall. Some day, before I leave the Cape, I *may* have a try, and trek down the Orange River; but I don't feel very keen about that secret passage, after poor Mowbray's experiences.'

A BORROWED ART.

THE grandest of our modern pageants, the Queen's triumphal procession to Westminster in the summer of Jubilee year, is already regarded very generally as mere matter of history; but those fortunate ones who can recall the event as a personal reminiscence will readily allow that among the minor attractions of the princely following, perhaps none exceeded in interest the group of native Indian princes. Calmly and impressively they moved onwards, their gorgeous Eastern attire, richly coloured and sparkling with jewels, contrasting sharply with the manly martial dress of Europe's royal sons. Yet was there to the thoughtful something impressive in the very fidelity of those native princes to the traditions of their forefathers. It is well that in life's seething, rushing current there should be here and there still stretches of back-water, where the tides and the winds scarce have power 'to make or break or work their will.' Such, to the feverish progress of the West, is Eastern conservatism. There, what has been, is; and looking at the dazzlingly arrayed figures of June 1887, one's thought easily pictured Herod Agrippa as for the last time, long, long ago, he stood forth in the sight of his people clothed in a silver robe 'of a contexture,' as Josephus tells us, 'truly wonderful.'

But to return to our subject. Perhaps the owners of those cunningly woven, gorgeously embroidered state robes would have been more than a little surprised had they known that here, in the far-off western island, there existed almost within hail a factory devoted entirely to the manufacture of a thoroughly Hindu speciality—gold and silver thread. Within six miles of London Bridge it lies, a quaint, old-world, brick and timber building, with high walls and a calm broad belt of water to shut off the busy city

world, and a rushing stream to drown the din and turmoil of the 'madding crowd.'

Perhaps some of our readers may be interested to learn how silver bars can be transformed into gold thread. In the first place, the silver is brought from the Bank of England in cakes, weighing about one thousand ounces. To secure the necessary degree of tenacity, a certain proportion of copper is added, and the alloyed metal, in the form of cylindrical bars, is next thoroughly heated. The hammering process follows; and the bars—originally about two feet in length and two inches in diameter, but now half as long again, and proportionately thinner—are in the next place filed and rubbed until their surfaces are perfectly even. What we may call the second part of the process begins with the laying on of leaf after leaf of gold in the proportion of two per cent. Afterwards, each bar is wrapped in paper and well heated in a charcoal fire. A sort of vice stands ready; and in it, bar after bar as it comes from the fire is fixed and thoroughly burnished. All trace of its silver original has now disappeared, and the bar is ready for conversion into wire. This is accomplished by drawing it from one hundred to one hundred and fifty times through ever-diminishing holes in steel plates; and finally, when the capabilities of this metal have been exhausted, through apertures in diamonds, rubies, or sapphires. The delicate wire thus obtained must now be passed through the steel rollers of one of Herr Krupp's little 'flattening-mills.' This brings us to the final process—the spinning of the flattened wire round silk, to form the golden thread of commerce. These spinning-machines are worked by water, although two steam-engines are to be found in the factory; for water-power is considered to be more regular and even in its action. There is a small home demand for the round wire for the adornment of epaulets, &c.; but the bulk of the manufactured article finds its way in the shape of silky gold thread to India and the far East generally, where it is converted by skilled native labour into those gorgeous cloths and tissues in which the heart of the Oriental delights.

Have we not here a striking illustration of the superiority of Western thought and enterprise over that of the soft luxurious East? By the aid of machinery and improved methods of working, we are enabled to compete with our Hindu fellow-subjects in one of their specialities despite the difficulties of transit, to say nothing of the expense of transporting goods so great a distance. However surprising the fact, we cease to wonder at it, after being assured that the Hindu with his manual process can only extract eight hundred yards of wire from a piece of silver the size of a florin, which would yield our manufacturers sixteen hundred yards.

What a wonderful property does gold possess in its malleability! It is asserted that every ounce of the bars whose fortunes we have followed with no little interest, each containing only two per cent. of gold, will run to the length of from five hundred to two thousand five hundred yards; and the amazing figure of five thousand yards is on record. This latter thread would be finer than human hair; but the extreme limit is not even yet reached.

There is a tradition telling how an attempt was

once made to produce a wire fine enough for use in a transit instrument. A solid gold wire was drawn by means of a copper cylinder to the length of twenty thousand feet to the ounce; but at that point the shadow of a thread fell to pieces, and the astronomer was obliged to resort to his usual spider's web.

One word as to the history of this unique manufacture. It boasts great antiquity, for the ancient Jewish records make mention of 'apparel of wrought gold,' which was probably identical with the *soneri* or golden stuff of the Hindus. The East was its early and for a long time its only nursery. At length the art found its way to the Continent; and in 1753 a London journal commented on the long-established superiority of the brocade made with the help of gold wire in France. Our neighbours across the Channel kept the secret so well of preparing perforated plates, that for many years we were unable to enter into successful competition with them. British pluck and enterprise, however, succeeded finally in surmounting the difficulty. Plates of the regulation 'mixt metal' were obtained, despite the penalty of capital punishment attached to their exportation, and the peculiar composition of them was studied and copied, until England was enabled to add to her long list of manufactures that of gold wire-drawing, which, besides its utility and interesting process, is worthy of note as one of the few remaining commercial links between the busy world of today and the dim ages of antiquity.

THE MAN WHO SWALLOWED THE EAST WIND.

THE well-known story of the two boys who, under the cognomen of 'Eyes and No Eyes,' went out for a walk, in which the one saw nothing worthy of record, while the other saw a great deal both to amuse and interest him, is a good deal older than *Sandford and Merton*, where most of us read it in the old days of long ago. No doubt, 'it is,' as we say, 'as old as the hills'—though, wise men have not yet quite settled how old *they* are—and as true as such proverbs usually are. For, as a general rule, the eye sees only what it wishes to see or cares to see; and there are 'none so blind as those who won't see,' and then, perversely enough, try to comfort themselves with another old saying, 'What the eye sees not, the heart doesn't crave.'

I had been reading an odd volume of Danish proverbs about Eyes and No Eyes, as it chanced, one day in October, just before setting out for a ramble through the woods; and as I wandered on down one of the grassy roads, I suddenly came upon a couple of squirrels at play—a downright game of frisking romp. The carpet under my feet was soft and thick—

Golden and red, purple and brown,
Lightly the woodland leaves came down,
Fluttering here and whirling there
All in the hazy ambient air;

so that not a footfall could be heard, and I could watch the two little merry sprites by simply getting under the boughs of a great copper beech and standing still, without a chance of detection. And so there I stood for some minutes; and such a game of fun I never before saw. The

two imps were like kittens gone mad; they ran races after each other, up one side of a tree and down another; they grinned, they chattered; they took flying leaps from bough to bough; they came down headlong on the piles of leaves with a dash and a hurry and a scramble that sent the small birds flying in all directions. Then they would perch gravely opposite to each other on the green grass, as if on the watch as to which should be the first to begin again their happy frolic. But all at once, as I made up my mind that I was still unseen, a fir-cone fell headlong down from a tall tree, and in a trice they had utterly vanished.

It was a day of dead sultry calm; and as I watched and listened, there fell on me an air of intense stillness and silence that seemed to fill all the wood. Right and left of me, on every side, were dense masses of trees—tall feathery silver birch; broad spreading beeches, with smooth, solemn, massive trunks; sturdy knotted yews, looking as if they had stood there for centuries; strong mighty oaks, with gnarled and twisted stems that stretched across the winding pathway, as if on guard over the quiet domain. Some of them I knew well; for I had seen them in all weathers; and again and again found shelter from rain or sun under their spreading boughs. They seemed like old friends, who betray no trust; even in winter staunch and true, as if standing and waiting in patience and in hope for the far-off but sure days of spring, the time of new life and light; living and dying without suffering or self-reproach; and 'gifted with the divine gift of silence,' which, according to a modern sage, is the most eloquent of all speech, for those who can hear it, when 'The Book of Nature getteth short of leaves.'

But however 'golden' such silence may be, and however divine the prophet of Cheyne Row, this one of woodland voices was, like all other mortal dreams, brought suddenly to an end. All at once, not a hundred yards away, there came pounding along over the dead leaves a little old man in a long gray coat; with his hat pulled down over his eyes, and a stout ash-plant in his hand, with which he slashed vigorously right and left among the briars and nettles. It was old Elzie Bartle, a strange odd creature, who lived in a lonely cottage at the end of the village, and spent most of his time in minding other people's business. Business of his own he seemed to have none; and the neighbours knew no more as to who or what he was than they did when he came among them, a stranger, twenty years ago. He had money enough to pay his way and keep out of debt; was without encumbrances of any kind, and seemed to have neither relatives nor friends that ever cared to write to or visit him. Jacob the postman affirms to this day that no letter ever came to him by post but a circular from the surveyor of taxes at the county town. The moment I set eyes on him in the wood, I went back to my book of Danish proverbs, and to one particular line therein which said, 'Some there are who see ill, and wouldn't mind seeing worse;' and there before me was the very man whom the words fitted to a T.

'Well, Squire,' said the old man, as he came up, 'here's a day for October! A regular, sweltering, mouldy sort of day, I call it; enough

to breed a fever all over the place. No wonder there's two more cases of measles down at the keeper's; not the two boys that got bitten by the sheep-dog last week, but girls this time; a poor sickly lot! and no wonder, with such a mother.'

'Such a mother?' said I. 'Why, what's the matter with the mother?—as clean, tidy, hard-working a woman as you'll find in a day's march.'

'Nonsense, Squire—non-sense! They sell gin, now, up at Murrige's the draper, and if Mrs Gaiters isn't one of his best customers, my name isn't Bartle. No, no; I know what I know, Squire, though I don't want it to go any further.'

'You had better not let it get as far as her husband's ears, Elzie, or he might tumble you into the horse-pond and not help you out again. It's deep, Bartle, and muddy too.'

'No doubt, Squire, no doubt; but, as I was saying when you interrupted me, I know what I know, though you needn't let it go any further. Mrs Gaiters is a good customer at Murrige's; and it was only yesterday I saw her coming out of his shop with a round bundle under her arm that looked as much like a bottle as it could, as I said to Jane Ripper, when I saw her going down the street.—And that reminds me, Squire, of the nasty drain at the corner. They've got it open again, and I've not met with a worse stench for weeks until just now, before I saw you, I came upon a polecat or a weasel or something of the sort, lying dead in the middle of the path, and enough to poison the whole wood.'

'Well, Elzie,' said I, 'they must open the drain to clear it out; and as for the polecat, he must die somewhere; and as he has got no relations to bury him, he must lie there until the ants pick his bones clean for him.—But never mind the drains or polecats this glorious afternoon. Come here, man, and look down that narrow green path, right on past the great clump of white clematis, up to where the sunshine is streaming through the black evergreen oak, and lighting up the copper beech, and the cluster of red berries on the spindle-tree, as if they were on fire.'

'Yes, yes,' replied the old man; 'I see it.—And talking of fire, it was just at this very corner that I caught two of Harris's boys, yesterday, making a fire of bits of furze and a broken hurdle, enough to set the whole copse in a blaze. There; you can see the ashes of it now; and there's a page out of a spelling-book, too, as I live—torn out of one of the school-books, I'll wager—the mischievous young wretches!—But it's all the same wherever you go; nothing but waste and extravagance. All the labourers crying out about low wages and starvation times; and if you believe me, when I went in to Hobbs's cottage last Thursday at five o'clock, just to tell him that one of his boys had been caught with his pockets full in Jackson's orchard, there they were, the whole seven of 'em, eating hot buttered toast!—"You seem to be enjoying yourselves," said I, "and butter at one-and-three!"—And if you believe me, Squire, they all burst out laughing at this; and "Right you are, Bartle," says old Hobbs, with his mouth full of toast—"right you are; and why shouldn't we?—Will 'ee have a piece?"—"No," said I; "I can't afford to eat melted butter in these times; and

if your boy isn't laid up to-morrow, after gorging himself with sour apples, let me know."—"Well, Bartle, we'll be sure to let you know; and we'll tell old Bolus to send in his bill to you."—"There, Squire; that's the way they waste their money; and if that boy doesn't get a month on the treadmill before long, my name isn't Bartle, that's all."

By this time we had got to the edge of the wood and were turning down into the lane; and as I had had more than enough of the old grumbler, I made up my mind to get rid of him. "Good-night, Bartle," said I—"good-night.—For God's sake, don't bother yourself any more about old Hobbs and his boys. He is a hard-working, steady fellow enough, and good to his wife too. And as for the apples, the boy only got a couple after all—so Jackson told me—and a good rope's-ending into the bargain."

And so, at last, after a final grumble about Hobbs's mother-in-law and a pair of shoes which she had got at Murridge's and never paid for, we shook hands and parted; he across the meadow down to his own cottage, and I sauntering on into the village. And here I fell in with another of our old men, of a totally different look, manner, and speech—Jim Samson the blacksmith; a sturdy well-built fellow of sixty, with a sun-burnt smutty face, and a pair of sharp gray eyes that brimmed over with fun. His day's work was over; he had shut up his forge, and was just going home to tea.

"Sarvant, sir," says Samson. "Hope you're pretty well, sir, after a dose of Elzie? I see you a-coming down the cope together, and I says to myself: "Squire's a-catchin' of it now, and no mistake." Old Bartle's bin on the rampage all the marning, and ready to bust about that there drain up street."

"Well, Samson," said I, "I've had a dose this time, and a good one too."

"Knowed you had, Squire, the minute I saw your face. Why, bliss 'ee, flesh and blood can't stand it. It's my belief, Squire, that there old chap "have a-swallowed the East wind," and it haven't agreed with un. He've a-got the best eye for dirt of any chap I ever set eyes on."

"Swallowed the East wind?" said I. "Why so, Samson?"

"Why, how else could he go on as he do? From marning to night, from one week's end to another, it's nothing but grumble, fidget, and growl. First, it's the dreadful accidents, the fires, and the murders; then it's the fever and the riots in Ireland; the paupers, the gaols, and the strikes. Everything's going wrong, and there's no good news anywhere.—Why, bless 'ee, he come into my forge the other marning, and what's he do but begin foraging about among my tools and putting 'em to rights; making 'em tidy, he says, and upsetting things to that degree that every bit o' fire went out of the coals and put me all of a cold sweat.—"Be off, Bartle!" I says at last. "Get away out into the sunshine there and take a good drink o' that, and see if you can't clear all them cobwebs out of your brains." And with that, Squire, away he goes out of the place like a mad March hare!"

"Well done, Samson!" said I—"well done! If he would but take your advice, that wretched old croaker would be a different man in a month,

instead of a nuisance to himself and all his neighbours.—Good-night, Samson.—How's the wind?"

"West, sir—west to everybody in the place but old Bartle.—But he keeps his own weather-cock, he do, and it's nothin' but "East-by-north-east," and dirty weather. It's a pity such people was ever born."

As I wended my way home through the wood and watched the soft mellow sunshine glinting down among the tall trunks of ruddy beech, and lighting up the green pathways with patches of golden splendour, it seemed a pity indeed that such miserable failures as old Elzie should exist to mar the beauty and peace of the whole scene. The smith's words were true words: it does seem a mistake that "such people ever was born." Perhaps, in his heart that miserable old bachelor himself inclines to the same way of thinking at times, and he, too, imagines that the world would have been better without him. If so, and he should feel tempted to write his own epitaph, I can save him from all further trouble on that score, in the words of a wise man and a wit of some two thousand years ago (Epicharmus, *Epigrammata Græca*):

At seventy winters' end I died,
A cheerless being, sole and sad.
The nuptial knot I never tied,
And wish my father never had.

WITHIN THE VEIL.

I CANNOT hear thy beating heart;
How strangely still the pulsing vein;
Closed are the eyes—those starlets twain;
I call; but all my words are vain;
Comes now no answer back again,
For cold and dead, dear love, thou art!
Yet hast thou joy, and not the smart:
Thou dost not feel my tender pain;
Thine eyes distil no tearful rain;
And thou with sorrow hast no part.

Come in the silent night to me;
Come when the morning spreads her ray;
Come in the evening calm and gray;
Come from the bright land far away,
Where hearts are glad and moments gay;
Come with thy footstep light and free;
Come with thy tongue's sweet melody;
And stay, love, by the ingle stay.
I wait, love, for the coming day,
The re-uniting hour with thee!

Where is thy brightsome dwelling now?
Art thou, love, in the solar beam?
Hear I thy voice in singing stream,
Or Melody's diviner theme?
Will eye meet eye in slumber's dream?
Behold thine eyes the winter's snow?
Or wend, dost thou, where flowers grow,
And light illumines eternal day?
Or leavest thou its brightsome ray,
To follow wheresoe'er I go?

J. F. HUNT.

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THE ALPINE ACCIDENTS OF 1888.

TAKING into account the fact that the fall of snow in the Alps during the winter of 1887-88, and especially during the months of January and February 1888, was the heaviest that can be remembered for many years—a circumstance which boded ill for mountaineering in the ensuing summer—the number of accidents in the high Alps during the past season must be considered small. It certainly did not reach the appalling frequency of fatal disasters that marked the previous year, when twenty persons met their deaths, either through their own foolhardiness or by misadventure.

The death-roll of the past season includes ten persons. Strangely enough, the first fatal accident took place in the Salzburg Alps, where excursions are looked upon as not at all perilous, but which nevertheless contain hidden dangers, as the accident in August 1887 proved. On that occasion a young student, a practised mountaineer, lost his life in a snowstorm. Again, the accident by which Herr Josef Zulehner, a merchant of Salzburg, was killed occurred as early as May 1, 1888. That gentleman and his eldest son left Salzburg on that day by the local railway for Drachenfels. Thence the two, both experienced climbers, started for the Bachkaser, considered perfectly free from danger. This time, however, the upper portion of the path was found impassable, owing to its being blocked by trunks of trees and rocks, brought down by avalanches. Herr Zulehner now went in search of another path, to the so-called 'Jägerhaus,' but lost his way, and finally reached, after much heavy work, a mountain top. When descending thence towards the Russboden, father and son arrived at a series of precipitous rocks. Herr Zulehner, junior, descended a small rock only about seven feet high, and rested his alpenstock against it, to facilitate the descent of his father. The latter put his foot on it, using it as a kind of step, slipped, lost his hold, and fell, dragging his son with him in his fall. Both rolled down a

steep slope for some distance. The son, who had hurt both his arms, rose, and noticed with horror that his father was bleeding from an ugly wound in his head, and unconscious. He dressed the wound as best he could, to stop the bleeding, and ran for assistance as fast as his own injuries permitted him; but when help arrived, Herr Zulehner had been dead some time.

While this fatality was entirely of the nature of an accident, the same cannot be said of the next fatal mishap, on July 25, which occurred also in the Salzburg Alps or Salzkammergut (on the Dachstein, near Gmunden), and by which two lives were sacrificed. A party of three tourists from Judenburg had successfully ascended the mountain without guides; but in descending a perpendicular ice-wall thirty-three feet high, the foremost, Dr Zeitlinger, lost his footing, and dragged one of his companions, Herr H. Thannheiser, with him. Dr Zeitlinger was killed on the spot; and Herr Thannheiser expired while being removed to a place of shelter. The third of the party, Herr L. Thannheiser, escaped with his life. The ascent and descent of the Dachstein are described as free from danger, but under no circumstances should they be undertaken without local guides. Dr Zeitlinger was an experienced mountaineer, although not a member of the Austrian Alpine Club.

The Dent du Midi (ten thousand four hundred and fifty feet) is a most formidable mountain when covered with snow, as it was in the past season, but otherwise not especially difficult. A splendid view is obtained from it of Mont Blanc and the Alps of Valais, Dauphiné, and Piedmont. This mountain exacted last year two victims, one of which was an Englishman. On August 11, two tourists, Messrs Ball, fell over a precipice while descending from the Dent du Midi; one being killed, and the survivor, Mr Frank Ball, seriously injured. Two different accounts have been received of the cause of the accident. According to one report, having safely reached the summit, in returning, instead of descending to Champéry, whence the ascent was made, the travellers decided

to come down the mountain on the Vernayaz side, into the Salvan Pass, one of the three principal passes from the Rhone Valley to Chamonix. The guide refused to accompany them, for what reasons has not been learned; but whatever these reasons were, the tourists ought to have given in to his better judgment. They elected to go alone, and the result was a disaster. Another account states that there was nothing rash in the course which Messrs Ball took, and that the accident, resulting from recent snow concealing ice-covered rocks, was one which could have occurred even to an experienced guide. Moreover, both tourists had had experience in Alpine climbing, and Mr Frank Ball is a member of the Alpine Club, and has been familiar with mountain-work under its various aspects. This only goes to prove that even experienced men ought to subordinate their judgment to the discretion of professional guides.

This accident was rapidly followed by one on August 13, when a young German, Herr Pietri, only eighteen years of age, fell over a precipice and was killed. In this case, unpardonable negligence was the cause. The party, of which the unfortunate victim was one, consisted of five persons from Montreux. They were quite unprepared for the expedition, having no guide, no ice-axes, and no ropes. They made a successful ascent, however; but in returning, the foremost of the party slipped down the smooth frozen surface of a steep snow-field over a precipice. If the party had been roped, the accident would in all probability not have happened.

On August 16, a young student of München, Herr Georg Winkler, attempted to ascend the Weisshorn, canton of Valais, without a guide, and in the face of strong remonstrances, and since that time nothing has been heard of him. His body will probably never be discovered, for it has been ascertained that the young man, only eighteen years of age, in ascending was overtaken by an avalanche, thrown down, and buried. The way he had taken could be traced to nearly the top of the Weisshorn, where the avalanche crossed his path. About the same time, a fatal accident happened on the Chamosaire, above Aigle, on the road to the Ormonts, the victim being the only son of parents residing in the neighbourhood, who was out on the mountains searching for *edelweiss*.

On August 20, a sad accident, resulting in the death of Michael Innerkofler, one of the best guides known in the district, occurred on the glacier of Monte Cristallo, Southern Tyrol. He had ascended the mountain from the Schludersbach with two German tourists in safety, and the descent was successfully made as far as the Cristallo glacier, when, in crossing a bridge of ice spanning a wide crevasse, it gave way, and the three, roped together, fell. If it had not been for the bravery of the guide Mansueto Barbaria, and two of his fellow-guides who had taken another party up the mountain, and who witnessed the accident, probably all three would have perished. But, owing to the rapidity with which he rendered succour, the two tourists were saved. Poor Innerkofler, however, was past help, and he succumbed to the dreadful injuries he had received in his fall down the crevasse. The faulty

and unbusiness-like way in which roping together is done by the Tyrolese guides, however brave the latter may be, is considered the cause of the death of one of the best of them.

The disappearance of Mr Rudd, an Englishman, who was a resident at Obermais, near Meran, Tyrol, is also probably due to an accident. Mr Rudd, on September 13, started alone on an expedition to Ala. The last trace of him was found at Bedole, where he stayed for the night, and in departing stated that he would go over the Presena Pass and the Mandron Glacier to Ponte di Legno. As the passes over the glacier are very dangerous, and Mr Rudd went without a guide, it is supposed that he met his death there. Six guides were despatched by the family to search for the missing gentleman; but no traces were found of him.

On October 5, the body of a tourist in an advanced state of decomposition was found at the foot of the Cima della Pala. The description of the body agrees with that of a traveller who entered his name in a hostelry at Landro as Reinhold, of Vienna. Herr Reinhold stayed for about a fortnight at Landro, and always undertook his excursions in the Ampezza and Sexten dolomites, even the most difficult, without a guide. He stayed away for days in his excursions, and thus his long absence on what proved to be his last expedition, to the Cima della Pala, was taken no notice of. It appears that the tourist slipped in descending from the mountain, sustaining injuries which rendered him unconscious, and that he was frozen to death in that state. This was the last fatal accident of the season.

It will be observed that most of the accidents were due to the fact that the tourists, from unexplained motives, undertook perilous expeditions without guides or without being properly equipped. Nearly all of them, however, had had experience in mountaineering, and this is rather a good feature, seeing that there are persons who undertake ascents for which they are not qualified by previous work, and in others are prompted to make them by motives of vanity. What will be thought, for instance, of the gentleman who dragged a young girl, aged thirteen, up to the summit of Mont Blanc, merely for the sake of making a display? If report is true, the young lady was so fatigued on returning that she had to be carried down part of the way. This is an abuse of a healthy exercise, which ought to be deprecated by all persons whose sense of propriety is not blurred by a love of éclat. The ascent of Mont Blanc, undertaken in October by M. Janssen, the President of the French Academy of Sciences, was quite another matter. And he only went as far as the Grands Mulets, and in the interest of science, to make some scientific observations in that elevated altitude. He stayed at the hut of the Grands Mulets three days and four nights, the thermometer registering twelve degrees of frost. He was accompanied by a large party of guides, as well as by his daughter, who probably attended from a sense of filial piety towards an aged father. The descent was made in a kind of sledge of M. Janssen's own invention, constructed of sheepskins, and which, we trust, the lady shared with her esteemed parent.

The total number of fatal Alpine accidents proper amounted in 1888 to ten, against twenty

in 1887, as already mentioned. The number of deaths in the latter year was swelled by the terrible Jungfrau disaster, in which six mountaineers in full manhood lost their lives owing to misadventure. It is sad to think that the death-record for last year should have been increased by a fatality in that other and grander alpine field, the Caucasus, to which four proved mountaineers have fallen victims. Although, strictly speaking, outside the range of the country with which we have been dealing, it is deserving of a brief reference here. From the official account which has been published of the Caucasus disaster, we learn that Mr Donkin and Mr Fox, accompanied by the two Swiss guides Streich and Fischer, arrived at the beginning of August at the village of Urusby, at the foot of Elburz, whence they proceeded to Bezingui. The party set out on August 15 for the glaciers of Bezingui, in order to reach the Kachkan Tau. The interpreter and a native guide were sent to Balcaria, where they were to await the return of the party, with orders to send horses and provisions to the refuge established at the foot of Mount Dykhtau, about twenty miles from Balcaria, and not far from the Schari Pass, which leads into the province of Koutais. These orders were carried out; but the party not returning, the authorities were informed of the prolonged absence of the travellers, and search-parties were then sent out. Traces of the travellers were found as far as the summit of Kachkan Tau, seventeen thousand and ninety-six feet. At different points, near large crevasses, pieces of boots and axe marks were discovered, the travellers having, in the opinion of the natives, chosen the most perilous paths. It is supposed that the travellers either were buried in an avalanche or fell into a crevasse. Owing to the advanced season, no further investigations could be made.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN the course of a month or two, John being by this time regarded as hopelessly intractable, Uncle Robert began to see that Fortune looked upon him with a smiling face. Nobody accused him, nobody blamed him, nobody suspected him of desiring to do anything but his duty by the pitiable and worthless creature left to his control. It was generally known that the boy was 'soft,' that is to say that he was almost but not quite an idiot. The bullying, mocking, pitying régime had brought him to that pass in so short a space of time.

To tell the truth, this rapid realisation of his hopes removed all sense of criminality from Uncle Robert's mind. There had never been any very oppressive sense of his own wickedness there—as, indeed, how should there be, when John's position and his own had been so evidently in need of rectification? He felt such a claim upon the property on the grounds of justice and common-sense, that any measure which transferred it to his own hands looked right and reasonable—almost. And the thing being so easily done, looked as if it must have happened in any case. He sturdily refused to believe that

he had hastened the catastrophe; and that amazing inward effrontery which everybody has, more or less, enabled him to tell himself that he had never meant to hasten it, or taken anything but common-sense means against it.

If there was anything which disturbed his felicity, it was the reflection that John would be a burden upon the estate; but he comforted himself with the reflection that the charges would be but small. He knew a case where a well-to-do father had left his estate in equal parts to his twin sons. One of them had grown up with a weak intellect; and the other boarded him at a farmhouse and paid a hundred a year for his maintenance; whilst he himself lived in a big house and kept his servants and carriages. Nobody thought the worse of this gentleman, and it was certain that the unfortunate brother had as much as he wanted or knew how to enjoy.

Before the body of John Vale the elder had lain three months in the ground, John Vale the younger was the unresisting fag and butt of half his schoolfellows, and Mr Macfarlane's tool of mental culture was more employed upon his wretched little body than upon that of any other two of the little crowd subjected to his tyrannies. But he had one friend whom his feebleness could not alienate, and who stuck to him the closer because of the ills that fell upon him. Master William Gregg fought his battles, and accepted the responsibility for many an act of helpless mischief, and did his lessons until it became quite useless to do them any longer, and generally played his part of protector with a bulldog fidelity natural to him. It became so certain that any boy who wanted to bully John had first of all to walk over the prostrate body of Master Gregg, and that youth was so difficult to walk over, and would be to-morrow so completely oblivious of to-day's defeat, that out of school-hours the forlorn innocent was at last left alone. In the days of health, he had been the brightest and cleverest lad in the school, full of courage, gaiety, high spirits, and mild dreams. He could jump farther in those days, and run faster, and learn his lessons with less effort than any one of them, and to the bulldog Gregg he had been a sort of Admirable Crichton. Everybody has seen and known these ungrudging romantic admirations and friendships amongst boys. John's fall from glory only made William Gregg the more loyal to him; and William went on his way in life in pretty constant heart-burning, because of the ill-usage his chum suffered. His days and nights were filled with dreams of the time when he would be as big as Macfarlane, and would be in a position to revenge himself for all the purposeless thrashings John now took at his hands. You cannot expect to have all the bulldog virtues and to escape all the bulldog shortcomings. Master Gregg was fully assured that as soon as he saw the remotest chance of repaying the schoolmaster, he should do it, and he hoarded up capital of wrath and added compound interest at such a rate as was warranted by no rules of arithmetic into which Macfarlane had yet inducted him.

The explosion came before he had meant it to come, for on a certain brightly showery day in April, the schoolmaster was in more than common form, and had John out three times. On the first occasion, Master Gregg's sense of

compound interest was worked at the usual extravagant rate, but no more; on the second, it assumed proportions which would have appalled the greediest of usurers; and on the third there were no figures to express it.

'Walk this way, Vale,' said Macfarlane, with an air of resigned fatigue, bent upon duty. 'I had hoped that the day's warning would have been sufficient, and that you would have been induced to prosecute your studies with some slight willingness and attention. I observe with regret that it is not so, and that I must repeat the lesson.' All this was wasted on the hapless John, who did not even know that the magistral voice was addressed to him, or what it said. 'Vale!' roared the bully, glad of the opportunity for flying into a passion, which this indifference gave him. He loved a rage, for it was the only outlet he knew from the tedious routine of his life. Nothing else lighted his blood to fervour, or quickened his heart-beats, or in any way fanned the ashes of his inward fires. 'Come here, sir!' He smote the desk with his cane so fiercely that every boy winced and winked.

The wretched John lifted his dull pale face with the grime of tears all over it, and arose. Young Gregg rose also, with a face even paler. He held in one hand a ruler, and with the other he fished a leaden inkstand from its hole in the desk before him, and stood with the ink dripping from his fingers. His heart beat with such monstrous thumps that every pulse shook him from head to foot, and his voice quaked as he spoke: 'Stop where you are, Jack.'

Only that New Englander of Lowell's who figured to himself a potato 'all on end at being boiled' could find a figure to do justice to the schoolmaster's amazement. It positively took his breath away. The boys looked on in wonder and wild awe, as at some dread cataclysm in nature. Gregg and the schoolmaster looked at each other in silence.

'Vale,' said Macfarlane, 'I will attend to you later on. Stay where you are.—Come here, Gregg.'

Gregg, with the dripping inkstand in one hand and the ruler in the other, stepped backward over the form, and walked slowly into the open space between the front desk and the fire-grate.

'Put those things down,' said Macfarlane. The boy shook his bulldog head and kept his glittering wicked eye upon the schoolmaster's, but said nothing.

There was a dreadful combat, but it was all unequal. So long as there was an ounce of fight left in him, the bulldog fought, and so long as Macfarlane could thrash he thrashed. In such a battle, blows fell anywhere, and the boy's face was wealed and streaked with blood when it was over.

The schoolmaster retired, leaving further discipline in the hands of the usher. Master Gregg, gathering himself together, walked to the desk and helped himself to water from the master's carafe and tumbler. He was white, except for the flushed and swollen streaks on his face, and trembled so much that he rattled the glass and water-bottle together noisily and spilled a good deal of the water when he drank. He propped himself against the desk, and from time to time drew the body of his hand gingerly across his

face and then looked at the blood upon it. The usher was awe-struck, and hardly dared to take notice of him. He was a young man of constitutional timidity, and was not overfed. The boy's dogged ferocity and quiet had frightened him, and perhaps in his heart he was not altogether on the tyrant's side.

An hour went by before Macfarlane came back. He had been busy in the interval with diachylon plaster, vinegar, and brown paper, and other such mild curatives for abrasions. Master Gregg looked at him as he entered; but the schoolmaster went by him without notice and took his customary seat, but with something more than his customary care.

'Boys,' he said, 'you have seen the punishment which is inflicted upon insubordination. You have witnessed an attempt to violate and set at naught the salutary and necessary discipline of the school. It is now my duty to show you that nothing can subvert that discipline or overthrow it.—Vale, come here!'

'Stop where you are, Jack,' said the dogged chum. If anything, the awe and amazement that fell upon the listeners transcended the first shock. Somehow, Master Gregg had provided himself with another ruler. He spat upon his hand and clutched it, workmanlike, twisting it until he had a firm hold upon it, and he looked so very unconquered that Macfarlane was more than half afraid of him.

'This has all to be gone through again, Gregg, has it?' he asked with an attempt at humour which sat rather uneasily upon his face and rang rather false in his voice.

'Seems so,' said Gregg, with an accent which sounded a hundredfold more daring and insolent for being purely commonplace. 'I shan't stand by and see him licked. He can't learn his lessons, and you know he can't learn 'em. It's no use licking him,' he concluded in an almost argumentative tone.

'I should have thought, Gregg,' said the schoolmaster, 'that your lesson would have sufficed you.'—Gregg shook his head with perfect solemnity.—'Do you presume to imagine that *you* will be allowed to dictate the discipline of the school?'—Gregg shook his head again.—'If I am compelled again to administer chastisement, I shall not spare you, Gregg; but I am not disposed at present to inflict further punishment if I can avoid it. Go to your seat, sir.'—A third time Gregg shook his head.

'You won't lick Vale again, sir,' he said, as if he had made up his mind upon the question.

Macfarlane, for the first time in his life, concluded reluctantly that nothing but bamboo would meet the case. There was another battle, which ended as the first had done, and ended sooner. Master Gregg's nerves had broken down, and he was sobbing and weeping at the end of this encounter; but when Vale was called again, he got to his feet and spluttered, 'Stop where you are, Jack,' with as wilful a determination as ever.

'Mr Johnson,' said Macfarlane, addressing his assistant, 'I shall be obliged to you if you will make a personal visit to Gregg's father and inform him that I have been compelled to expel Gregg from the school.'

The usher whispered that the hour for the

dismissal of the school had passed, and the school-master welcomed the intelligence.

'You may go, boys,' he said.—'I will deal with you to-morrow, Vale.' And with that he withdrew.

Master Gregg got home with difficulty, and found that the usher had been there before him. Gregg, senior, who was all for the sustenance of authority, conceived it to be his duty to horse-whip William, and did it—thereby setting more machinery in motion than he dreamt of; for if it had not been for this supplementary flogging, Uncle Robert's delightfully simple plan would in all probability have prospered, and such starved root of wit as lived in young John's brains would have perished altogether.

When William had digested his flogging, he was allowed to take his supper and retire to rest without much further notice. The first thing he did on reaching his bedroom was to lock himself in, and being thus safe from observation or intrusion, he set to work to pack up sundry simple necessities, which he tied together in a handkerchief. Next, from the bottom of a small wooden trunk which belonged to him he extracted a glazed earthen money-pot, which gave forth a heavy muffled noise as he shook it. After having vainly tried to coax the coins it held through the slit at the top by means of a straw, a folded leaf of his copy-book, and the end of a lucifer-match, he laid the earthen treasury upon the bed and there broke it with a tap of the poker, having previously laid his jacket over it to dull the sound of the blow. He gathered up the shards and hid them carefully beneath the fire-grate, pushing them as far out of sight as they would go. Next he counted his treasure, and made out three shillings and fourpence in coppers, and one shilling and sevenpence in threepenny and fourpenny pieces. From his trousers' pockets he drew such a variety of miscellaneous articles as boys love to carry, and amongst them a solitary penny piece, sticky with cobbler's wax and toffy. Having counted it over with extreme silence and caution several times, in the vain hope of making more than five shillings of it, he tied it all together in a strip of rag and put it under his pillow. Then he undressed and got into bed, and after some sore-sided tumbling and tossing, fell asleep.

It was pitch-dark when he awoke, but he was out of bed in an instant. He lit his candle and dressed with great quiet and expedition; and so with his bundle in one hand, his boots in the other, and his handful of money bulging out one of his pockets, he stole noiselessly downstairs. The clock ticked sternly at him, and the house-dog's cold nose thrust suddenly into his hand in the dark brought his heart into his mouth. The lock and the bolts of the door were rusty, and creaked dreadfully as he withdrew them; but though he listened with all his ears, he heard no sound of movement in the house. The night gaped at him, black, chill, and starless, when the door was open, and the widespread world looked cheerless enough. But he had made up rather an unusual mind for a boy of his years, and perhaps *had* rather an unusual mind for a boy of his years; and stifling any misgivings that may have assailed him, he slipped into the open air, closed the door behind him, and stole away.

He looked back once at the house he was leaving, and found suddenly that he had no rancour in his heart. But he turned round again to the bare world he had made up his mind to face, and trudged on in a growing darkness until he reached the Jacob's ladder and mounted to Scott's Hills. There he sat down upon a stile to wait for daylight—which proved a weary business. He dozed several times, and awoke, nipped to the bone by the chill air of early April; but at last, in spite of sore bones, and cold, and the loneliness which was worse than anything else or all other discomforts put together, he fell sound asleep again, until the morning sun shining full into his eyes awoke him.

He rose to his feet, shook himself, and pursued his way towards the town. Arrived there, he found the earliest inhabitants already leisurely taking down their shop-shutters, or sweeping out their shops or leaning on their brooms to exchange the slow-going news of the place across the street. He could not rid himself of a sense that everybody was aware of his intent, and that he was running away from home; and this feeling, if anybody had noticed him, might have given him a furtive look as he sped along the high street towards Robert Snelling's house.

Snelling's house stood three or four doors from a side-street which branched off from the main thoroughfare; and from this side-street branched off in turn a narrow blind alley, in which were situate a bakehouse, a wheelwright's workshop, a stable or two, and a granary. Doors opening off the alley led to the back-yards of dwelling-houses, and in one of them, as fate would have it, young Gregg saw the chum for whose sake he had suffered, languidly and dreamily blacking a pair of boots. It was part of Uncle Robert's household economy that the young should have this kind of office imposed upon them, and he had set John the task with all the greater willingness because the boy had never been accustomed to it, and it hurt his pride.

The runaway tried in vain to signal his companion by whistlings and rappings, and at length growing desperate, ventured within the yard and called him by name. At that John turned and came towards him.

'Come outside,' young Gregg whispered. 'Come with me.'

Young John obeyed unquestioningly; and when William began to run with a backward inviting glance and gesture, he followed. They ran up the by-street until they came to an open piece of waste land with three or four abandoned houses on it, deserted by some bankrupt contractor, and long since left to fall to ruin and decay.

'Where are you going, Will?' he asked then.

'I have run away from home,' Will answered. 'I am going to seek my fortune, if you'll come with me. Do come, Jack. What have you got to stay for? Macfarlane will give you a hiding if you go back to school. He'll always be doing it. You can't learn your lessons, Jack; it's no use trying. Will you come?'

John looked frightened, and hesitated.

'Come along,' the other urged him, taking him by the hand. He obeyed the impulse, and they set out together. 'I'll take care of you, Jack.'

The bulldog heart was as warm and tender and valiant as ever yet a heart was in the world. 'You cheer up, old chap; they shan't hurt you any more.'

ON THE ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTION OF FIRE.

WHEN the pursuits of hunting and fishing or other causes led primitive man into the colder regions of the earth, the warmth of fire for bodily comfort, as well as for the preparation of food, must have been one of his first necessities, and the artificial production of it one of the earliest objects of his ambitious ingenuity. Modern savages in tropical and sub-tropical climates produce fire by the friction of dry and inflammable wood, rotated either by the hands or by a bow closely resembling that employed with a drill. Such a method of producing fire works very well in dry climates, where wood suitable for the purpose is abundant; but it is evident that it would not be so satisfactory in those countries where, with the exception of a small part of the year, dry wood is an object of considerable rarity. To a man in the early stages of civilisation, the accidental production of a spark of fire by the concussion of flints and iron-pyrites, or iron-stone, may have suggested such a means for the attainment of his desired object; and, it may be added, the occurrence of these two minerals together, as is often the case, gives great probability to such a theory. The kindling of a fire by means of dry grass was but one step further, and followed naturally upon the first discovery of the accidental spark. The substitution of flint and iron-stone for the friction of dry wood in the production of fire marks a decided step in the advancement of civilisation. The object was attained with less expenditure of time and labour than by the old method, although it was of course practicable only where flints and iron-stones were easily obtainable.

Man, as several writers have pointed out, is the only fire-making animal. Other animals have the skill to build houses for protection from the weather and from enemies; are swift in the chase, and, in point of strength, are in many cases superior to man. But this particular attribute of fire-producing belongs to man alone, and, were there no other mark of distinction between him and the brutes, this would of itself show him to belong to an order, in degree at least, pre-eminently above them.

Among the very earliest specimens of man's handiwork which have been preserved for our examination—namely, chipped and wrought flints—there are to be found many that bear in the character of their shapes and external markings the clearest possible evidences of having once served as 'strike-a-lights'; and in some cases the actual fragments of iron-pyrites with which they were used have been found in close proximity to them, thus indicating with a probability which almost amounts to certainty the original use to which they were applied. Among many thousands of paleolithic and neolithic flint implements which we have had the opportunity of

closely examining, were a great many forms which there is no hesitation in saying belong to this class. Many of the forms which sometimes have been regarded as 'scrapers' of a rough and uneven type are nothing more than flints which have been so used. The essential quality of such a flint was that it should be capable of throwing off small splinters when brought in sharp contact with a mass of iron-pyrites. The scraper-like form of flint was particularly suited for such a purpose, presenting a tolerably acute angle to the object upon which it was impinged. Several specimens in our collection—gathered chiefly from West Kent—bear indentations which have resulted probably from having been used with thin flakes or strips of iron-stone, such, for instance, as are very abundant in the greensand of Sevenoaks and the surrounding district. As such fragments are occasionally found among the tertiary deposits in and around West Wickham, there is good reason to suppose that such means were used for striking a light, although we are bound to say we have not yet succeeded in finding any particular piece of iron-stone which looks as if it had been used for such a purpose.

The ancient inhabitants of the East were familiar with the use of magnifying glasses and reflectors for producing fire from the sun's rays, and there are in the writings of classical authors numerous allusions to such customs; but there is no reason to suppose that such means were ever largely used in England. The frequent absence of bright sunshine would often render any such attempt to obtain fire wholly ineffectual.

For many centuries the tinder-box, or something closely analogous, must have been the only means by which fire was artificially produced in England. The writer possesses an old tinder-box which had been used for many years, but of course since the introduction of matches it has been cast away as mere lumber. As an original specimen of the common type of those indispensable accessories of domestic life during many centuries, it is of considerable antiquarian interest, although it is of no intrinsic value whatever. It is a circular box of tin, four inches in diameter, and an inch and a half in height. It originally possessed a lid, which was probably furnished with a socket for the candle, by means of which the flame developed from the spark on the tinder was preserved; but unfortunately the lid is lost. The steel, shaped to fit the hand, upon which the flint was struck to produce the spark, and flat plate of tin, designed to extinguish the smouldering tinder which the spark had ignited, both remain, and the steel bears marks of long-continued wear. A fragment of flint, too, which is in all likelihood that used for producing the sparks, has been considerably chipped and bruised by repeated contact with the steel; and it is interesting on that account, as showing what really is the effect of such wear. Upon comparison, we find that there is no important difference between this flint and those which we have described as having been found in conjunction with neolithic implements. On the contrary, it bears a strong resemblance to them; and what few variations there are, are only such as would necessarily arise from the variation in the time which has elapsed since the flints were chipped and broken. Some

of the tinder remains in the box, and we have often succeeded in producing a light from it by striking the steel, held firmly in the left hand, with the flint in the right, the blow being directed towards the tinder-box. When the small spark of red fire generated by the minute chip of flint appears, it is necessary to fan or blow gently upon it until it has grown to a small patch of fire. Then, upon the application of a thin strip or splint of wood, previously tipped with sulphur, the desired flame is produced, and the tinder in the box may be extinguished by simply putting on the lid. The whole process, after practice, occupies less than half a minute; but if the tinder be not perfectly dry, perhaps five or ten minutes may be required to produce a light. Tinder is made by burning old cotton rags, and extinguishing them before they are completely consumed by the fire. Other kinds of tinder are made from dried fungus. It seems almost incredible that, with the knowledge of chemistry which was possessed during the last two or three centuries, such a clumsy and difficult method of producing fire should not have been superseded by one more easy and expeditious.

The invention of 'lucifer matches' in 1827 marks the commencement of a very important era in the history of our subject. Before that date, it is true there had been certain chemical means used by which a light was produced, but they were merely exceptional cases. Friction matches were invented by Mr John Walker, of Stockton-on-Tees, in 1827. For many years he occupied a small shop, No. 59 High Street, where he carried on the business of an apothecary. He appears to have been a tolerable chemist; and, being interested in studying the properties of phosphorus, it is probable he discovered its suitability for the production of light in the course of his researches. For several years he sold the matches he made in pasteboard boxes containing fifty matches for one shilling per box. By this lucrative business he saved enough money to retire; and on the 1st of May 1859 he died at the age of seventy-eight years. A letter relating to Mr Walker's valuable invention has been contributed to the *Northern Echo* by Mr Alderman Jackson. It is so interesting that we shall make no apology for reproducing it here:

SIR—I have not the slightest doubt that the invention of lucifer matches is due to our late fellow-townsmen, Mr John Walker, chemist and druggist, who had for his place of business the shop No. 59 High Street, Stockton. I knew Mr Walker personally and intimately, and have had many a friendly chat with him both on this subject and others. In the year 1860 I sent a communication to the *Illustrated London News*, in consequence of an article in that journal with the heading, 'The Origin or Invention of Lucifer Matches.' After alluding to the tinder-box and phosphorus match-boxes, it is stated: 'Suddenly and successfully, but where we have not been able to learn, the lucifer matches invaded the province of the old tar matches.' Before replying to the article in the *Illustrated London News*, I communicated with an old friend, the editor of a local newspaper, who confirmed my conviction that the world at large is indebted to Mr John Walker for this very useful

invention. I may say that Mr Walker was frequently and urgently pressed by his numerous friends to take out a patent; but he always declined, saying it was not worth the while doing so, considering the simple and trifling nature of the article. Mr Walker died in Stockton in the year 1859. The facts as stated in the local paper to which I refer were published in 1852, and were as follows: 'Mr Walker was preparing some lighting mixture for his own use, when a match, after being dipped in the preparation, took fire by accidental friction upon the hearth. This was the first friction match, and the hint was not lost. He commenced making friction matches, selling with each box a piece of doubled sand-paper to set them in flames by pressure of the thumb and a sharp pull. It was in the month of August 1827 that he began the sale, and his first customer was the late Mr John Hixon, solicitor, of Stockton. Harrison Burn was employed to make the matches; and the boxes were made by Mr John Ellis, at three-halfpence each, the price of a box containing fifty being one shilling.' I think, after perusing the above, you will have no doubt that Mr Walker is really the inventor of this useful and now indispensable article. I have always endeavoured, in various parts of the Continent, as well as in England, to establish these facts, that justice may be done to the departed.—I am, sir, very respectfully,

RICHARD JACKSON.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES, May 6, 1871.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the great improvements which have been made in matches since Walker's time. They can now be produced so cheaply that, we are informed, boxes of safety matches well made and neatly packed can be obtained for elevenpence per gross.

THE WESTERFIELD SCORE.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

I HAVE been so often asked to tell the following story in the course of the forty years which have come and gone since the events narrated in it took place, that at last I have made up my mind never to open my lips about it again, but just to write it down in my own homely fashion, so that if anybody bothers me to tell it in time to come, I can put it before them in black and white, and bid them read it for themselves, which will be a saving of time and trouble to every one concerned.

My name is Reuben Holditch, and I was born and brought up in the little town of Westerfield, in the north of England, where my father, my grandfather, and my great-grandfather, and, for aught I know to the contrary, a generation or two of ancestors still further back, had filled, with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the public, the office of sexton to the grand old abbey church of St Mary's.

The ancient and reputable post in question having been held by a Holditch for something like a hundred and fifty years, it was looked

upon, from the time I can remember anything, quite as a matter of course, and as one of those things which are not open to question, that my father's son should one day follow in the footsteps of his ancestors, and earn his daily bread after the same fashion in which they had earned theirs. How the knowledge came to me that such was the mode of life which an unkind fate had mapped out for me, I cannot now call to mind, but from the very first I looked forward to it with loathing and dismay. Many a time my father would make me stand by him while he scooped out a grave in the black loamy soil, with the view, I suppose, of teaching the young idea how to dig. He was very proud of his handiwork, and would bid me observe the artistic finish—only those weren't the words he used—of all the details; but sometimes his spade would throw up the skull or thigh-bone of some previous tenant of the space he was now getting ready for another, and then I would turn away, disgusted and sick at heart, while my father would laugh lightly and say: 'It's nowt, lad, nowt at all, when once a body gets used to it.' But whatever my secret thoughts and feelings might be on the question of my future, I said no word to any one about them, and certainly my father was the last person in the world to have any suspicion of the degeneracy of his only son.

My father eked out his livelihood by making and cobbling shoes, as his father and grandfather had done in their time, so that the lapstone might be said to be as much an inheritance of the Holditch family as the churchyard itself. I, however, had little more liking for the cobbler's awl than for the spade and pickaxe; my thoughts and wishes went out and clung to something very different from either.

From the time when I was quite a child I had a great fondness for flowers. I know not whence the liking came, nor why it came, but there it was. One day, when I was about twelve years old, I was sent by a neighbour with a message to the head-gardener at Penigarth, Sir William Verinder's country-house, about four miles away. To me, the poor sexton's son, the gardens and glass-houses at Penigarth came as a revelation of beauty undreamed of before. The gardener, a kindly old Scotchman, was evidently pleased with my enthusiasm, and was at the trouble to show me over the place, eliciting from me by the way sundry particulars of my history. 'Weel, laddie,' he said to me at parting, 'everybody to his likes; but for my part, I'd sooner tend my bit flowers than howk graves.' I need hardly say that I was entirely of the same way of thinking.

From that hour my heart was set on becoming a gardener. My father, for his position in life, gave me what was considered in those days a fairly good education; but with my fourteenth birthday my schooling came to an end. He was a reticent man, and had said no word to me of his intentions; but I foreboded only too surely what they were. I was to be apprenticed to a shoemaker in the town, in order that I might learn the business thoroughly, then, after I should be out of my time, and as years crept over my father, I was gradually to work into the position of assistant-sexton, with the view of ultimately succeeding to all the emoluments and dignities

which so many of my predecessors had enjoyed before me.

Hereupon ensued the only serious difference of opinion that ever divided my father and myself even for a day. I told him plainly how utterly hateful to me was the idea of becoming a shoemaker, and how my heart was set on being a gardener. He was 'struck all of a heap,' as the saying is, and said some hard things in the heat of his temper. For a week or more he remained in the 'dumps,' hardly speaking a dozen words to me all that time. Then came another explosion; and then, finding I was not to be moved from my purpose, he gave way all at once, and told me I might do as I liked. All this had reference only to the shoemaking; not for a moment did he dream that when the proper time should come, a Holditch could be other than a proud man at succeeding to what might with reason be called the family estate in the abbey churchyard, and I was careful not to deceive him. One day I overheard him say to his particular crony, Peter Philp: 'After all, when one comes to consider, there isn't such a vast difference between a grave-digger and a gardener. They both get their living out o' the mould, and both have to be handy with their shovels. And who knows, if this new-fangled notion of planting folks' graves with flowers and shrubs comes into fashion, but what Rube may be doing a good thing for hisself by learning all about 'em.'

So, with a fast-beating heart, I went to Penigarth and asked for Mr Ayscough. The old Scotchman had not forgotten me; and a fortnight later, through his influence, I was offered the post of under-gardener's assistant at Linden Villa, the house of a rich merchant in the outskirts of Westerfield. There I stayed for two years, picking up every scrap of knowledge I could lay hold of, at the end of which time a berth was found for me at Penigarth itself. Here several years slipped away almost without my knowing how, so happy and full of content was my lot. Mr Ayscough, who took great interest in me, had advised me to learn at least the rudiments of Latin, without which, he said, no horticulturist could be said to know his business in these days; so a great portion of my spare hours were given to the acquisition of that grand but difficult language. Almost as a matter of course, I had fallen in love by this time. The object of my passion was pretty Mary Lidford, the only child of her mother, who was a widow. Mary had nothing of her own in the way of this world's gear, and as my wages only just sufficed to keep myself, there seemed little likelihood of our being able to marry for several years to come. But that was a prospect which did not trouble us greatly. We were young, we loved each other, and we could afford to wait till brighter days should dawn.

I was a few months turned one-and-twenty when a sad accident happened to my father: he fell and broke his leg. The fracture was a bad one; it would be weeks before he would be able to leave the house, months before he would be strong enough to go about his work as usual. I was sent for at once, and had not been more than a few hours at home when word was brought that my father's services were needed. A parishioner was dead, and his grave would have to be dug

the following day. In this emergency my father naturally turned to me; and when I hinted that, seeing how little I knew of such things, it might be advisable to call in the services of the sexton of St Michael's, he gave me a look I did not forget for many a day.

'There was never a Holditch born who couldn't dig a grave,' he said. 'It comes nat'el to 'em.'

After that, of course there was nothing for it but to do as my father's son was expected to do.

If the affair had ended there, it would not have mattered greatly, but it could not. It was evident that my father would be disabled for a long time to come; he must either find a substitute, or give up his post; and to have had to do the latter would, I verily believe, have broken his heart. I was to be his successor—on that point everybody (but myself) was agreed, and everybody seemed to think I could do no other than act as his deputy at a time like the present.

Of course I had to tell Mr Ayscough how matters stood. 'There's no help for it, laddie,' he said. 'Thou must go and bide with thy father till he gets better, and we must try and get on without thee for a while as best we can.'

It was in October, when the days seem to shorten so fast and the lengthening nights are already full of the prophecy of the coming winter, that my father met with his accident. I had not been more than three days at home before I was told something—not by one person only, but by a dozen at the least—which surprised me greatly, and set me wondering what amount of truth there could be at the bottom of it.

What I was told was this: That of an evening after dark, especially on those nights when there was no moon, or when it did not rise till late, the town was infested by a creature which was said to be half-man and half-monkey in appearance—the 'man-ape' being the term applied to it by general acceptance. The account given of it by those who professed to have seen it varied in some of the details; but all agreed that its body was covered with long coarse hair, that its face resembled that of the ape tribe in general, that its footsteps were inaudible, that its activity was something marvellous, and finally, that on the two or three occasions on which certain bolder spirits than common had ventured to go in pursuit of it, it was seen to vault over the railings which crown the low wall that encloses the abbey churchyard, and disappear among the tombs and grave-stones inside. At first this strange creature seemed to confine its pranks to frightening women and elderly people. It seldom or never made its appearance before nine o'clock, by which hour nearly all the shops were shut and the streets comparatively deserted. Then would it spring suddenly out from some dark corner or covered entry—and in our old-fashioned town such 'entries' were to be found in every street—and encircling the neck of the passer-by, which, five times out of six, was that of a woman, with one of its dreadful hairy arms, it would give utterance to a shrill gibbering cry, which all who had heard it declared to be like nothing human, and then releasing its victim as suddenly as it had grasped her or him, it would beat its breast for a moment or two with one hand, and then bounding away, vanish in the darkness. Several of the women thus assailed fainted with fright, and

were ill for days after; while on old Miss Glendovy the effect was such that she became subject to fits of nervous trembling, which she was unable to control to the last day of her life. Nor did the men fare much better. Mr Pybus, the tailor, was so scared that he took to his bed, and was not seen in his shop for a week to come; while Mr Wakeling, the corn-chandler, the moment his tormentor released him, gave vent to a yell which brought half the people in the street to their doors and windows. Doveton, the butcher, who stood six feet one in his stockings, was so terrified one night that it was said he never went out after dark for weeks afterwards without being armed with one of his own formidable knives; while two of the town constables fared no better than ordinary mortals, but considerably worse in one respect, seeing that both of them had their hats knocked completely over their eyes by their all but unseen tormentor.

It is not too much to say that before long a scare set in the like of which had never been known in Westerfield. Hardly a female would venture out of doors after eight o'clock unless escorted by one of the opposite sex, and not a child was to be seen abroad after dusk. Even the members of the Apollo Club, a convivial gathering of well-to-do people who met on two evenings a week at the *King's Head* for the promotion of harmony and good-fellowship, were reported to be so far affected by the general scare that when they broke up a little before midnight they preferred wending their way homeward by twos or threes to running the risk of being pounced upon singly by an anomalous hairy being after a fashion which was enough to throw any elderly gentleman into a fit. All sorts of absurd stories and exaggerations got about, as must inevitably be the case whenever the 'thousand tongues of Rumour' are all set wagging at once. It was reported that sometimes the man-ape had a plaster in his hand, which he tried to fix over the mouths of his victims; some who professed to have seen him would have it that he was at the very least seven feet high; while others averred that he was deformed, and had a huge hump between his shoulders. Others of the more ignorant were firmly persuaded that there was a strong smell of brimstone about the creature, and that his eyes glowed in his head like live coals.

At length matters came to such a pass that a number of the bolder spirits among the young men of the town banded themselves together with the avowed intention of hunting down the man-ape. Dividing themselves into a couple of gangs, each member of which was armed with a stout cudgel, they perambulated the town night after night from eight o'clock till midnight, vowing vengeance the most dire on the object of their hatred—if only they could come across it. This, unfortunately, small as the town was, they never succeeded in doing. The creature seemed to derive a sort of malicious glee from setting them at defiance. Thus, on more than one occasion, the 'vigilance boys,' as they had dubbed themselves, on turning a corner would find a woman in a half-fainting state, who had been waylaid by the creature only a minute or two previously. It may be that the 'boys' were too much addicted to chaffing each other, to rattling their

sticks on the pavement, and to acting in too demonstrative a manner generally in the course of their perambulations, to render their services of any avail; but be that as it may, the outrages still went on as heretofore. Not that they occurred every night by any means; sometimes four or five nights would go by without anything being seen or heard of the creature; while, as before remarked, it seemed to have a rooted dislike to moonlight; then, for two or three nights together, its objectionable practices would be resumed. Westerfield was fairly at its wits' end with terror and rage.

So far the creature's pranks had seemed actuated by nothing worse than a spirit of mischief, such as might be supposed to be in accord with its ape-like attributes; but when one morning a rumour spread through the town that on the previous night Squire Dallison had not only been assailed in the usual way, but had, in addition, been robbed of his gold chronometer, his purse, and a valuable breast-pin, it was felt that matters were becoming serious indeed. Mr Dallison, who was returning home from a friend's house at the time, was so prostrated by the dastardly attack as to be unable to leave his room for a week to come. His first act was to offer a reward of twenty pounds for such information as should lead to the capture of his cowardly assailant.

A few nights later, three young men made sure they had secured the reward. They were returning together from a dancing party, and having goloshes over their shoes, they made scarcely any noise in walking. Turning a corner, they came full upon the creature, who was advancing from the opposite direction, and who instantly turned and fled. The young men were so startled that for a moment or two they lost their presence of mind, but five seconds later they were in full pursuit. They were all good runners, and the chase was an exciting one. The night was clear and starlit, the time was between eleven and twelve o'clock, and the streets were deserted. Presently the creature, with its pursuers some forty or fifty yards behind, emerged from the tangle of side streets among which the chase had begun, into the main street of the town, which led, almost in a direct line, to the abbey, some quarter of a mile away. It was apparently bent on escaping as it had escaped before, that is, by scaling the spiked railings of the churchyard and being lost among the wilderness of tombstones inside. The pursuers put on an extra spurt; but their quarry, as if aware of it, did the same. Suddenly, to the intense surprise of the young men, the creature turned sharply to the left and disappeared up a narrow covered way known as Cooper's Court. But this move was explained a moment or two later by the appearance of a couple of constables approaching from the opposite direction. Cooper's Court being a *cul-de-sac*, with houses on three sides of it, the young men now felt themselves as sure of capturing their prey as one may reasonably feel sure about anything. They shouted to the constables to hurry up, and rushed helter-skelter through the passage into the court. Then they paused to gather breath and look around. But what had become of the creature? Three pairs of keen eyes scanned every corner of the court,

but to no purpose. Then an exclamation broke from one of them; and the others, following the direction of his finger with their gaze, could just make out a dusky figure climbing ape-fashion up the iron water-spout which ran from the roof to the ground between two of the corner houses of the court. The creature was climbing slowly, hand over hand and foot over foot, and was already three parts of the way up. The young men were so struck that they could not utter a word. Half a minute later the creature had reached the roof of one of the houses; then it turned and relieved itself by giving vent to a gibbering derisive laugh, if laugh it could be called, and scrambling nimbly up the tiles of the roof, disappeared on the other side. By this the two constables had come up, and they, as a matter of course, took the direction of the affair into their own hands. But by the time they had succeeded in knocking up the people in one of the houses and in getting leave to go through into the garden at the back, the creature could easily have got away three or four times over.

A QUARTETTE OF THEATRICAL TRIUMPHS.

JOHN STUART MILL, in a very characteristic part of his writings, says: 'Success in life may be compared to what we see at every crossing in a large city. At the crossing, one man arrives just in time to pass to the other side before one or, it may be, more carriages block up the way; but another man equally as smart comes up a second later and has to wait till the roadway is cleared of the obstruction. The first of these men, it may be, has caught the train which shall carry him to the scene of some lucky business transaction; whilst the latter, through the delay, may have missed the best opportunity ever presented to him in life.' On such a simile it is quite possible for many minds to enlarge, or even criticise; but on the whole, Mill's illustration is a very true one, for it is the lesson of experience.

All professions fall within the circumference of Mill's illustration; but none lies so near the centre as the profession of an actor. The stage, as a rule, presents to its votaries more blanks than prizes; and yet the boards are always crowded with men and women eager to rival a Garrick or a Siddons. Whence arises this constant supply? The answer may be inferred from the following facts. The actor in the course of his profession meets his fellow-men face to face; the author may write, but the praise due to his merits comes to him second-hand. Not so with the actor, for *he* can feel the enthusiasm of applause, which is meted out to him by a delighted and admiring audience. Hence it is that so many from behind the footlights challenge the verdict of their fellows; and one chance of success is eagerly laid against a thousand chances of failure. Such is human nature.

Failure is a term of frequent occurrence in the annals of actors; and to those who know all the realities of stage-life, it is pitiful to see and to meet men who have clung to their 'profession' for a lifetime without making the least advancement. It is not our intention at present to speak

of these, but rather to recall some instances of great and marvellous success.

And first, there is Garrick, who made his début in Goodman's Field Theatre, London, in October 1741. A worse time could not have been chosen, for during the previous month an Act had been passed regulating stage-plays. The result of this Act was that many theatres were closed, and hundreds of men and women deprived of their occupation. Many plans, however, were tried for the purpose of evading the statute; and it was under the shelter of one of these subterfuges that Garrick commenced his professional career. On the 19th of October 1741, placards announced that a concert of vocal and instrumental music would be given in Goodman's Field Theatre. The music was to be divided into two parts, and between the parts a representation of *King Richard III.* was to be given by a gentleman who was to act for the first time. The statement was not altogether correct, for Garrick had once acted at Coventry. An average audience was gathered when the curtain rose. Garrick acted splendidly; and this was noted by two admirable actors and critics—Macklin and Smith. Next morning, the *Post* gave the young actor a glowing criticism, which tended to raise the public curiosity. Pope heard Garrick the second night, and pronounced him 'the first actor of the day.' Crowds flocked to Goodman's Field; the western places of amusement were neglected; and before the performance began, nobles, bishops, and legislators might have been seen struggling with each other for the empty seats. His first real venture was a success; he received thirty pounds a night, besides many benefits. But Garrick's triumphs do not end here. Pitt lauded him to the skies; and Murray, Halifax, Chesterfield, and Sandwich thought it an honour to count Garrick amongst the number of their friends. Fortune continued to smile upon him; and he continued acting till the year 1776. When he pronounced his 'Farewell,' and made his final bow from the stage of Drury Lane on the 10th of June, there was not a dry eye in the theatre. The whole audience re-echoed the word 'farewell' which had fallen from the gifted actor's lips; and in this way ended a true dramatic scene—a scene only dramatic in the sense that it was touchingly real.

Six months previous to Garrick's 'farewell,' there appeared on the same boards another aspirant—Sarah Siddons. Her part was that of Portia, in the *Merchant of Venice*; and she failed. Her delicate and fragile form clothed in a faded dress did not captivate the audience. Sarah was the protégée of Garrick, who was greatly disappointed at his apt pupil's discomfiture, for nervousness had entirely overpowered her. But Garrick did not despair; and another chance was given to the young actress. This time she was to appear as Lady Anne in *Richard III.*; but in the love-scene she forgot the directions given her in the morning, and Garrick's look was so terrible at a certain part in the play that she fainted. Failure was now her reward; Melpomene was not propitious.

Seven years passed; and by the end of this time the provinces were ringing with the fame of Sarah Siddons. The proprietors of Drury Lane, on the strength of this new popularity,

re-engaged her. Two weeks before the advertised date, Sarah was minus a voice and was again afflicted with her old nervousness. Isabella in *The Fatal Marriage* was her rôle, and when the curtain rose she soon displayed her powers. The sweet tones of her voice melted men into tears, and her tragic acting threw women into hysterics. She had at length triumphed, and the theatre-goers of London were at her feet. 'When I reached my own fireside,' she thus graphically writes, 'from that scene of reiterated shouts and applause, I was half dead; and my joy and thankfulness were of too solemn and overpowering a nature to admit of words, or even tears.'

The first night was a prelude of what followed. Fox and Sheridan might have been seen weeping in their seats; and when great men weep, what of those who are not accounted great? The engagement brought her fifteen hundred pounds. Next year she received two thousand pounds, and her two benefits each amounted to fourteen hundred and fifty pounds.

Her second visit to Edinburgh was a remarkable one; two thousand five hundred and fifty-seven applied for seats in a theatre which could only accommodate six hundred and fifty persons; and it was quite common for footmen to retake on the same night the places newly vacated by their masters. Audiences are fickle, for when Sarah Siddons first visited Modern Athens she was very coldly received; the only praise she got was from a man in the gallery, who called out to the actress at the end of one of her best parts, 'That's no sae bad.' Our readers may not be aware of the strange coincidence which marked the second visit. While the actress was representing the heroine (Isabella) where she calls out, 'My Biron! my Biron!' a lady was seized with hysterics and had to be removed. The unfortunate lady was Miss Gordon of Gight, afterwards the mother of Lord Byron.

Sarah Siddons took her leave of the public on the 29th of June 1812, in her great character of Lady Macbeth. She never acted better; and when the sleep-walking scene was finished, the audience demanded that the play should terminate, this being in those days the highest form of showing approval. Subsequently, she occasionally consented to reappear on the stage for charitable ends.

Another remarkable theatrical success was that of the boy Henry West Betty. Born of Irish parents in the year 1791 at Shrewsbury, he very early displayed histrionic powers. His parents wisely resolved to cultivate these latent possibilities; they took him first to hear Sarah Siddons, then acting at Dublin; thereafter, they entrusted him to the Dublin manager, and he in turn handed him to his prompter, Hough, who saw in the boy a something which he thought would yet do credit to his instructor. He therefore set about training Betty, who made his début at Belfast in the year 1803. The boy was only twelve years of age, yet he played the parts of Rollo, Douglas, Romeo, and Hamlet; and so popular did he become, that although it was the days of the United Irishmen, when it behoved every one in Belfast to be within doors by nine o'clock P.M., special permission was given to theatre-goers returning from Betty's performance.

From Belfast he crossed over to Scotland, and made his first appearance in Edinburgh. Jackson, his employer, left no plan untried to herald the youthful Roscius's fame. *Douglas* was the first play acted. Home, its author, was present, and declared he had never before seen it done so well. Glasgow received Betty with open arms; and so intense was the popular regard for him, that a journalist who ventured to criticise the 'idol' had to flee the city.

Macready, father of the great William, engaged Betty for his theatre in Birmingham; the sum guaranteed was ten pounds per night, plus his benefits. When the youthful actor made himself known to Macready, the latter was so disappointed that he wished to cancel the engagement. Betty was agreeable, and only asked that his expenses to Edinburgh might be paid; however, Macready repented, and promised to remunerate according to the success of the venture. The engagement proved remunerative, for Betty received on an average sixty pounds per night.

The proprietors of Drury Lane wished to engage him, but they were of opinion that fifty pounds per night was an exorbitant demand, and so refused to employ him. What Drury Lane would not do, Covent Garden did, and the speculation proved a literal mine of wealth. During the summer, Betty visited the provinces; at Liverpool he cleared fifteen hundred and twenty pounds, and so great was the demand for seats, that crowds of all sexes might have been seen standing at the box-office at seven o'clock in the morning!

In the winter, he returned to London; and his popularity was greater than ever. The street in which Covent Garden Theatre stands was lined with soldiers; and so great was the crowd, that Drury Lane, from the overflow of its neighbour, drew three hundred pounds, and this in the afternoon. The play was one of Voltaire's, and Betty had to appear as Achmet, the boy-slave. Mrs Inchbald was one of the audience, and in her eyes the actor made a sorry appearance; indeed, she regarded the whole affair as the offspring of a popular whim. But her criticism stood for little, because was not the popular fancy tickled? Public taste is very erratic, for while Betty was drawing crowds, Kemble and Mrs Siddons, Cooke and Mrs Gordon, were acting to empty benches. But the 'feeling' had never on any other occasion run so high; Bonaparte was entirely forgotten; and the aristocracy vied with each other in having the company of the Irish boy. Pitt on one occasion moved the adjournment of the House of Commons in order that the members might see Betty act in a certain part. When the actor suddenly took ill, bulletins were issued at intervals; and after he reached the stage of convalescence, Charles James Fox read by his bedside.

Three nights a week he was at Covent Garden, and on the off-nights he acted in Drury Lane. For his first three appearances he received fifty pounds; and for the remaining five, one hundred pounds, besides benefits, each of which was worth one thousand pounds. The total receipts for the twenty-eight nights at Covent Garden amounted to seventeen thousand two hundred and ten pounds; the average nightly drawing was six

hundred and fourteen pounds; the largest ever reached was seven hundred and fifty-two.

The following autumn saw Betty again in London; but the spell was broken. Worth once more became an element in shaping public opinion; and it was needed. A picture of that period represents Kemble and Betty riding on the same horse; the latter, of course, is first, and the following words are put into his mouth: 'I don't mean to affront you; but when two persons ride on a horse, one must ride behind.' When the craze passed away, Kemble resumed his rightful place in the public mind. The provinces clung to Betty for a time; but they, too, tired of novelty. He was soon neglected; and in consequence he quitted the stage, and at the age of fifteen enrolled himself as a student at Cambridge with a view to the Church. But his first love was too strong, and he returned to the stage, continuing to act with indifferent success until his death at Southport in the year 1824.

The last of the quartette is Edmund Kean. The miseries he endured in the early part of his professional career seem almost too great for any man to have weathered. He married rashly, and the step did not lighten his sorrows. In the midst of such adverse circumstances, Kean always believed he was a born genius, and destined to receive the adulation of his fellows. His first engagement was at a theatre in Teignmouth, but the pittance he received was barely sufficient to procure for himself, wife, and child the necessities of life. But while fulfilling this engagement, he attracted the attention of Dr Drury, who strongly recommended Kean to the proprietors of Drury Lane. One of their number was despatched to Teignmouth to witness Kean's acting and report upon the result. In consequence of this visit the ambitious actor was engaged for three years at nine pounds per week—a large sum for one who before could hardly keep starvation from his door. Kean repaired to London; but three months had to elapse before he could get into harness; during this time he had only eight pounds to keep himself and family. The privations they endured must have been terrible. For one hundred and thirty nights Drury Lane had been far below its average drawings, and the directors resolved to infuse new spirit into their company. They turned to Kean, and proposed that he should play the part of Richard III.; this Kean refused to do, saying, 'Shylock or nothing.' Expostulation was useless, and the directors submitted; success, they thought, was now hopeless.

On the 26th of January 1814 Kean made his first appearance at Drury Lane; for him it was an anxious time, for he was as yet an unknown man. His fellow-actors treated him with studied coolness, and until the morning of that eventful night no rehearsal was given him. When the rehearsal was finished, the general talk was regarding the certainty of Kean's failure, and even the manager, in petulant disgust, said it would never do. That day he resolved to dine! By some means his wife obtained for him steak and a pint of porter. To him this was indeed a feast. He felt conscious of his near triumph; and when he left home with a wig and a pair of black silk stockings in his hand, he said to his wife: 'My God, I shall go mad!' The

night was unfavourable, for the London streets were covered with two feet of snow. The play went on, and Kean displayed his great abilities. 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' was received with rounds of applause; and 'My principal!' was well rendered. But it was in the withering look of scorn with which he received the taunts of Gratiano that the audience saw the might of a genius. The motion of eye, lip, and muscle which Kean displayed had never been seen since the days of Garrick. And Fanny Kemble wrote that she would never forget his dying eyes in Richard III.

From that night Kean's triumph was complete. But his nature was very passionate; he could dine with Byron and the best of London society and thereafter be the chairman at a pugilistic supper. Excess told upon his frame; and when the time for bidding farewell to the stage came, he was unequal to it. He last acted as Othello to the Iago of his son Charles; and when he came to the words, 'Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!' he sank back into his son's arms, saying, 'I am dying; speak to the audience for me.' So ended this brilliant career. Its noonday was very bright and fair; but the clouds of sunset hid the beauty we would have desired to see.

LION-HUNTING IN ALGERIA.

NORTH AFRICA, the seat of the once mighty empire of Carthage—the resting-place of the Vandals and cradle of the Moors—remains a *terra incognita* to the rank and file of the great army of modern travellers. Quaint notions still prevail as to the fauna of that vast expanse of country stretching northward from the Sahara to the shores of the Mediterranean. It is to most people a fabulous region, teeming with gigantic forms of animal life, where elephants and lions, the rhinoceros and giraffe, are believed to abound. But most of this is pure fiction, founded to some small extent on ancient history. In the remote past, elephants seem to have flourished in Morocco. Strabo describes them as existing there; but the fact nowadays is, that throughout all Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, and the great belt of desert on the south, no trace of wild elephants is to be found. The rhinoceros and giraffe are likewise conspicuous by their absence. Nevertheless, public opinion exacts from every African traveller a thrilling recital of the way in which these mighty denizens of the wilderness are laid low.

At the risk of being regarded as prosaic, we will be truthful and eschew all fiction. We have encountered no wild elephants; the giraffe and rhinoceros are strangers to us, beyond seeing them in captivity. The larger beasts of prey met by us with anything like frequency were only hyenas and jackals. The hyena, so called by the Greeks from its swine-like appearance, is that bristly-maned, dog-like animal frequently seen in menageries, of which we once heard the showman say: 'This is the savage hyena; he prowls about graveyards at night; he

digs up the corpses and eats them alive.' As to the jackal, he is but a wild gregarious sort of dog. When seen at menageries, half mad with hunger, or stirred up by the long pole of the keeper into fits of impotent ferocity, growling and snarling at you and at each other over the scanty meal of bones flung to them—these noxious creatures may have produced in some of us the pleasant sensation of being terrified in perfect safety. No doubt, many a visitor has come away from such shows firmly convinced that hyenas and jackals are animals of the most dangerous description; ugly customers to meet outside their iron cages. Such notions will be quickly dispelled by a holiday tour through Algeria. Moors or Arabs mind them no more than we do rats. Hyenas and jackals are to the aborigines of North Africa mere vermin, and, as such, not objects of fear, but only of loathing and contempt. No Kabyle would demean himself by stalking the like. His long gun, scimitar, or yataghan is much too good for them. They are fit only for his cudgel, and with it he slays them indiscriminately whenever they cross his path. In the eyes of the European sportsman they soon become more contemptible even than the rat, for it is a plucky animal, and will sometimes turn upon its foe and die game; but the jackal never. Even when wounded, or with their young, their only resource is to sneak away ignominiously. In short, master jackal is an arrant coward and humbug, known as such by every child in Algeria. Nor can it be said of the more powerful hyena that he is much braver. We have seen a mere lad with a stick chase them by day; and even at night, when they pluck up courage and come forth from their hiding-places in large numbers to ply their loathsome task as scavengers of the desert, an encounter with them is deemed by no means formidable. Only the most verdant novice, freshly imported from Europe, would bring a breech-loader to bear upon them.

Where, then, in broad Algeria, may the brave son of Nimrod find game worthy of his trusted rifle and of his keen and practised eye, which have been the death of many a hare and wildfowl on the moors of merry England and Wales and bonnie Scotland? If he is *sans peur et sans reproche*, and, moreover, patient, much-enduring—and with plenty of time at his disposal—we can promise him the grandest and noblest sport of all. The king of beasts in his finest development is still to be found in North Africa. Among the mimosa bushes of yonder sandy plains he rears his majestic crest. Those rocky heights know his presence. From boulder to boulder he leaps with mighty bounds, and at night his awful voice re-echoes, rolling like thunder along the ground, and cowing all nature into silence. No other North African country contains so many lions as Algeria; but even there they are growing scarcer from year to year. Gérard, the first famous Algerian lion-killer, upwards of thirty years ago estimated them as only one hundred and twenty in number, and they have certainly not increased since. A successful lion-hunt has thus become one of the rarest of rare events. We have known many fashionable *chasses-au-lion* to be organised. No stranger of note who visits the country can well leave it without indulging in one or more of them. They are a picturesque but costly kind of

pageantry, always shown off in broad daylight, and forsooth on horseback. Small matter to these amateur sportsmen that lions habitually sleep by day in their almost inaccessible mountain fastnesses, and that the proximity of a large posse of men and horses intimidates them. The native guides know well what they are about. A lion-hunt has been ordered regardless of expense, and vast preparations are set on foot forthwith.

At dawn of the appointed day, a glittering cavalcade issues from the gates. It is hailed by the acclamation of a motley crowd of natives eager for backsheesh, whose expectations are abundantly gratified, owing to the best of humours engendered by the prospect of such noble sport. A truly magnificent display is made of horses, harness, and picturesque costumes. Breech-loading rifles, revolvers, spears, and yataghans reflect the bright rays of the morning sun; and thus, with much shouting, clanking, and jingling, the grand hunt proceeds. Much show, but little wool, for nothing ever comes of it. All day long, through field, sandy plain, and forest, the king of beasts is sought, and never found. Some spicy little bit of excitement or other has been pre-arranged by the guides, who feel that something must be done for the money. A turbaned Arab suddenly appears on the outskirts of a thicket, vowing that a lion is there. With much show of courage, the thicket is entered by the guides, leading what seems a forlorn-hope; and the uninitiated follow boldly. Every bush is searched, but no! His royal majesty is not at home. His lair is indeed pointed out, and declared to be still warm with unmistakable signs of recent occupancy—but that is about all; unless some one in the fervour of his enthusiasm should fancy that he has got sight of the lion, of his tawny mane, his tufted tail, or glittering eyes. In that case, a rifle, perhaps several, are discharged; and though no carcass is ever found, the ready-witted natives are at no loss to account for that: it has tumbled into some inaccessible ravine, and there it lies. Lies, indeed! And so the grand hunt comes to an end before nightfall. A triumphal return and sumptuous feast crown the glorious achievements of the day. In fact, the thing is a sham from beginning to end.

Real lion-hunts present widely different features. Free from all ostentatious display, they are spiced with much difficulty, exertion, and danger, and only on rare occasions unqualified success is reaped. Perhaps the most impressive of them is, when a whole tribe of Arabs in sheer self-defence issue forth to a man, determined to put an end to the ravagers of their flocks and herds or die in the attempt. It is indeed a question of life or death for the Arab. The amount of damage done to the herds of a tribe by a single family of lions in a month has been estimated at ten per cent., and remember, his herd is the Arab's *all*.

We were on a visit to one of the hill-tribes when such an emergency arose. Our hosts were poor, but to the best they could offer we were made heartily welcome. There is no lack of hospitality among the much-maligned Ishmaelites. Many an act of genuine kindness was shown us, and we should have been cravens indeed had we refused to aid our dusky friends in their hour of need. A lion family had taken up their abode in a cave difficult of access, among the hills close

by. Night after night dire havoc was wrought by these fierce marauders, and the time had come when a determined stand must be made to avert utter and irrevocable ruin. While the mountain Arab is by no means deficient in courage, perseverance, or physical strength, his weapons are of a most primitive kind. The long light flint-lock gun he handles bears no comparison with our modern arms of precision. Deprived of that comfortable sense of safety and self-assurance which the possession of a trusty breech-loader affords, the Arab endeavours to make up for it by an accumulation of numbers. It can scarcely be said, however, that the old proverb holds good on such occasions. Face to face with an angry North African lion, there is no safety in numbers; he has been known to rush upon hundreds of men.

A glorious morning it was among the hills; the sky all aglow with purple tints; and through the veil of mist which hung round the shoulder of the great granite heights far off, the summits were glistening like so many black diamonds bathed in sunbeams. Nature in its most rugged form lay before and around us. In the pure azure above, moon and stars were paling before the sun's return. We were surrounded by a motley crowd of Arabs in their picturesque costume. Young and old, all indeed capable of bearing arms had turned out; some few were handling their long, slender, smooth-bore guns, but by far the greater number had only spears and yataghans. The venerable chief beside us gave his orders briefly but distinctly. The exact location of the lion's cave was well known. At imminent peril of their lives, the scouts had found it, tracking its mighty denizens to their very lair. A large circle of spearmen was now formed, and the men received instructions to converge gradually towards a rocky ledge in front of the cave, whose entrance was faintly visible from the elevated position of our trysting-place. Presently the 'battue' commenced. Amid much shouting and clash of arms, the lines were drawn closer and closer, while all of us who had firearms made as straight as possible for the cave. Before we had got within range, an enormous male lion showed himself for an instant, shook his mane and vanished, to appear again when we had arrived at a distance of about a thousand yards.

A brisk but harmless fusilade was opened upon him by our Arab friends, and with a roar of defiance he withdrew once more into his stronghold; nor did he show himself again as we drew nearer and nearer, until we came to a halt about two hundred yards from the cave. The narrow ledge leading up to it was separated from the hillside on which we stood by a deep gorge more than forty feet wide. Above the ledge towered a precipitous height; and every cleft or gully in the rocky wall around bristled with the arms of our spearmen, barring escape in every direction, a complete circle of glittering steel. We looked carefully to our weapons, and, when all was ready for giving our royal foes a hot reception, loud shouts and clamour were raised to draw them forth; but all in vain. No lion showed as much as the tip of his nose. After brief consultation, one dauntless youth volunteered to creep along the ledge, close to the cave, collect a heap of dry brushwood and fire it, so as to smoke the lions out. The spearmen redoubled their clamour, and

we held our rifles in readiness for instant use, while anxiously watching the lad's progress. He pursued his perilous task with great courage. Creeping warily along the ledge, he never paused till he had gained the entrance of the cave. Quickly gathering together the dry brushwood near at hand, he soon raised a pile large enough to fill the entrance; and after firing it, he made his way back in safety, proud of his daring achievement, and warmly greeted by us all. A few moments and the fire blazed up, sending a column of smoke into the cave. The effect upon the inmates was instantaneous and startling. Two mighty roars mingled in one, and lion and lioness bounded forth one after the other. Our doings had goaded them into fury, and they were ready to do battle against all odds in defence of their young ones and their home. At first glimpse of them my companion and I fired; but the movements of the mighty beasts were so rapid and incessant that both of us missed. Our Arab friends were peppering away with their firelocks, but also to little or no purpose.

Suddenly, while the lioness charged down upon us along the ledge, her consort, with one mighty bound, cleared the gully, alighting in the very midst of the Arabs at its brink, and, for the moment, carrying all before him. We aimed carefully this time as the lioness sprang upon us, and both our bullets took effect; but it needed a second dose of lead out of our breech-loaders to stretch her lifeless at our feet. We then hastened to the assistance of our allies. What a scene met our eyes! Bleeding profusely from many wounds, but as yet far from disabled, the furious male was making sad havoc among the crowd. Cracking a skull there with one mighty sweep of his paw, and smashing a shoulder with another, he had already strewn the ground with slain and wounded, as we drew nigh to finish him with our rifles. At that very moment the spearmen were likewise upon him. While he was scattering his assailants in front, more and more men had drawn near from behind, and half-a-dozen lances were now plunged into him simultaneously, bearing him to the ground at last. The short but fierce struggle was over. Our terrible antagonist lay breathing his last, with his victims around him. He had killed five Arabs outright, and wounded fourteen more, among whom, to our great regret, was the young hero of the day, the same brave lad whose perilous exploit we had admired so much. A great broad gash from neck to shoulder will henceforth bear witness to his prowess in the eyes of the whole tribe.

We were publicly thanked by the chief for our modest share in the glory of the day, and he informed us later on that he deemed victory cheap at the price, considering that thirty or forty victims often fall in such encounters. Two young cubs, scarcely six months old, were found inside the cave half smothered by the smoke. We afterwards learnt that they had been sent to Algiers for sale, and, for all we know, they may now be inmates of some zoological garden or menagerie. Our work was accomplished. Probably for many years to come the tribe would be exempt from similar infliction. With high hearts we held our triumphal entry into the village, amid shouts of victory blended with death-wails, and with lamentations

over the many wounded. Our young hero of the fire met with his reward. They carried him along in triumph, and, as he lay on his roughly improvised couch, faint from loss of blood, but elated with the consciousness of his achievement, no mortal could have been happier than he. The whole tribe, young and old, paid grateful homage to him as he lay there, for 'honour to whom honour is due' remains the rule with these unsophisticated sons of the wilderness, and long may it continue so.

Such, then, has been our experience of lion-hunting in North Africa. Furnished with the best arms of precision, and well supported by the indomitable pluck and ripe experience of our dusky allies, we had found ourselves face to face with the king of beasts, and, after all, had but little right to boast of our encounter with him.

AN ATLANTIC EXPERIENCE.

A WILD night in mid-Atlantic, with a gale of wind, and the old *Octavia* staggering along before it, with her lower topsails and reefed foresail set. Now, slowly climbing up the hill, then a slight pause on the crest before she dived down into the dark abyss between the waves, and every now and again a great sea would catch her under the quarter, making her old timbers creak and groan as if they were in agony. Two hands at the wheel grinding away, hard up and hard down, trying to keep the old tub as straight as possible. Sometimes she would come up and a green sea would dash over the weather rail and across to leeward, making the deck-load strain and tug at its lashings as if it longed to get loose and join the foam-capped waves in their mad gambols.

It was the month of July, and the barque *Octavia*, from Quebec to Sunderland with timber, was reaping the full benefit of a westerly gale, which had sprung up the night before. There are much more comfortable places than the deck of a timber *droguer* in bad weather, and such was the opinion of the watch on deck, who were clustered round the windmill pump, just under the break of the poop, earnestly wishing for eight bells, when they would divest themselves of dripping oilskins and big sea-boots and enjoy the comforts of a dry fo'c'sle.

Just after a heavier sea than usual had broken over us, which made us hang on like grim death to the life-lines which were rigged across the deck, the second-mate sang out: 'Lay along here, lads, and get a lashing on these boats;' and we tumbled aft, growling as only sailors can. We carried three—one the gig in the davits on the port quarter; the two others on top of the deckhouse forward. We commenced putting the extra lashings on the quarter-boat first, and an awkward job it was, holding on with one hand, and passing the rope round the boat with the other, while the ship rolled about and staggered like a drunken man, which made it difficult for the best sailor to keep his feet, while every now and then a blinding spray would dash up into our faces and fly all over the poop, covering us all with sparkling drops of salt water, that glittered like diamonds whenever the sun, with a struggle, peeped through the heavy clouds that were flying over the skies. We finished the job, however,

without any mishap, except that Magnus the Shetlander dived head foremost into the dog-kennel, to the intense disgust of Flora, the big Newfoundland.

Having securely lashed the after-boat, we made our way forward to do the same to the others, accompanied by Flora, who never seemed to think a piece of work properly done unless executed under her own superintendence. We had got into the waist, when a warning shout of 'Look out there, boys!' from the wheel made us look up, to see a huge sea just rising on the weather-side and threatening to overwhelm us. A tremendous rush for the fore-rigging ensued, ropes and handspikes being dropped and abandoned to their fate. I, being a young sailor at the time, and not fully aware of the enormous power of an Atlantic wave, sprang on top of the hencoop just abaft the house. I had scarcely got up, when, with an awful crash, the sea broke over us, and I was swept away to leeward amidst the wreck of the hencoop, covered with water, and all afloat. I thought I was overboard, and remembered that we had just lashed the only boat that could have been lowered, although no boat could have lived in such a sea. The next thing I felt was something holding me by the legs; and when the water cleared away, I found myself half over the side, but my legs jammed by the last log of the deck cargo, which had got loose, the wedges being washed out, and the lee bulwark cut off by the deck. Waiting for the next weather-roll, I scrambled up as best I could, and made my way to the fore-rigging, in which the second-mate and the rest of the watch on deck had taken refuge. I was helped up by the men, who were very much surprised to see me, every one thinking I had been swept overboard, like poor Flora, who was seen struggling in the waves astern.

The old barque had broached to just as the sea topped, and her decks were left in a complete state of wreck, the deck cargo loose, and knocking about with every roll. The hencoop on which I had climbed had been carried overboard. The boats on top of the house had saved us the trouble of putting extra lashings on by disappearing altogether except a few splinters on the lee-side of the house. The lee bulwarks had been carried away, and the weather-side of the deckhouse stove in. The *Octavia*, as usual in timber ships, had no fore-castle in the bows, and the crew lived in the forward end of the deckhouse. The whole of the watch below had been washed out of their bunks, and were flying about the deck in their shirts, half awake, and adding not a little to the general confusion. The rest of the crew immediately set to work to put things to rights; while I, feeling my legs very painful, made my way to the galley, where the cook was at his wits' end, having lost all his pots and pans except one large kettle, which had been washed into the coal locker and escaped the fate of the others. In a few hours we were all to rights again, the cargo wedged off, a spare topsail nailed over the side of the house, and a life-line rigged along the lee gunwale. I was laid up for a day or two, as my legs were much bruised and swollen, but I was soon able to be about again. I have been in several scrapes at sea since that time; but I have never forgotten my first narrow escape from drowning.

GRANDMOTHER'S VALENTINE.

ST VALENTINE'S DAY dawned bright and fair,
And 'twas nine by the great hall clock
When we gathered about dear Granny's chair,
Awaiting the postman's knock.
It came at last with a rat-tat-tat
That resounded through the place,
And startled Grandmother where she sat
With a smile on her fair old face.

Then eager hands were outstretched to take
The missives that youth holds dear,
And her silver head gave a warning shake,
As she heard the laughter clear
That rose and fell, and broke out anew
'Mid questions of 'yours' and 'mine,'
Till one cried: 'Granny, a letter for you—
It must be a Valentine!'

Grandmother, knowing her young folks well,
Suspected some girlish plot,
But opened her letter, and from it fell
A spray of forget-me-not—
A slender spray, which had once been blue
As the tints of the summer sky,
But was faded now, and of palest hue,
Like a relic of days gone by.

Our eyes grew dim with a sudden mist
That melted in tender showers,
When our youngest and dearest stooped and kissed
The hand that fondled the flowers.
Grandmother smiled; but we saw the tears
On her soft gray lashes shine,
As she said: 'Nay, do not trouble, dears;
'Tis a precious Valentine.

'Some gentle fingers gathered this spray,
Under last summer's skies,
From a grave in a churchyard far away
Where my heart's best treasure lies.
It has been carefully pressed, you see,
And kept through the winter hours,
Then sent like a message of love to me,
This delicate spray of flowers.'

But Grandmother spent that day alone;
And we guessed the tender truth,
That the grave where the little flowers had grown
Held the husband of her youth.
For when we bade her a fond good-night,
With pathos that seemed divine
She laid 'neath the folds of her pillow white
That strange, sweet Valentine.

Ah well! She died when the spring was new,
And we laid her down to rest
Where fragile blossoms of tender blue
Would nestle above her breast:
But we knew her love had lived through grief,
In Memory's greenest spot,
When we found on her Bible's well-worn leaf
That spray of forget-me-not!

E. MATHESON.

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IN THE SUNNY SOUTH.

THERE was never a blue so dreamy as that sea at first sight from the hills. A patch of yellow corn made a clear edge; beyond its softly rounded line one saw the blue gap of the bay, the vision of the southern sea. It might have been close below; it might have been deep as the cliff in *King Lear*. All sense of depth was lost; only the smoothness told that the dreamy surface was very far below. Placid, mysterious, it faded away into the round bright distance.

One pities holiday travellers who cannot enjoy these things. 'The vision and the faculty divine'—the eyes to see and the heart that knows what to rejoice at—are better than a long purse of gold to the summer traveller. The question is not how far we can go, but how much we can appreciate.

On the Rhine steamers, one meets with a type of tourist who reads the guide-book while the realities are drifting past. The same sort of sightseer 'does' London, and stands before the great Raphael with his whole soul filled with wonder—not at the picture, but at the fact that such a matter of saints and paint could have cost the nation seventy thousand pounds. There is no more cultured observation in the man than in a pumpkin, and no emotion except at the sight of his hotel bill.

Another mistaken type of holiday-maker is the discontented one; he does not find anything to enjoy, but everything to grumble over. Of this class are the distressing folks who come home fagged with a dreary report: 'Never was in such a miserable place! No shops; no promenade; stones to walk on; nothing but the sea, and of course that is always the same, so there is not even anything to look at!' Truly, a barren picture. Let them take heart anew, and wander away to the Sunny South.

Down in that bright region the sea changes colour many times a day. All the popular names of its colouring are failures, when it is before one's eyes. This is not the sea we have heard

about as being glassy, or blue, or green, or azure, or leaden, or silvery. It is not glass; there is the appearance of depth, and its best stillness is infinite movement. If it be true to call it blue, the colour is a dream-blue, that belongs to no other thing in heaven or earth. If it be green, it is a hue that we never connect with the abstract word—a gray-glass green with a liquid quality of its own. If it be azure, it is not the plain reflection of the sky, but a most mysterious shadow of it. When it is leaden, there is no sense of weight, but confusion of movement; and, lastly, when the broad ocean-paths are called silvery, one forgets that the silver is made of living light.

There are some English watering-places where the parading crowds appear in different toilettes three or four times a day. It is no wonder that the great sea refuses to show its majestic colours to small folk so taken up with themselves. For the multitude who strive to outshine each other, the sea has no changes except from rough to smooth; but for those who have eyes and ears for greater things, it has a welcome like the face of a friend, and its voice is an eternal greeting. Come away to the Sunny South, and watch whether it is 'nothing but the sea, and always the same.'

Its morning light is that living silver, with vast cloud-shadows travelling over it. The clouds gather, and along the shore it is liquid lead—or so it may be said to be, in the poverty of human words. Look later at its face when the thunder-clouds have passed. Along the south they lie like a purple shroud, with here and there a pile of fiery cloud-light. In the darkest depth is the fragment of a rainbow. Under this pageant, ghostly ships stand poised on a still surface of gray melting into dreamy blue, blue into purple under the purple of the far-off storm-clouds, and purple again dissolving into brightness where those fiery towers ascend the sky.

Or call to mind what is roughly classed as green water, and examine it near. The rollers on a clear morning lift a dusky glass-green edge

full of bits of red and brown weed running upward. There is one moment of transparency against the light; then with a crash the wave falls over along the whole length, with white spray and infinite rushing of foam fountains. The shingle rattles like a giant's pebble store as it runs back while the next wave is rolling in.

Night comes; and the buffeting roar alternates with the rush of shingle. Black under the stars lies a vast space of darkness and mystery. The warning lights of a far-off shore, revolving patiently, flash like stars out of the sea. Faint glimmers vanishing mark the track of ships—the homeward course, now nearly done at last; or the outward way to the pathless oceans, to the wide, wide world. Lonely wanderers on the deep, their faint far lights are sparks of heroism in the night. By day one may see from the hills 'a painted ship upon a painted ocean;' but those slow meteors by night have somehow deeper meaning; they send back a message of the long leagues traversed, or remind us of the lights that go off into the darkness and never come back.

Then comes the day, dazzling with every ripple, and waning to afternoon, when the sea spreads to its far circle mysteriously, in that dream-blue that we saw above the corn.

The shore of this southern land is as wonderful as its ever-changing sea. The summer tourist abroad enters vast cathedrals, those medieval miracles of stone; perhaps their counterpart in nature is to be found in the German pine forests. In turn, he visits also castle and fortress, the strongest human strength could build against the tide of war centuries ago; their counterpart in nature must be the bastions of the shore against the waves.

Now the coast in this corner of the Sunny South is built right nobly. Tower beyond tower it guards the land for many a mile; tower beyond tower, not piled or embattled, but level as a wall at the top, and from sheer height impregnable. Gigantic buttresses strengthen their base. Grass and samphire streak their grayish whiteness. Seabirds circle round them by day; the magnificence of the stars looks down upon them by night; and when the moon steals out from above the topmost ridge of those cliff fortifications, all the vast wall whitens, and, like the poet's abbey, buttress and buttress alternately are carved of ebon and ivory.

Ascending by zigzags from the bay, the naturalist may find on the green top of these ramparts a bewildering wealth of flowers haunted by rarest butterflies. The student of things human sees the valleys with their yellow rivers of harvest, or the green and brown squares of cultured hillside; the wayside fields full of sheaves; the village labyrinth; the thatched barns and red roofs; and he finds himself in the midst of a peasantry where cottage comfort is the rule, and rags and poverty are unknown.

Hark to the horn! The carrier's cart is going—a stagecoach on a small scale; and we can ride inside or out, and feel what travelling was fifty years ago. Before mounting, let us step into the post-office, where the half-dozen letters are being sorted in the cottage back-parlour, and the post-girl waits with her satchel. We are off with the twanging of the horn. The driver belongs to the good old school—a fine young fellow, who

loves his horses and his work. He is no city toiler, whose life is a business of struggle and pay, but a son of the pure country, the rejoicing descendant of a long line of carriers who have done honour to the family trade. In the Norman church there is a stained window to his grandfather's memory, all ablaze with glorious colour, simply because 'he was a good man,' who in every sense of the word drove honestly by the straight road. In his case, certainly, the path of duty was the way to glory, as the Laureate sings so truly.

We whirl along past the unhedged fields, by roads that are mere horsepaths, with an open French appearance. Then come tangled hedges dashed with the scarlet berries of the 'wayfaring tree.' Our driver fairly pets his horses with the wrong end of his whip; and, like Barkis, he is 'willin'—to tell us all about them. They know Sunday, those intelligent animals, and are found lying on their straw beds, conscious that for the carrier's horses it is the morning of rest. Possibly the church bells tell them, or they may have a way of counting like Robinson Crusoe, for anything we know. After the hardest journey, the best one will prance when he is let loose, and want to play with his master like a dog. Would that the town horses knew these things—ay, and the town drivers!

After long journeying, here we are arrived among seaport streets. We dive into a curiosity-shop to get some souvenir. 'Thirty pound I was offered for them two little bronze horses,' says the shrewd trader; 'but no less than seventy is the price, for there's not the like of them in Europe. Four hundred year old, if they are a day; and brought over from the siege of Paris.' (One of them is Napoleon on horseback.) 'Four hundred year old!' After this shock, we beat a retreat, sighing that even here man is but human, and the tourist is his victim. So we get back in haste to the cliffs and the stars, the harvest-fields and the happy village, the bright shore, and the ever-changing sea.

Where is that shore, and where that sea? Why, it is no farther south than our own southern coast. The pageant of land and water, the banquet of delights, was in the very same Kentish corner where the unobservant folks found 'a miserable place with nothing but the sea and stones.' So, when we go for a holiday, let us take, not only our luggage, but our eyes and our hearts.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE might have been a certain elation of spirit produced by running away from home under other circumstances; but John was so dull that he seemed only half to realise what he was doing, and Will was so sore with yesterday's handlings that walking was difficult to him. John's spirits could fall but little lower, and Will had his inward fires to keep him going; but they were both solemn and silent.

'I'm beastly hungry, Will,' said John, when they had travelled some two miles. They had struck into the great southern road which led Londonwards, and Will was bent on pressing

onward, for the road was dangerous for the next three or four miles. Any moment might bring a passer-by who would recognise them, and set pursuit upon the track.

'All right,' Will answered; 'you shall have something directly.'

They sighted by-and-by a little wayside house where the legend 'Ginger beer sold here' was wafered to the window-panes; and a half-dozen bilious-looking buns of suspicious yellowness were exposed with a few nuts, a wooden measure with a body of unnecessary density, and some bottles of acidulated drops, which in long neglect and solitude had learned to stick to each other. There was a picture in the window, where people with lettered bladders floating from their lips were supposed to express the highest admiration for the qualities of the ginger beer. One gentleman held a bottle in both hands with a stream of the inspiring liquid bursting from it; and another gentleman balanced the escaped cork at the extreme tip of his nose; and all the other gentlemen and several ladies lifted their hands and looked supremely unaware of everything.

The boys entered the shop, and an old woman in spectacles and pattens came clattering out of the kitchen behind it.

'Now, then,' said the old woman, as if their entrance there were an aggression and she resented it bitterly, 'what do you want?'

'How much are those buns?' Will asked, constituting himself spokesman.

'They're a penny apiece,' said the old woman. 'Very cheap and light and wholesome.'

'There're very stale, by the look of 'em,' the boy answered. 'I'll give you twopence for three.'

'They're a deal more wholesome than if they were new,' said the old woman. 'You shall have three for twopence-ha'penny, deary.'

'Twopence,' said Master Gregg stolidly. 'I've got to make my money go as far as I can.' There was something so aged and severe in this, that the old woman capitulated at once, and set the buns upon the counter, where they sounded like *plaques* of wood.

'How much is the ginger beer a bottle?'

'A penny a bottle, my dear, and very brisk and strong.'

He ordered two bottles; and the old lady having found two heavy tumblers, opened the ginger beer, which concealed its fiery properties with great meekness. It had a faintly milky hue, and drank like rain-water very faintly spiced and sweetened. The yellow buns, in spite of their rich appearance, were dry and sawdusty; but the boys despatched them somehow, and went their way, with hunger and thirst appeased for the time being. But this first drain upon his resources set Master Gregg thinking. Fourpence a meal was not an extravagant price to pay; but fourpence a meal meant a shilling a day, and at that rate he could last for five days only. Running away from home was all very well in its way; but the three diurnal meals were something, after all. Yet he was running away from bitter injustice and cruelty, as well as from home, and he had made himself responsible for John, and had promised that nobody should hurt him any more. He would

keep his promise. Somehow, John should have enough to eat, and he would find and keep a shelter for him. A shelter? There was another consideration. What would it cost to get a bed? His financial possessions began to look wofully small.

Whatever other thoughts he had, he had no dream of turning back again. Let the future look as black as it might, he walked towards it, and when he thought of his companion, pity and justice stirred his heart and lent him new courage. The great majority of people are content to think of boys as if they were creatures who will come alive one of these days, and begin to think and feel at some undefined epoch of existence. But the boy is alive already, and is thinking and feeling with an intensity to which the average man is a stranger. He has so much and so many things to learn, that he is sure to forget with great rapidity, and so he seems inconsequent and fickle. He is a great deal better than the adult as a rule—more honest, more affectionate, more in earnest, more loyal, than he will ever be again. A man throwing up every chance in life to defend a trampled friend would be an heroic figure. A boy doing the same thing looks only rebellious and thoughtless. I warn the reader of this chronicle that I am going to treat this exodus from the land of injustice and oppression *au grand sérieux*.

The two wayfarers struck the great town in something like an hour and a half from the beginning of their journey, and in another hour had walked through it and come upon the country once more. Master Gregg began to feel easier in his mind with respect to the chances of pursuit, and had ceased to look behind him whenever a vehicle of any sort made itself audible in the rear. The day was pleasant enough, dry, and bright with a spring-tide brightness. The first signs of spring-tide life were gay in the hedgerows, and the birds were busy, and made the fields vocal with their pipings. The sun shone, though not too warmly, and there was a merry vagrant wind abroad.

'Will,' said John, putting an arm through his companion's, 'where are we going?'

'We'll go to London, Jack,' said Master Gregg with more cheerfulness than his thoughts warranted.—'There's a bell ringing. D'ye hear it? What does it say, Jack?'

They stood still to listen, and a bell rang in the distant town.

'Turn again, Whittington,' John suggested.

'No,' said Master Gregg; 'whatever else it says, it doesn't say that. "Go along both of you," perhaps. It must be ten o'clock by this time. You'd have had a hiding before now, if you'd gone to school, Jack. Old Macfarlane promised you one, didn't he? He doesn't often forget his promises, old Macfarlane doesn't.'

'I'm very glad I came,' John answered wistfully after a little pause.

'That's right,' said the protector.—'I say, Jack, now you're with me, and haven't got anything to be afraid of, nor anybody to bullyrag you, you'll get brighter every day. Won't you? You ain't so bright as you used to be, are you, Jack?'

'No,' said Jack submissively; 'I'm not bright a bit. Do you think I shall ever be?'

'I should think I did and all. It's only Uncle Bob and old Macfarlane. Don't you mind, Jack. You'll never see them any more. We'll get something to do in London. I wonder what we shall have to be? London's a port like Liverpool. We might go to sea, and be cabin boys. That would be jolly, wouldn't it? But then they wouldn't want two in the same ship, and that wouldn't do, unless you went as a stowaway. I could hear you tap when we were three days out, so that *that* would be all right, wouldn't it?'

Before John could reply to this, a tall trap rattled by, and pulled up in a cloud of April dust; and there in the trap sat Isaiah, staring backwards with a face of wooden astonishment.

'Hillo!' said Isaiah. 'What brings you two here?'

Master Gregg's first natural thought was that Isaiah had been despatched in pursuit, and his question hardly served to dissipate it.

'Where are you going to?' asked Isaiah. 'What brings you so far away from home, the pair of you?—It's my belief,' he added aloud, but with an inward tone, 'that they're running away, the pair of 'em.'

'So we are,' said William doggedly.

'You are, are you?' cried Isaiah. 'That's pretty cool, that is. And where do you suppose you're agoing to, the pair of you? And what do you suppose you're going to do when you get there?'

To this neither of the fugitives returned an answer. John looked timidly at his companion, as if appealing to him for support, and Master Gregg looked sullen defiance at Isaiah, but said nothing.

'Look here, you know,' said Isaiah, climbing out of the trap and throwing the reins over his arm. 'This won't work a bit, this won't. It won't act at all. I've no authority over you, you know; but I must take Master John back with me; that's what I've got to do.—Come along, Master John. Get into the trap.'

'We're not going back any more, either of us,' said the captain of the expedition, gathering stoutness. 'And if father and old Snelling and old Macfarlane took us back, we should run away again.'

'Oh!' returned Isaiah. 'That's settled, is it? Now, to begin with, what are you arunning away from? And—to go on with—what are you arunning to? What are you arunning away from, for a start?'

'Old Macfarlane licks him every day,' said the boy hotly. 'He can't do his lessons, and it's no use pretending that he can. And old Macfarlane licks him because he can't do them; and he licks me because I won't let him lick Jack.'

'Oh!' said Isaiah again. It was an odd-sounding slow exclamation, and seemed as if it had something friendly and understanding in it. If even the faintest flicker of a smile had gone with it, it might have been reassuring. 'You won't let him lick Jack, won't you? And how do you hinder that, young master?'

'I didn't let him yesterday, anyway,' the young master answered.—'Did I, Jack?'

'No,' said Jack gratefully. Isaiah looked from one to the other, and scratched his whiskerless cheek, with a wooden distortion of his face, but said nothing.

The bulldog boy went on with a sudden intense earnestness: 'You don't know what it's all about. I've heard my father say that if Jack doesn't get better, old Snelling will have the handling of his money; and it's my belief he don't want him to get better, and he pays old Macfarlane to bullyrag him, and keep him like he is, and make him worse.'

'Well, upon my sayso!' said Isaiah. 'You're begining to take away your elders' characters pretty early in life, you are! That's a very pretty idea to have hit on at your time of life.'

'Don't take me back, Isaiah,' John besought him feebly.

'Don't you be afraid, Jack,' cried his champion; 'nobody'll take you back again.'

'This is all rubbish, this is,' said Isaiah. 'You can't be let go wander all over the country like a pair o' babes in the wood.—Have you got any money?'—William nodded.—'How much?'

'Four-and-eightpence. I don't know whether Jack's got anything.' Jack, it appeared upon investigation, had threepence-halfpenny. 'I shall get something to do; I shan't let Jack want for anything.'

'You're a good plucked un, you are,' said Isaiah with the same unmoved visage. 'But it won't act, you know. You've got to go home again; that's what you've got to do, you know.'

Neither of the boys made any answer to this statement; and Isaiah, scratching his cheek and making hideous faces, looked at them in turn. He had felt it necessary to protest against the dreadful accusation young Gregg had hurled at his employer; but he was not so sure as he would have liked to feel that there was not a touch of truth in it. The boy himself, of course, had no idea of its full enormity. A responsible accuser would have hesitated, because he would have understood. The irresponsible boy-mind went straight to the mark simply because it could not understand the appalling nature of the truth. The more Isaiah looked at the ghastly suggestion, the more he was inclined to give it credence. It was horrible; but it was like Snelling, somehow.

'Look here!' he said after a while. 'I can't afford to stop a-idling and a-trifling here. If you young gentlemen'll get into my trap, I gives you my word—honour bright, mind you!—that I'll let you down again, and won't try to stop you, and won't try to take you back, and won't tell on you. But we'll talk it over while we go, and we'll see what is to be done. If you makes up your minds to go back, I'll take you back; and if you makes up your minds to go on, why, we must think of somewheres for you to go to. I can give you a six-mile lift, anyway.'

'Honour bright?' asked William, and Isaiah answering, 'Honour bright!' the two boys climbed into the trap and were driven onwards.

'Now, tell us all about it,' said Isaiah; 'tell us what started you. Let's see where we are.'

In response to this invitation, William told the story of yesterday's conflict and its results in his own mind. Isaiah made him take off his coat and waistcoat in a lonely part of the road, and himself unloosed the boy's neckerchief, and undid the collar and wristbands of his shirt, to seek ocular demonstration of the truth of the tale.

'Put 'em on again,' he said brusquely, after a mere glance at the lad's arms and shoulders—

'put 'em on again. Was it Macfarlane worked your face i' that way too? Um!'

After this, he stared straight before him in silence, occasionally clenching his fist and drawing his right arm back with a threatening gesture. He accompanied this gesture with a grunt of angry scorn, and was probably having it out with the schoolmaster in his own mind.

'Had any breakfast?' he asked suddenly, and being answered, grunted: 'Buns and ginger beer! What's buns and ginger beer? Can't live on buns and ginger beer. Buns and ginger beer, indeed!'

He pulled up at a wayside inn, and ordered eggs, bread and butter, and coffee, which the wanderers consumed with a relish, though they had still some mistrust of Isaiah's ultimate intentions. He in the meantime smoked a contemplative pipe, and drank a mug of ale standing at the kitchen fireplace, and scratching his bald head in an occasional frenzy whenever either of the boys looked at him.

When they had finished their meal, he paid and drove on again; and when they were a good twelve miles from his employer's house, he pulled up suddenly and announced that he had made up his mind. 'You see that lane?' he said, indicating a grass-grown thoroughfare to the right. 'You go down that lane for about two mile, or maybe two mile and a half, and you'll come to a village with a church in it. When you come to the church, you'll see a shop, shop opposite, a little shop, a greengrocer's. You ask there for Mrs Winter—that's my mother, and tell her Isaiah sent you. She'll take care of you, and I'll come over and see you on Saturday night. Out you get! It's more than my place is worth to be seen with you. I'll make it right for you at home; and there's half-a-crown apiece for you.'

'No, thank you,' said Master Gregg, taking up from John's unyielding palm the coin Isaiah had already thrust into it. 'We sha'n't go there. You're very kind, Isaiah; but you can't make it up at home, and you can't keep old Macfarlane from licking John. They don't want him to get bright again, and they won't let him if he goes back to em.'

'Burn my taters!' cried Isaiah in a high state of exasperation, 'I don't know what to do. You'll have to go home again; that's what you'll have to do, you know. Why, it's madness, letting two kids like you wander off into the wide, wide world. It can't be done, you know.'

'You promised you wouldn't try to stop us,' said William. 'You said, "Honour bright."—Isaiah half groaned, half grunted an assent.—'I shall never let John come to any harm.'

'What's the use of talkin'?' cried Isaiah. 'How can you keep him from harm?'

'I shall find some work to do,' replied William stoutly; 'and I shall do it.'

'Well, now,' said Isaiah, 'will you do this? Will you promise me, you'll buy an envelope and a queen's-head at the very first bookseller's shop you come to? Will you write on it Isaiah Winter, Post Office, Castle-Barfield? And will you send it to me if you get into any sort of trouble?'

'If you'll promise not to tell where we are.'

'Yes; I'll promise that,' said Isaiah, scratching

so savagely at his baldness that he tilted his hat into the roadway. John gravely handed it up to him, and he slammed it on with an air of utter desperation.—'Mind you, if ever you're caught, you don't say a word about having seen me. That's a bargain?'

'That's a bargain, Isaiah; and thank you very much.'

'Well, there's five shilling apiece for you, and the Lord help you!' said Isaiah. He threw four half-crown pieces into the dusty road and drove away without a backward glance.

'You're a man, you are,' he told himself; 'you're a pretty creetur to set up to live outside of a lunatic asylum, ain't you, letting two innocents like them go trapezing about the world?' He stared forlornly forward, and then responded angrily, as if the reproach had been addressed to him by some unjust and stupid person: 'What was a cove to do, Isaiah? Come now; what was a cove to do? Take 'em back again? Take him back?' he grunted in profound derision. 'As if anybody *but* a fool would ha' let 'em go like that.—Well, I can't help it. They'll precious soon get through what bit they've got, with their buns and ginger beer, and such-like notions of living, and then they'll write. They won't go far. They'll be all right; and if anybody had told me as Isaiah Winter was such a fool as he's turned out to be, I'd ha' knocked his head off his shoulders.'

(To be continued.)

THE 'DRUMMER' OF THE FAR WEST.

FROM my title your readers may imagine that I am going to write about performers on the bass or side drum; but I am not. To be a 'drummer' out here, no musical education is necessary, because, instead of playing with two sticks on the head of one of those instruments, the gentlemen who follow the occupation have to be able to play a most lively tune on the minds of the retail merchants throughout the country. In other words, a drummer is a commercial traveller, or, as he is often called, a 'knight of the grip,' because in his travels he is always accompanied by one or more grip-sacks, the American name for a valise or Gladstone bag. But between the English commercial traveller and the American drummer there is a wide gulf. In all respects the drummer belongs to the New World; and while you may meet commercial travellers in every country in the world, yet in America, and America only, do you find the drummer. The name is appropriate, too; for the competition in all branches of trade in the United States is so strong that it takes drumming indeed, and the ability to play a most popular tune of low prices and fine quality for the drummer to succeed.

Your commercial travellers in the Old World have a path of roses to walk in compared with the drummer in the Far West. Here he must be possessed of the patience of Job, the perseverance of the spider, the cunning of the fox, and the digestion of the ostrich, to say nothing of powers of endurance and uniformity of temper. He must have three subjects uppermost in his mind all the time, and never lose sight of

them for a moment : himself, his employer, and his customer. I place them in this position because in America, of all other places, you must look out for yourself first. I know it reads like a selfish creed, but it is none the less true, and to the drummer more essential, I think, than in other walks of life. He meets with but little sympathy usually either from his employers or customers. Employers in the United States, unlike those in the Old World, very rarely, if ever, pension an employee, the usual course of procedure being, when a man has passed beyond the age of usefulness, to replace him with another and younger man. Of course there are exceptions to this rule, but they are very few and far between.

Then his customers rarely appreciate the efforts of the drummer in his endeavour to please them by giving the best prices, finest qualities, and liberal discounts, but are all the time anxiously looking for some other who will give them a little better terms ; and when he is found, as too often he is in this country of strong competition, they transfer their trade without a single thought as to the consequences to the man who has looked out for their interests maybe for years.

But as I do not wish to tire your readers with a homily on the relations between the drummer, his employer and customer, I will proceed to give a description of the more interesting features of his life on the road, and of his pleasures and trials.

That old chorus, 'For we're a crew of jolly dogs,' &c., is specially applicable to the drummer, who has always on hand a stock of funny stories with which to interest his customer. Indeed, to be successful, you must always be jolly. No matter what happens, you must meet your acquaintances with a smile, and be 'hail fellow, well met' with all. An old story is told of a wholesale merchant who had never had any experience on the road, but who thought he knew all about the life. A young drummer had just returned from his first trip, and the smallness of his sales had aroused his employer's anger, when the following dialogue ensued :

Employer. Now, Mr Blank, let me give you a few hints as to how to sell goods. Let us suppose you are the salesman, and I the country customer. Let me see how you perform the part for which I am paying you. (With that the employer stands up, ready to meet his supposed unknown visitor, who approaches him with a confident smile on his features.)

Drummer. Good-morning, sir ; allow me (presenting his card) to introduce myself, the representative of Dash & Co., the great dry-goods house.—I have a very fine line of samples, which I hope you will allow me to show you.

Employer. Certainly, certainly. I am delighted to meet the representative of such a well-known firm. I shall be most happy to inspect your samples, and hope to buy a good bill of your stock.

Drummer. You think that's the way we are treated—do you, sir ? Well, let us change places, and I will undeceive you, and give you a sample of the welcome we receive from a majority of our customers. Now, sir, I will represent the country dealer ; you, the drummer.—(With these words he settled himself in his employer's chair, placed

his feet on the rosewood desk, and commenced to chew plug tobacco vigorously.)

Employer. Good-morning, sir, I represent—

Drummer. Oh, you do ! You are about the twentieth drummer that has been pestering me this morning.—I am stocked up fully in every line.—Now, take No for answer at once, and don't bother me any more, for I want to read my paper. I intend to buy a bull-dog, a spring-gun, and a man-trap, and see if I can't keep you nuisances out of here.—Good-morning.—(And without paying any attention to the look of astonishment on his employer's features, he quietly picked up a paper.)

To say the old gentleman was astonished is a mild way of putting it ; but as soon as he found his voice, he at once apologised to the drummer for his fault-finding.

Of course, this is an exaggeration of the actual treatment the drummer receives ; but in reality he often finds his country customers very sour, crabbed, and unapproachable. But such receptions must not ruffle his temper ; he must smile cordially, and proceed to captivate the boorish dealer, and often succeeds so well as to sell him a good bill of goods. The drummer must have a full repertoire of comical characters to mimic, and the better the mimicry, the more successful is the drummer usually in gaining the good-will of the retail dealer. He must arise from his bed at any and all hours of the night, no matter how cold or stormy, in order to catch a freight-train or the regular passenger. He must be able to eat a meal in fifteen minutes at the eating stations along the line of the road, no matter how tough the meat may be, or how hot the coffee and soup ; otherwise, the train will pull out of the station, and he will be left with the pleasant recollection that the representative of a competing house will reach the next town first and maybe take up all his customers. He must be ready to jump from a train as it enters the station, walk half a mile, sell a bill of goods, and reach the station again in time to take his seat before the train pulls out, and accomplish this feat while the engine is taking coal and water.

In the wintry blizzard he is often snowed-up, sometimes being caught between two stations without a house in sight, with the thermometer away below zero, and the wind blowing the snow against the railroad car at the rate of fifty miles an hour. Here he may have to stay for hours without any food ; and when his hunger compels him to seek the shelter of the nearest farmhouse, he wanders out into the storm, and runs a great risk of being found frozen to death at the bottom of a snowdrift when the summer's sun shall have melted the snow.

His experiences in the country hotels, sleeping in damp and often dirty sheets with his head resting on pillows apparently stuffed with brick-bats, can be described, but must be felt to be thoroughly appreciated. The fare, too, is often of a nature not the most appetising to a weak stomach. Every dish will taste alike, a greasy flavour predominating. The butter often is strong enough to walk alone, the meat so tough and the knives so dull that it is impossible to cut it ; the bread either burnt or doughy, and the milk sour.

Of course, this is not always the case ; for even

in the life of a drummer there are oases, green spots in his memory of a pleasant country hotel where the milk is sweet, the butter fresh, the bread white and nicely baked, and the meat tender and well cooked. But such home-like hotels are few and far between in the Far West; and whenever a drummer is so fortunate as to visit one, the news of the discovery is quickly imparted to all his colleagues who travel in that particular section.

Sundays on the road are none too enjoyable; more often than otherwise the drummer is compelled to spend the Sabbath in a little out-of-the-way town, where he is thrown entirely on his own resources to pass away the hours. Too often, there is only one church or chapel, and that presided over by a clergyman whose ability is just sufficient to send his congregation to sleep during the delivery of his sermon. During the winter months, when the snows blockade the railroad tracks, he is often compelled to stay in one small town, comprising an hotel, a few general stores, drug store, and maybe a drinking saloon or two, for days at a time, when connection with the outside world is entirely cut off, when he cannot see a newspaper for days, and when the only occupation which offers itself is to flirt with the waiter-girl at the hotel, or play draughts with the store-keeper, or draw poker with the saloon-keepers. Of all the dreary places in the winter, one of these small towns, built out on the broad prairie, as many of them are, without a sign of a tree or shrub within sight, is, I think, the dreariest even when the trains are running regularly; but when the snow blockades the road, then, indeed, is the unfortunate drummer deserving of sympathy. But regardless of all these trials and annoyances, the drummer is still the same jolly, fun-loving, reckless sort of fellow, always ready to lend a helping hand to any fellow-being in distress, never passing by a worthy object of charity without a bountiful donation, always ready to flirt with a pretty girl or attend a country-dance, but always with his weather-eye open for chances to sell goods, and looking out for the interests of himself, his firm, and his customers in such a manner as none but a real live American drummer can.

THE WESTERFIELD SCARE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

AFTER this, nothing was seen or heard of the man-ape for upwards of a week; but then came a piece of startling news indeed. Lady Dacre's mansion, which was situated about a mile and a half beyond the town boundary, had been broken into, and jewelry of the estimated value of three hundred pounds stolen therefrom. From the evidence, there seemed little or no doubt that the man-ape was the thief. It appeared that while the family were at dinner, Lady Dacre's dressing-room, which was on the second floor, had been entered from the window and the jewel-case rifled. The window in question overlooked a lawn at the back of the house. The wall outside was thickly covered with ivy, said to be nearly as old as the house itself, by the aid of which the thief had doubtless been enabled to reach the

window. A shaded lamp was burning in the room at the time. The robber, in order, no doubt, to secure himself from interruption, had locked the door which opened into the corridor, but had omitted to notice that the dressing-room was only divided from the bedroom by a *portière*. Through this *portière* Lady Dacre's maid presently appeared on the scene, just as the rascal was in the act of rifling the jewel-case. For a moment the two stood confronting each other, then, with something between a snarl and a cry, the man-ape took one stride towards the woman, who thereupon gave utterance to a loud scream and fainted. The only description she could afterwards give of him was that he was exactly like a huge monkey, except that he stood perfectly upright like a human being.

A detective came down from Scotland Yard, and after lingering about Dacre House and its neighbourhood for nearly a fortnight, was seen no more.

Then Lady Dacre, in her turn, offered a reward, this time of fifty pounds, for 'such information as would,' &c.; but most people were of opinion that nothing would come of it, even as nothing had come of Squire Dallison's offer. Meanwhile, the creature was at its pranks again, as audacious as ever. And yet, as people asked themselves in dismay, what was it possible to do under circumstances so unprecedented that not even the oldest inhabitant could remember the like of them! It seemed as if the whole town lay helpless and at the mercy of one daring and unscrupulous ruffian. It was a veritable reign of terror on a small scale. Nobody guessed, I least of all, how soon and by what a singular chain of events it was destined to be put an end to.

My father's house, which was the end one of a row of cottage tenements all alike in size and appearance, might be said to abut on the churchyard, seeing that it was only divided from the wall which enclosed the latter by a gravelled footway. From the back of our house, and following the line of the churchyard, ran the high wall which on that side shut in the old grammar-school and its playground. Along the base of the churchyard flowed the little river Ken. On the farther side, shrouded by its elms and beeches, stood the vicarage; while on the fourth side was the main entrance, with its beautiful wrought-iron gates, of which the townspeople were justly proud.

In the gable end of my father's cottage was a window which looked full on to the churchyard: it was the window of my bedroom. One night when my father had been more restless than usual and unable to sleep, I sat up with him for company's sake till between twelve and one in the morning. When at length I went to my room, I went without a light. It was too late to think of reading, and I could undress as well in the dark as not. I drew up the blind and stood looking out for a little while, not thinking much of what I was doing, but rather wondering how long a time it would be before I should be able to get back to Mr Ayscough and my beloved flowers. Then, all at once my eye was caught by something which broke up my waking dream in an instant, and brought me back to the place and the hour

with a sort of shock. What I saw was a faint yellow disc of light, evidently emanating from somewhere in the churchyard, and nearly in a line with my window. All the stories I had heard about the man-ape flashed at once across my mind. Motionless and almost breathless, I stood and watched the light, which shone with a faint steady glow, and never varied its position by as much as a hair'sbreadth. For a space of about two minutes I stood thus without taking my eyes off it; and then all at once it was gone, and though I stayed watching for upwards of an hour longer, I saw it no more.

I said no word to any one of what I had seen; but next morning I made a careful examination of that portion of the churchyard which was visible from the window of my room. Not the slightest sign or token did I find of any unhalloved midnight intruder. The grass grew rank and green on the quiet graves; tombstones of various shapes and sizes were scattered about as if they had been dropped at random, but nowhere was there anything which told of any recent living presence. There was an old right of way through the churchyard; but as it led to nowhere in particular but the river, it was but little used. At sundown the gates were locked, and remained so till morning.

My curiosity had been so much excited, that the next night found me on watch at my window again; but although I sat there in the dark and cold for upwards of two hours, my patience went unrewarded. The same thing happened next night. Then I made up my mind that should the third night prove as fruitless as the first and second had done, I would trouble myself no further in the matter. But that third night, and close upon the same hour, I beheld again the appearance which had so puzzled me before: a subdued, yellow light, or radiance, almost like a harvest moon seen through a haze, only not, perhaps, quite so large. It was as though the circular door of a furnace in which the fire had begun to burn low had been opened for a little while. As before, it was visible for a space of from two to three minutes, and then it disappeared as instantaneously as it had come. Then and there I made up my mind to solve the mystery, if it were possible for human ingenuity to do so.

The first step towards doing so was evidently to take up my watch in the churchyard itself. This, however, I was unable to do for some nights to come, in consequence of my father's illness having taken a turn for the worse which made it undesirable that I should be out of call. The first night it seemed safe for me to leave him, I let myself quietly out of the house about half-past ten o'clock. I had my father's key with me, which admitted me into the churchyard through one of the side-doors. I was warmly wrapped up in a dark overcoat, and wore on my head a close-fitting cap. I had provided myself with a stout cudgel, in view of any possible encounter at close quarters. Threading my way cautiously among the graves, I presently took up a position between two large family tombs which I had previously fixed upon. The point to be borne in mind was that I should be able to see while myself remaining unseen. A little way behind me was a tall headstone, but in

front there was nothing but a few lowly mounds between myself and the abbey. Crouching in the long grass, with my back supported by one of the tombs, I began my watch with such patience as I could summon to my aid. Now and then I raised myself cautiously and peered around. The night was starlit and windless, and around me reigned silence the most absolute. Eleven o'clock boomed forth in deep musical throbs from the abbey tower, and then, after what seemed to me a space as long as three or four ordinary hours, midnight struck. I had raised my head and shoulders above the level of the tombs for about the hundredth time, when suddenly my eyes were taken by a dark movable object faintly outlined by the starlight. Whatever it might be, it was advancing swiftly, and apparently in a direct line towards me. My head went down again in an instant; I drew closer to the tomb, and grasping my cudgel more tightly, kept my eyes fixed on the opening in front of me. Half-a-dozen seconds later a human form passed swiftly across my line of vision, which, in my crouching position, was bounded by the tomb on each side of me. The figure had come and gone almost while I had time to draw a breath—come and gone, too, without a sound, for not the faintest noise of footsteps had reached my ears—but that might perhaps be accounted for by the fact that it was walking on the grass. Hardly had it passed before I raised myself cautiously and peered the way it had gone; but already it had vanished—the darkness had swallowed it up as completely as if it had never been. I waited a full half-hour longer, but saw nothing more.

My watch next night proved of no avail; but the night following that I was more fortunate. I had taken up the same position as before; midnight had struck: a cold wind swept over the churchyard and moaned drearily among the tombs. I was chilled through and through. At length I said to myself: 'I will wait another quarter of an hour, but not a moment longer.' Scarcely had the words passed my lips when all at once I saw again the same faint disc of yellow light which I had seen twice already from my bedroom window. Now that I was closer to it, it shone out more clearly than before; still, I was utterly puzzled to know whence it emanated. It was not much raised above the level of the ground, and seemed as if it might proceed from the interior of some tomb, and yet I remembered no tomb just there which could have been made to serve such a purpose. I found that I had somewhat miscalculated its position, that is, assuming it to be in the same position as when I saw it first, which was a point I could not be quite sure about, and that from the place where I now was I could only obtain a side-view of it. If I wanted to find out more about it, I must get nearer to it, be the risk whatever it might.

I had seen nothing of the mysterious being who had come and gone so strangely two nights before, but might he not appear at any moment? It was needful to proceed with the utmost caution. Slowly and carefully I began to creep forward on my hands and knees through the wet grass in the direction of the light. About half-way towards the point for which I was making was a tall headstone; behind this I paused for a moment while I took a careful look round. I was on the

point of setting out again when, casting my eyes in the direction where the light had been but an instant before, I found it gone. Not the faintest glimmer of it was to be seen. I waited where I was for half an hour longer, but nothing more came to pass.

I could not sleep till long after I got to bed, but by next morning I had worked out a certain theory in my mind which I determined to put to the test at the earliest possible moment. Accordingly, in the course of the forenoon, taking my tape with me, I made my way to that part of the churchyard where I had kept watch the night before. Not knowing what unseen eyes might be taking note of my movements, I proceeded to measure a space here and there with my tape, as though I were selecting a site for a grave; in reality I was deciding on a spot for my next hiding-place. Just thereabouts, as it happened, there were no large family tombs behind which might be found a convenient shelter, nothing, in fact, but a few scattered headstones and row after row of nameless graves. Such as the situation was, I must make the best of it.

In the course of the day I went into the town, and from the tradesman who had the care of the abbey clock I borrowed a powerful opera-glass, and from an undertaker a mourner's cloak long enough to shroud me from head to foot. I was now ready for my enterprise. The evening, however, brought wind and rain, which before midnight increased to a storm, and the next night proved nearly as bad: it would have been madness to take up my watch under such circumstances. The third night was fair and clear, and at half-past ten I let myself out of the house, carrying with me not only my 'inky cloak,' but a couple of old overcoats to spread on the ground. I made my way stealthily to the particular headstone I had marked out beforehand. It was a very old stone which had settled down a little on one side, so that it now stood somewhat askant, while the mound whose inmate it was intended to commemorate had by this time sunk nearly to the original level of the churchyard. Here I spread my overcoats, and wrapping my cloak about me, I lay down upon them. Any passer-by who might have observed me by that dim light would merely have taken me for one mound more among the scores that surrounded me.

Eleven o'clock—midnight. Ten minutes later the mysterious light shone suddenly out, clear and steady; but this time I was not more than twenty yards away and in a direct line with it. My theory was verified. The light proceeded from a small circular grated opening in the outer wall of the abbey about a couple of feet above the level of the ground outside. The aperture in question was an air-hole, or it might even be called an unglazed window, to the family vault of the Deromes of Standish, one of our great county families. This vault, like three or four others pertaining to families of distinction, had originally been formed by enclosing a portion of the crypt, which at one time had extended under nearly the whole of the abbey. Access could be had from the churchyard to any of these vaults by means of a low-browed, iron-studded door, below the level, and reached by a descent of three or four steps. But whenever a funeral took place, a portion of the flooring of the abbey

immediately over the required vault was removed, and the body lowered to its last resting-place below.

I now found the value of my opera-glass. By its aid, a certain section of the interior of the vault was clearly visible to me. On a ledge behind the grating a lamp was burning. Close by stood a man with one of the most unprepossessing and evil-looking faces it has ever been my lot to behold. He was close-shaven, and his short black hair came down to a point in the middle of his forehead. When he lifted his head for a moment as if to observe the flame of the lamp, I was able to see that he had a cast in his right eye, and the healed scar of some old wound or gash in his upper lip. He wore a sort of loose pea-jacket, which just now was unbuttoned, exposing a portion of his chest, which was thickly matted with long brown, coarse hair, as it might be the chest of some wild animal. A thrill ran through me from head to foot. I could no longer doubt that I was on the track of the mystery which had baffled all Westerfield for three months past. What ought I to do? What step ought I to take next? If I could but be the means of bringing this scoundrel to justice! If I could but succeed in securing the reward!

In my excitement I had risen to my knees, and was still gazing with the glass to my eyes, when a shrill cry rent the air close behind me. I was on my feet in an instant. I had heard no one approach, but not more than a yard or two away stood a woman; evidently the long grass had deadened the sound of her footsteps. I was nearly as much startled as she was, but there was no time for thinking or wondering. Scarcely had her cry shattered the silence, before the light in the vault disappeared, and scarcely was I on my feet before the woman had screamed out: 'Bill, we are betrayed!' Then was I aware of a second figure springing towards me over the grass, which I knew could be none other than the man I had seen in the vault, and I felt that I was on the point of being attacked; but my cudgel was on the ground and I was entangled in the long cloak, and before I had time to do more than fling up one arm instinctively, there came a crashing blow on my head which felled me like a senseless log.

When I came to myself I was in darkness. My head ached as it had never ached before, and my dazed senses refused for some time to tell me more than that I was alive and in great pain. Little by little, however, the evening's incidents began to recall themselves brokenly to my memory, so that, after a time, I was able to piece them into a consecutive whole up to the point of my having been struck on the head and rendered unconscious. But what had befallen me after that? Where was I now? By-and-by I contrived to sit up and stare around. Everywhere darkness the most profound. I was chilled to the marrow and ached in every limb. The atmosphere I breathed was cold, but not with the fresh frosty coldness of the open air; it was the coldness of a place long shut up, which no sunlight ever penetrated; there was about it, too, a damp earthy flavour which could almost be tasted. Then all at once it flashed across me that the place in which I was could

be none other than the vault of the Deromes. Scarcely had this conclusion forced itself on me when the abbey clock struck three, the sound reaching me with a sort of muffled clang from somewhere overhead. I had lain there unconscious since a little after midnight.

Presently I contrived to get upon my feet, although my head felt strangely dizzy and I seemed to have no proper control over my limbs. Once before, when a schoolboy, I had been in the Derome vault with my father, and I had a clear recollection of what it was like; for it was a part of my father's duties to visit each of the vaults, as a matter of form, two or three times a year. I knew that, ranged around me on their black marble slabs, lay some score or more of dead and gone Deromes in their leaden coffins cased with oak. But it was a thought that had no terrors for me. All my life I had been too familiar with death and the grave to feel myself thrilled by any touch of the supernatural or any ghostly fears, even now when I knew in what place I was at that hour and alone.

With groping outstretched arms I went forward slowly, step by step, till presently my fingers encountered a cold smooth substance, which I at once guessed to be one of the slabs already mentioned. All I had to do now in order to find the door was to keep on feeling my way forward, slab by slab, till I should reach it. My only fear was that I should find it locked, in which case I should be a prisoner, at the very least, for several hours to come. Happily, I found it merely shut to, and was able to open it without difficulty. Never in my life had I felt more thankful than when I stumbled out of the last home of the defunct Deromes and found myself once more under the free sweet air of heaven.

By six o'clock my story had been told to the superintendent of police, who was called out of his bed on purpose to hear it. Thanks to the description I was able to give of the fellow, both he and his wife were arrested about a week later at Liverpool. The man proved to be a very notorious character, who was 'wanted' for certain other offences against the law, perpetrated in the south of England. To him punishment was meted out in due course; but the woman was acquitted, and it is chiefly from her after-confession that I am enabled to supplement my own narrative with the following particulars.

The woman in question was a native of Westerfield, and had at one time been employed as housemaid at Standish, the seat of the Derome family. She had afterwards gone to London, where she had fallen in love with and married a worthless scamp, who in days gone by had been a gymnast in a circus, but had latterly taken to more dubious modes of earning a livelihood. At length the hue-and-cry after him became so hot that he determined to go into close hiding for some time to come. In this emergency his wife bethought herself of the vault of the Deromes in her native town as a likely spot where her husband could lie by till the heat of pursuit should have somewhat slackened. Her residence at Standish had made her acquainted with the existence of the vault, and she was aware that the big old-fashioned key always hung on a certain nail in the armoury. Having been somewhat of a

favourite with the housekeeper at Standish, it seemed only natural, when she returned to Westerfield—where she gave herself out as a widow—that she should go up to the Hall to pay her respects to that personage. The opportunity was utilised by her for purloining the key, which a second visit, made on some pretext or other a day or two later, enabled her to replace on its nail before it had been missed.

By this time she had engaged humble lodgings in the town, and her husband had taken up his quarters in the vault, where he had a sufficiency of blankets and warm clothing, not to speak of a frequently replenished brandy flask, to keep him from suffering from the chills and damps of his strange domicile. His food, which was bought in small quantities at different shops in the town, so as to avoid suspicion, was conveyed to him by his wife at night; and as he knew exactly when to expect her, he placed his lamp in front of the grating as a guide to her through the intricacies of the churchyard, the light being shut in at other times by an extemporised curtain. Both the man and his wife were aware that that side of the churchyard was overlooked by one window only, but as they never saw a light in it, they had come to the conclusion that the room to which it pertained was unoccupied. But not every night did the lamp shine through the grating. Sometimes the man met his wife at the low wall by the river, where there were no railings, and where easy access could be had to the churchyard by day or night. It was only when he was too lazy, or otherwise disinclined for stirring out, that the signal was shown; whereby, as we have seen, came his own undoing.

It would seem that in the course of the man's professional career he had more than once personated an ape in a pantomime, and that he still retained the tight-fitting hairy dress and mask used by him for that purpose. Tired, and no wonder, of his long days and nights in the company of the dead and gone Deromes, it had seemed no more than a pleasant relaxation to the fellow to scare and terrify the good people of Westerfield as they had never been terrified before and never have been since. When funds began to run low, an easy mode of replenishing them was found in the contents of Lady Dacre's jewel case. Doubtless means and opportunities were not wanting for disposing of the diamonds and other gems which came into his possession on that occasion; in any case, none of them were found on him at the time of his arrest.

A few last words and I shall have done. Not only were the rewards offered by Squire Dallison and Lady Dacre paid over to me, but the townspeople subscribed among themselves a further sum on my behalf, so that, altogether, I was enabled to put away more than a hundred pounds into the savings-bank. Three months later I married. My father lived for some years longer, and although before his death he came to understand that he was the last member of the Holditch family who was likely to fill the post of sexton to the old abbey church, he was never quite reconciled to the necessity, neither could he be made to understand why his only son should have so far degenerated as not to feel a pride in following in the footsteps of so many of his progenitors.

As long as he lived, Mr Ayscough remained my true friend, and to him I owe much of the prosperity with which my later years have happily been crowned.

A BLIND STREET-MERCHANT.

AMONG the many curious acquaintances with whom my world-wanderings have brought me into contact, not the least interesting is this blind street-merchant; a man whose last glimpse of light and life was forty years ago, and to whose eyes the brightest day does not differ from the darkest night. The casual passer-by would doubtless write down my friend in his mental category as a 'poor blind beggar;' but the latter would repudiate such a description of himself with indignant scorn, for he reasonably maintains that he is as much a 'merchant' as any peripatetic dealer, perambulating barrowman, or other 'sighted' persons, as he terms them, who obtain a living by selling goods in the street. For ten long years, in winter and summer, he has stationed himself against a wall in a certain suburb of London, and with his box of humble wares in front of him, awaited with saint-like patience the tardy advent of his infrequent customers. Taking advantage of my position as one of these, I one day entered into friendly conversation with him, and was agreeably surprised at his knowledge of matters, political and otherwise, that were going on around him, and as well at his general cheerfulness.

It was a welcome break in the monotony of the tedious day, he informed me, when a customer exchanged a few words with him, a luxury he enjoyed but seldom: his chief gossips and informants being the kindly policemen on the beat. He was very eloquent upon policemen and their kindness to him, and told me with a gratified smile how he was indebted to the influence of some good-hearted officer high in grade for the remission of his hawk's license, a matter of no small moment to him.

Yet, sad to relate, even this poor helpless fellow found an enemy; for some peculiarly heartless specimen of humanity had complained several times to the officials of the station in whose vicinity my blind merchant took his purgatorial stand, that 'such a nuisance' should be permitted to come betwixt the wind and his nobility. His inhuman complaints, however, had no effect; and so in winter and summer, in scorching heat and bitter cold, the sightless vendor of lights and laces, after his two-mile-walk from home, is to be seen at 'business' from nine in the morning until about eight in the evening all the year round, except Sundays, only leaving his post, or rather his wall, for a little needful refreshment.

But to counterbalance such unaccountable enmity, my friend assured me that he was happy in the possession of a goodly number of friends and many regular customers. Among the latter were two benevolent creatures, who to their regularity added a certain amount of eccentricity. For months they had been constant contributors to the humble store of the blind merchant—whose weather-beaten visage lighted up with a pleased expression as he spoke of them—but had always passed their donations in absolute silence, never

speaking a word. 'No, sir,' said my informant in answer to my interrogations; 'neither of them, singular to say, has ever exchanged a word with me; but I know them by the manner in which they put the money into my hand! A gentleman used to give me twopence every day. One week I missed him until the Saturday came round, and then I felt the same kindly pressure of the hand and found a shilling in my palm. Ever since then this kind gentleman has given me the same amount every Saturday afternoon.'

'My other best friend is a good soul who gives me threepence every Saturday, like the former, as sure as the week comes round, God bless him! About a year ago I missed him for six weeks—you see I have nothing to do but keep account of such matters—and I thought I had lost him; but no; up he came one Saturday and put eighteenpence into my hand—that's six threes, you know—and away he went without a word!—But that's not all,' he continued. 'Some time back I really thought I had lost him for good; and one day, after he had been away for ten weeks, I was bemoaning the lack of business, and wondering how I should manage at home, when up comes my lost gentleman and gives me half-a-crown—ten threepences, you see—just as though he had made a vow to give me threepence a week come what would! Being curious to know what sort of people in appearance my two good Samaritans were, I inquired of my friend the policeman, who described the "shilling" one as like a City merchant, and the "threepenny" one as a superior sort of working-man.'

Many subsequent conversations quite disabused me of my previous idea—which I presume I hold with most people—that the world is a blank to the blind, and that with the loss of sight all the pleasures of life are blotted out. Having missed my blind friend from his accustomed place one Bank Holiday, I inquired the reason, and he informed me that he had been out into the country—a real blind man's holiday! 'I went with my daughter to Abbey Wood yesterday, sir,' were his words; 'and a capital day I had, and thoroughly enjoyed myself. You see, my daughter describes the scene to me, and I can remember things—I was nearly twenty when I became blind—so that I have the picture in my mind at once, and can see the trees and the fields, the cows, the streams, the hedges, and the woods, just as well as you, sir. Then I went nutting, too; I felt the leaves and the branches, and picked the nuts almost like a "sighted" person. Then my girl would pick a flower and tell me the colour while I felt the shape, and it was pictured to my mind directly.—O yes, thank God! I have many advantages over a person born blind.—And yet,' he continued thoughtfully, 'it is a debatable question how the balance lies. You see, as I said, I only require a description of any object or scene to bring it to my mind; but, on the other hand, although a person who is born blind is debarred from this undoubted pleasure, what his eye has never seen his heart cannot grieve for!'

'But I suppose the born blind can realise to some extent by description what they lose through not having their sight?' I inquired.

'Not a bit, sir,' replied my friend. 'In the school to which I first went after becoming blind, we who had lost our sight by accident could not

make the slightest impression upon the minds of those who had been blind from birth. We would sit round the fire enjoying ourselves in our own way, singing and telling stories; but no matter how vivid our descriptions of scenes and objects might be, they had absolutely no meaning whatever for those born without sight.—I remember one young fellow—although it is difficult for a person blessed with the power of vision to credit such a speech—who was very clever at music, the organ and such instruments, and who declared he would not give his little finger for the best eyesight you could give him! Another, after listening attentively to all we could urge in favour of man's greatest blessing, said with a light laugh: "Well, I don't care what you say about seeing: give me a good dinner before all your sight!" While a third actually doubted if he could find his way about the town as well with eyes as he could without, and felt sure he should be knocking his head against every corner.'

These strange utterances astound one at first hearing; but it is easy to understand that those born without sight can have no conception of the appearance of objects and scenes, and that it is impossible to give them any idea by the most striking description; yet none the less it grates strangely to hear a good dinner considered a desirable equivalent for the most precious gift of vision.

During one of my conversations I ventured to hint that the absence of amusements and reading must make life exceedingly dull for the blind; but received in reply the information that there are many recreations for the sightless which the outer world knows not of. One almost inconceivable game is 'blind' chess, in which each player feels his own and his antagonist's men, and so notes the progress of the game, each piece having a peg to fix in the board. To mark the difference between the opposing hosts, one set has a top-knot to each piece, the other being smooth. An even more startling kind of game for blind people to play is skittles! This, however, is generally played with a 'sighted' person to assist, and when there is no such individual at hand—he is generally the porter or gardener of the establishment—a sharp lad is chosen, whose duty it is to count the fallen pins and stick them up again. A paper on the various pastimes of the blind, how they play at 'touch' and at other almost incredible games, how they write and generally amuse themselves, could be made very interesting, but would unduly prolong this little sketch.

Among our countless benevolent enterprises, one of the most useful and truly beneficent is assuredly the Society which has for its object the supplying of embossed reading-books for the blind. This merciful and Christian institution sends out its well-laden emissaries—and a load of bulky 'blind' books is no joke—to distribute and exchange its literary treasures among its poor dark *clientèle*; and it does not require a great effort of the imagination to picture the pleasure with which the advent of this itinerant library is hailed. In this way my informant assured me that he had read the *History of England* from its earliest times to those of the Georges—with the exception of two volumes which he had failed to obtain—besides many other works, essays, &c. Reading, he said, was a great solace to him at all times;

and many a sleepless hour has he whiled away at night by reading in bed with his open volume upon his breast.

The rapidity with which he read astonished me; the volume was Proctor's *Lectures on the Sun*; and after getting a fair start with a sentence or two, he proceeded quite as quickly as an ordinary schoolboy would read a given exercise, reading from left to right, and following on with the next line from right to left, and so on backwards and forwards in unbroken continuity.

It would be difficult to conceive, one would think, of an advantage which a blind person has over one gifted with sight; but my humble friend claimed such a one, laughingly telling me he could read in bed in the dark; and even on very cold nights could place his book under the bed-clothes, and in luxurious comfort pursue his nocturnal studies to his heart's content.

With one more instance of a blind man's superiority to a 'sighted' person under certain circumstances, I will conclude. One dark foggy night, when, as they say, you can scarcely see your hand before you, and there is one of those filthy opaque mists of which London is supposed to have the monopoly, my friend was wending his way home after his day's business was over. Of course fog or no fog did not matter to one to whom it was always night, and so, knowing every step of the road, he was making the best of his way—he walked at a good pace—when a belated passenger whom he overtook requested to be directed to a certain street.

'Take my arm, friend,' said the blind man; 'I am going that way.' And the two walked steadily along, the lost traveller not for a moment suspecting his guide's affliction, and taking the frequent taps of his stick on the pavement as only a reasonable precaution on such a night. It was not until they arrived at the required corner that the surprised individual discovered that his friendly companion was blind; and he finished up his expressions of astonishment at the singular circumstance with a hearty burst of laughter, in which my old friend was not slow to join. And assuredly such an instance, not of 'the blind leading the blind,' but of the sightless conducting the seeing through the dangers and difficulties of a London fog, must be unique even among the wonderful things that have been achieved by those afflicted with the loss of sight.

--- EVENING IN AN OLD CITY.

Down the long street of the gray old city on either side the soldiers stand, with drooping heads and arms reversed. Up the road comes the tramp of many feet, moving in slow unison, following the flag-draped bier. Under the old gateway of the city they pass silently up the hill towards the cemetery. The sky is gray and still, and the trees hang heavily over the road, their bright autumn hues showing neutral against the scarlet uniforms. The *Dead March* breaks out wild and mournful as the procession winds slowly out of sight, leaving the long street desolate and empty, the boom of the drum coming heavily down the wind. We pass under the ancient archway, through the quiet close, with avenue of trees and

restless rooks, past the long Minster, away into the quiet water-meadows, where the river winds level and clear down the valley. All round slope the naked downs, gray against the valley's marshy green, and the reaches of pale-blue sky above. No sign of death or any token, only clear-flowing river, and round about the mighty hills, and freshness of light and colour, and springing of the vigorous grass. Suddenly, a rattling crash like thunder comes from the cemetery on the hill, and another and another, as the soldier's requiem is sung by powder from a hundred rifles. Wreaths of smoke float lightly, slowly, down the valley, and stillness falls again, broken only by the rooks in the old elms along the river's brink, who flap uneasily among the branches in the fading light.

Up on the downs, in the steely gray of the autumn evening, the wind sings through the low bare hedges and the long rank grass on the steep banks. The feathery tops have a slight purple tinge as they are bent and blent in the breeze, and the shorter grass below is russet yellow. The scattered thorn-bushes have a rich red and yellow bloom on their small leaves, suggesting the presence of many a varied hue only to be discovered by close inspection. This suggestion of colour is part of the peculiar charm of autumn. In summer the local colour is so dependent on the sunlight, changing as the sky changes, that an overcast day will take away half the beauty, and leave the foliage masses of dull green. But in the cloudy days of autumn, the many-hued bravery of the landscape stands out rich against the gray clouds, and when the sun shines down with dreamy golden haze, turns it into such magical beauty that we loose our detaining hold on the fleeting robes of Summer, and turn right joyously to welcome her generous sister.

Sharp and dark against the sunset sky stands the pine-topped hill in front of us, with its ancient fosse and earthwork, where the old Romans made their camp many a long century ago. Between their time and ours, the Lord Protector Cromwell kept there his watch and ward over the old city and its approaches for leagues around. The mounds are quiet and deserted now, with long rank grass where once the camp-fires blazed, amid the talk of the stern old Puritans as they tethered their horses and set their watch. What did old Oliver think about, as he leant his broad back against the rough pine-stem, while the sunset gleamed red through the trees behind him, glittering on the windows of the Minster far below? Did no compunction touch him, as he looked on the long lines of pinnacle and roof, and the darkened western end, where his men had shattered the glass of the great window? And did no doubt cross his mind, as he thought on the carved work broken down with axes and hammers? Beauty was to him a snare of the Evil One, and the red sunset but the promise of a storm to-morrow; the whistling wind and mighty sweeps and swells of upland but chill weather and so many miles to march.

A dreary and a desolate place now is 'Oliver's Battery' at nightfall, where the shades of the old Puritans walk round the darkening ramparts as of yore, keeping watch and ward. They did what they thought good to the ancient Minster, and it stands but the more beautiful therefor

to-day, with the rime and crust of centuries upon it, mellowed by the wind and weather, and melodious with the sound of organ and of chiming bells. Like a violin, it ripens with the growing years into a fulness of use and beauty which the wise old builders strove for when as yet the future was all before them. From the piled masses of brown stone on mighty column and rounded arch, to climax of their skill and labour, perfect equipoise of strength, with flowing line and delicate foliage, and many a quaint device of bird and beast and fish, stands now the great stone poem of the ages, written to many measures by many earnest hands, complete in every phase of beauty. Generation after generation of the race of those who teach their hands to express their thoughts, have carved their thought in stone, and sleep now in its shadow; while within its walls the same story is sung and carved and spoken, as it will be till the need for symbols is no more.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WE must go back nearly three centuries to find a total solar eclipse occurring on the 1st of January, as it has done this year, nor will another event of the same kind occur on New-year's Day until the year 2161. On no former occasion have such preparations been made for it, and never before has such an army of astronomers and volunteer observers been enrolled to watch the interesting phenomena which attend such an eclipse. It speaks well for the enthusiasm of these observers when we remember that many of them undertake a journey of thousands of miles in order to view a spectacle which lasts at the most about two minutes, and which by the very possible interposition of clouds may not be visible to them. But, according to all accounts, the weather at most of the stations was propitious, and valuable observations were made. Since the photographic camera and the spectroscope were enlisted into the service of astronomical research, these total eclipses have been regarded with increased interest, and each one helps towards the solution of problems of great importance to science.

The invention, some years ago, by Parkes, of celluloid at once placed in the hands of manufacturers a compound which could be used for most purposes in which ivory, which is every year becoming more scarce and expensive, was formerly employed. Knife-handles, the keys of pianofortes, and even billiard balls, have been made from the new material, which has also been employed for the manufacture of washable shirt collars and cuffs for those who grudge the expense of clean linen. Hitherto, this substance, which is a compound of camphor and collodion, has been opaque; but by a recent modification, it is now manufactured in thin sheets which are almost as transparent as glass. This material has been recently introduced as a support, instead of glass, for photographic dry plates, and there is every indi-

cation that it will be extensively used for this purpose. Besides the great saving of weight and the absence of brittleness, there are other advantages of a technical nature which will cause this new departure to be received with enthusiasm by photographers.

More than one writing-telegraph has been invented, and we can find the germ of such an apparatus by turning to the pages of any of the old text-books on electricity. None of these has, however, gone beyond the experimental stage, each having imperfections of either speed or style which prevented it competing with more ordinary methods of electrical communication. It is said, however, that Professor Elisha Gray has now completed a writing-telegraph which is perfect in its action and which transmits handwriting faithfully. There is no doubt that such a telegraph would be extremely useful in certain cases, but for ordinary needs existing systems are sufficient.

A gas-propelled carriage which was shown at an Exhibition of Machinery at Munich last year is described and illustrated in one of the German papers. This novel vehicle has the appearance of a large tricycle, bearing an ordinary carriage body with seats for four persons. The motor is charged with gas, which it generates from benzine or some similar fluid, the vapour so generated being ignited in a closed cylinder by an electric spark. The benzine is contained in a copper receptacle beneath one of the seats, and enough can be carried to last for a journey of seventy-five miles. Although this vehicle can be driven if required at as high a speed as ten miles an hour, it is so perfectly under control that the driver can go at a walking pace if he so desires. Experiments with the gas-carriage are said to have been highly successful, and it is obvious that if this be the case, it will have a wide future before it.

A most ingenious form of telephone, and one which seems to be quite distinct from the well-known 'Bell' or other patterns, has been produced by Mr James Lowth, and called after him the Lowth Telephone. It is being introduced by a Company in Chicago, and is said to work well. The instrument consists of a receiver and transmitter in one, and the novel point of the apparatus lies in the circumstance that whilst the receiving part of the contrivance is naturally held to the ear, the transmitter, in the form of a projecting plug, presses against the exterior of the throat, and takes up from that organ the mechanical vibrations caused by speech. These muscular vibrations are converted into undulating impulses of electricity, and are so conveyed to the distant correspondent by line-wires. This new system of telephony is said to work well, and to be free from defects which are found in older methods of speech-transmission.

Mr G. J. Symons, the well-known meteorologist, believes that fogs, not only in London, but elsewhere in these islands, are on the increase. This is unwelcome intelligence for all; for, both directly and indirectly, fogs lead to much loss of life. It is also worthy of notice that even plant-life is not exempt from their baneful influence. In the Royal Botanic Society's conservatories, many of the plants have during the late foggy weather shed both leaves and flower-buds. This

is especially the case with Australian plants, which are so dependent upon sunny weather for their healthy condition. But it is not alone absence of light that they have suffered from, but because of their pores becoming clogged with those sulphurous and carbonaceous particles which are so plentifully dispensed by the smoke of London.

The Miniature Pocket Type-writer (the Miniature Type-writer Company, Swan Arcade, Bradford) is an instrument which weighs only four ounces, is so compact that it can be easily carried in the pocket, and at the same time will print any matter in legible type. It is certainly a marvel of ingenuity. The little contrivance comprises a rotating disc, on the under side of which the types protrude; an inking roller which supplies ink to the types automatically; and a roller furnished with a ratchet, by which the instrument is made to travel over the paper, and the necessary space is preserved between the printed letters. This form of type-writer can, of course, never compete in speed with those instruments which are furnished with keys, but it is something more than a toy, and will be very useful to those who occasionally want matter printed instead of written.

The introduction of mineral oil for domestic lighting purposes has been a great boon to the working classes, for they are at once supplied with a cheap and efficient illuminant, which replaces the farthing 'dip' which many of them were compelled to use, and in many cases to work by. But the cheap oil fostered the introduction of cheap lamps in which it could be burned, and these lamps have brought disaster and death to many a household. Indeed, the number of fatal accidents which are caused by the use of these lamps is positively appalling, and many attempts have been made by inventors to produce a form of lamp which shall be inexplodable. One form of these we have recently had the opportunity of trying; it is called the 'Protector Safety' Household Lamp, and is so constructed that the wick has no direct communication with the oil-chamber. It is a hand-lamp which can be carried about with perfect safety. The 'Protector Lamp Company' makes these lamps at Eccles, near Manchester.

A few years ago, an important alteration was made in harnessing the dray-horses used by one of the French Railway Companies, and the method has proved to be so satisfactory that it has been extended to all stations under the control of the Company. The improvement is confined to the traces, which are made of chain, with a strong spiral spring inserted in them. These elastic traces are found to possess many advantages besides durability. The shock or blow on the collar at starting is far less violent and injurious to the horse, and the animal soon learns that a steady pull without jerks will do the work required of him. It is most distressing to see what difficulties horses have in starting a heavy load under ordinary conditions, and we trust that the system described may be widely adopted.

A specialist interested in the question of Children's Sight lately tested the vision of fifty boys indifferently chosen from a public elementary school in London. Only twenty-three out of the fifty were found to possess normal sight; 'twenty more only attained an average visual value of

three-quarters; and the remainder were not more than one-half, one being as low as one-fifth. None of these boys had ever worn glasses, and as we further learn that few could afford to purchase such aids to sight, it is perhaps a fair inference to assume that defective nutrition, owing to privation, may be at the bottom of the mischief. The subject is one of such great importance that it should be taken up and thoroughly inquired into by the authorities.

We have more than once commented upon the fearful loss of life which annually occurs in India from snake-bite. It has recently been computed that there are in that country two hundred and thirteen separate species of these reptiles, but less than one-sixth of these are poisonous. It is stated that an effectual barrier to their entrance into a house is afforded by a line of carbolic powder strewn across the doorway. But before adopting this remedy, care should be taken that the enemy has not already become a lodger, for the same line of defence would most surely prevent his exit.

The *Athenæum* publishes an interesting account of a young gorilla belonging to a trader on the south-west coast of Africa. It follows its owner like a dog, and has accompanied him on a journey of twenty miles, walking the entire distance. It is very docile and tractable, and weeps like a child if it is left alone by its master. The animal seems to have acquired many civilised tastes and habits, and will drink different liquids out of a cup or glass like a human being. This is by no means the first instance of a gorilla being brought under subjection by kindness. It will perhaps be remembered by some of our readers that a baby gorilla was a few years ago exhibited in London, but the severity of an English winter was fatal to it.

What may be called the science of burglary has now attained such a perfection that householders, if they would preserve their valuables, must endeavour to cope with it in a scientific manner. We are all too prone to shut the stable door after instead of before the horse is stolen, and we doubt not that those who have been 'burgled' have since been most careful to guard both their doors and windows. In these days, when electric bells are fitted to all modern residences, it is an extremely easy and cheap process to so extend the system of wires that all entries can be made to give an alarm directly they are attempted by the burglar. A gong ringing out persistently in the dead of night will frighten away the most courageous robber, and it is in one respect better than a barking dog, for the reason that it cannot be silenced by drugs, or any other means within the power of the intruder.

A correspondent of the *Zoologist* believes from observations made in his London house that mice and cockroaches are in some way antagonistic to one another. He notes that although the disagreeable so-called 'black beetles' had been numerous in his residence for some time past, they have completely disappeared before an invasion of mice. 'Do mice eat cockroaches?' he asks, or do they merely disperse them by consuming the food upon which they depend? We should be inclined to think that there may be some local circumstances to account for this result; or perhaps, as the correspondent himself suggests, the season may have been prejudicial to cockroaches

and favourable to mice. It is certain that in many households both flourish to a most disagreeable extent.

In a recent paragraph we referred to some experiments which have been conducted by the sanitary authorities in New York with steam as a disinfecting agent for clothing, &c. Our attention has since been called to the circumstance that a similar system has been in use in this country for some time, and has been found so successful that it has been adopted in many public institutions in different towns. The following are some of its advantages: No chemicals are used; no article of dress need be unmade; colours are not affected by the treatment; all germs, eggs, and insect life are instantaneously destroyed; the steam being under pressure, will penetrate closely packed bad conductors of heat, such as feather-beds; and the articles submitted to the process remain perfectly dry. The apparatus used is known as Washington Lyon's Patent Steam Disinfecter, and all particulars concerning it can be obtained of Mr Lyon by addressing him at 85 Asylum Road, Peckham, London, S.E.

A French doctor during a recent residence in Tonquin has successfully employed *mercuric chloride* as a remedy in cholera. This salt is one of the most poisonous compounds known, and is otherwise called corrosive sublimate. Although it appears in the British Pharmacopœia, it is very seldom used for internal administration, and then only in doses of about one-tenth of a grain. The doctor referred to employed it in still smaller quantities, and found that by its use the mortality was reduced from sixty-six per cent. to about twenty per cent. The drug was also found effective as a preventive measure in cases where perhaps one or two only of a community was attacked with the dire disease.

Spong's Patent Gas Utiliser is a little contrivance which can be fitted on to any fish-tail burner. It consists of a spoon-shaped piece of nickel, which is so hinged on to a clamp which embraces the burner that it can be made to impinge on the flame in a certain direction. This causes the flame to spread out, and to give a greatly increased light with the same quantity of gas. We attribute the result to change of shape in the flame, and also more perfect combustion brought about by the agency of the heated metal disc.

Another expedition to the North Pole is projected, this time by our Norwegian neighbours. It is asserted that a picked set of men, used to contact with snow and ice, and for whom the rigours of an arctic journey would have few terrors, could readily be mustered. It is proposed to despatch the expedition on its journey in the summer of 1890, the leadership being offered to Dr Nansen. The attempt to reach the Pole would be made *viâ* Franz Josef's Land, a route which many students of the subject have advocated.

The Early Roman church on the heights of Dover, the oldest Christian fabric in the country, has just been restored, and reopened for public worship. Its foundations were laid fifteen centuries ago, and the spot where the Roman soldiers' altar formerly stood, and the window through which the sentry could see whether the lamp was burning before it, can still be pointed out. This

interesting old building is almost touching the ruin of the old pharos or lighthouse which guided the Roman galleys to their home. In one respect this latter building is unique, so far as this country is concerned, for it is built of volcanic tufa. As this stone is not found in the district, it is presumed that it was carried here as ballast in the Roman ships.

TOBACCO AS A DISINFECTANT.

THE habit of smoking is not one that commends itself to every person. With those who abstain from it, we find no fault; but for that great number in the community who indulge in the weed, it may be interesting to know, as the result of scientific inquiry, that tobacco is not quite so black as it is frequently painted. Tobacco may not rank as a public benefactor, but, from what has recently been disclosed, it may lay claim to be somewhat of the nature of a general sanitarian. There is a popular notion, especially among the smoking portion of the community, that tobacco-smoke acts as a disinfectant; this claim, however, is, we believe, not generally supported by medical men. But it has now been shown, from the investigations and experiments of an Italian professor, Dr Vincenzo Tassinari, assistant at the Hygienic Institute of the university of Pisa, that tobacco-smoke is to a certain extent an annihilator of disease, by its action upon the growth of bacilli. Dr Tassinari has taken great pains to demonstrate its utility in that direction, and constructed special apparatus for the purpose. In order to imitate as closely as possible the process going on in the human mouth during the inhalation of smoke, Dr Tassinari passed tobacco-smoke through a horizontal tube into a chamber kept moist by a bunch of wet cotton-wool suspended in it, and containing, besides, a 'culture,' or growth, of bacilli, which he submitted to the action of tobacco-smoke. He used in his experiments the various qualities of manufactured tobacco most generally smoked in Italy—that is to say, the large Virginia cigar, the large Cavour cigar, the small Cavour cigar, and the best cigarette tobacco. The action of all these was tried severally upon seven known kinds of bacteria—namely, the so-called cholera bacillus, the cattle-distemper bacillus, pus coccus, Finkler-Prior bacteria, the bacilli of typhus and pleuro-pneumonia, and finally, the bacillus of blue pus. We say advisedly the 'so-called cholera bacillus,' because its existence is not yet positively proved.

The results obtained by Dr Tassinari were most remarkable, and amply repaid him for his trouble, the experiments showing unmistakably that tobacco-smoke considerably retards the development of some varieties of bacteria, while it effectually prevents the development of others. Dr Tassinari carried his investigations further, actually fixing the length of time during which the development of bacteria is prevented. By comparing experimentally the growth of the same micro-organisms when not exposed to the retarding action of tobacco-smoke with their development when so exposed, it was found that the smoke of the large Cavour cigar, for instance, delayed the development of pus bacilli for seventy-two hours, and of cattle-

distemper bacilli for a hundred hours, and that the same smoke prevented the formation of cholera and typhus bacilli entirely—in fact, acted as a germicide. Similar results were obtained in the experiments with other descriptions of manufactured tobacco.

Dr Tassinari attributes this annihilating effect of tobacco-smoke upon bacteria to the action of the chemical elements contained in it. He proposes to carry on further experiments with regard especially to the action of tobacco-smoke upon the bacillus of tuberculosis; and if these should prove as conclusive as those he has made with the micro-organisms named, consumptive patients may be benefited from a hygienic point of view. At any rate, the highly important results of the curious observations of Dr Tassinari, while they are of great interest to laymen, both smokers and non-smokers, deserve that careful attention of the medical profession which they will no doubt receive.

A BIRTHDAY.

Up from the under-world they come again,
Dim forms of vanished years;
And some rose-garlanded, nor known of pain;
Some pale with tears.

The golden summers of gone girlhood's days,
When all the world was young;
The glittering star-gleam; the bedizened sprays
Where hoar-frost clung.

Rose-scented gales that are the breath of June;
The north wind's bitter blast—
With many voices do they sing the tune
Of life that's past.

And could they tell us of the years to come—
Would it be better so?
But nay: the Book is sealed, their lips are dumb;
We may not know.

I can but wish you what is good and great,
True-hearted till the end,
Nor ever daunted by an adverse fate,
Nor lacking friend.

And if it be that you must tread alone
The long and empty years,
Wear still rosemary for the past you've known,
With hopes, not fears.

J. W.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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SOME NOTES ON TOTEMISM.

WHAT is a Totem? Broadly, the badge of a clan or tribe, but something signifying a great deal more than mere political or social alliance. It is not only a tribal emblem, but also a family signal; not merely a symbol of nationality, but also an expression of religion; not simply a bond of union among primitive peoples, but also a regulator of the marriage laws and of other social institutions. As defined by Mr J. G. Frazer, a totem is a 'class of material objects which a savage regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists between him and every member of the class an intimate and altogether special relation.'

The use of totems seems to have been first noticed among the North American Indians, and the word itself is an Indian one. It is taken from the language of the Ojibways or Chipeways, a branch of the Algonquin race, who inhabited the region near Lake Superior. It is said to have been introduced into our literature by one Long, an Indian interpreter, who published a book of travels in 1791. Among the American Indians its meaning is clear enough; for with them the totems are well defined, although often curious in character. Thus, in the Ojibway tribe there are no fewer than twenty-three different totems, or clan divisions. Nine of these are quadrupeds, marking out the wolf, the bear, the beaver, and other clans; eight are birds, five are fishes, and one is the snake. In other words, the members of the tribe who carry these devices by so doing mark themselves as belonging to a distinct division of it, to be for all time and for certain practical purposes distinguished and separated from the other divisions.

It is easy enough with totems of this character to imagine a basis of worship as the origin of the tribal badge, but it is not easy to see the meaning in other cases. For instance, the totems of some of the other Indian tribes are such things as corn, potato, tobacco-plant, and reed-grass; as medicine, tent, lodge, bonnet, leggings, and knife; as sun,

earth, sand, salt, sea, snow, ice, water, and rain; as thunder, wind, and even as 'many seasons.' Now, it is hardly possible to presuppose worship in the case of many of these totems, and indeed of some of them it is evident the pictorial representation, or concrete expression in any form, was impossible. But a totem may exist without visible expression, and its nature may be indicated by a species of freemasonry.

Next to the North American Indians, the aboriginal tribes of Australia present the most developed form of totemism of any peoples of our time. Among the Australians is to be found the same use of totems as among the Indians, and chiefly taken from the animal kingdom. There are kangaroo, opossum, iguana, emu, bandicoot, and black-snake divisions among the Kamilaroi tribes. There are also eagle, crow, water, mountain, swamp, river, hot-wind, and sun totems; and the first question asked by an Australian black of a stranger is, 'Of what murdoo [family or clan] are you?' In fact, in Australia the totem seems more of a family than a clan name.

So in Africa, among the Hottentots and Bechuanas, are found crocodile-men, monkey-men, buffalo-men, and such family names as Horse, Lion, Sheep, Ass, &c. The head of the family is the 'great man' of the animal whose name he bears, and the members of the tribe will not eat the flesh or use the skin of its protecting animal.

Professor Robertson Smith in his work on Early Arabia tells us that many of the Arab tribes take their names from animals, such as the lion, the panther, the wolf, the bear, the dog, the fox, the hyena, the sheep, &c.; and that the animal whose name is borne by the tribe is not used for food by that tribe, and is otherwise treated with respect. Among the hill-tribes of India, similar clan-badges are also to be found, as the Heron, Hawk, Crow, and Eel clans of the Oraon and Mundari tribes of Chota-Nagpur.

The geographical distribution of totemism is very wide, too wide for us to follow within the limits of this article. In North America it pre-

vails among all the Indian tribes, but not among the Eskimos. In Central America it is found among some of the tribes of Panama; and in South America it is found in Colombia, Venezuela, Guiana, and Patagonia; and traces also have been supposed among the aborigines (not the Incas) of Peru. In Australia it is universal—we speak, of course, always of aboriginal peoples—and in Africa it appears to be general in the south and west, and on the equator. It is found alike in Bengal and in Siberia, in Polynesia and in China.

The Chinese system merits a word; and it is noteworthy that, on the authority of a Russian traveller quoted by Mr M'Lennan, 'a characteristic feature in Central Asiatic traditions is the derivation of their origin from some animal.' Thus, the 'Tele people are said to have sprung from the marriage of a wolf and a beautiful Hun princess; the Tugas believe themselves to be descended from a she-wolf; the Tibetans from a dog; the Mongol khans from a blue wolf and a white hind, &c. The Chinese expression for their own people is *Pih-Sing*, which means 'the hundred family-names.' In fact it is computed that there are about four hundred family-names in China, and intermarriage is forbidden between persons of the same family-name. In this connection it may be noted that some of the Australian tribes have a legend to the effect that the use of totems was introduced by command of the Great Spirit to put a stop to consanguineous marriages.

Some curious items referring to totemism are to be found in Dr Turner's book about Samoa. Thus, it is said that if a Turtle-man ate of a turtle he grew very ill, and the voice of the turtle was heard in his inside, saying: 'He ate me: I am killing him.' If a Prickly Sea-urchin-man consumed one of these shellfish, a prickly sea-urchin grew in his body and killed him. If a Mullet-man ate a mullet, he squinted. If a Cockle-man carried away a cockle, it appeared on some part of his person; and if he ate it, it grew on his nose. If a Banana-man used a banana leaf for a cap, he became bald. If a Butterfly-man caught a butterfly, it struck him dead. If a Fowl-man ate a fowl, delirium and death resulted. And so on—all going to show that among some totem peoples, if not among all, the totem has something of the quality of a fetish, as well as the significance of a family emblem.

But, as Mr J. G. Frazer shows, totems are of at least three kinds. There is, first, the Clan totem, common to a whole clan, and passing by inheritance from generation to generation. There is, second, the Sex totem, common either to all the males or to all the females of a tribe, to the exclusion of the other sex. And there is, third, the Individual totem, belonging to a single individual, and not passing to his descendants. There are also Cross totems and some other kinds, which, however, are really only varieties of the Clan totem, and this last is the most important of all.

Regarding Clan totemism, it is to be noted that the relation of mutual help and protection includes also the totem itself; that is to say, if a man takes care of his totem, he expects the totem to return the compliment. If the totem is a dangerous animal, it must not hurt his clansmen. The Scorpion-men of Senegambia declare

that the most deadly scorpions will run over their bodies without hurting them. There is a Snake clan in Cyprus which holds to a similar belief. Among the Moxos of Peru, a candidate for the office of medicine-man must allow himself to be bitten by a tiger (the totem); and if he survives, he proves his kinship and fitness. Among the Crocodile clan of the Bechuanas, if a man is bitten by a crocodile, or even has water splashed on him by one, he is expelled from the clan, as one esteemed unworthy by the totem. But a totem must do more than not injure—it must help. Members of Serpent clans in various parts of the world profess to heal by their touch those who have been bitten by serpents. There is a Seaweed clan in Samoa which, when it goes out in canoes to fight, throws seaweed into the water to hinder the flight of the enemy; if the enemy try to pick up the weed, it sinks, but rises again as soon as some of the totem clan approach it. The kangaroo warns the Kangaroo tribes, and the crow warns the Crow tribes of Australia of approaching danger. This is all very well when the totem is a bird, beast, or fish; but one does not very well see how it will work when the totem is a stick, a stone, a cloud, an element, or a colour.

The totem bond is a much stronger affair than what we regard as the bond of blood or family. All the members of a totem clan regard each other as kinsmen, or brothers and sisters, and are bound to help each other. The Clan totem represents both a religious and a social system, because all the men and women who call themselves by the name of the totem believe themselves to be of one blood, descendants of a common ancestor, and bound to each other by common obligations and a common faith.

Some of the social aspects of totemism may be briefly referred to. For one thing, the totem bond is stronger than the domestic bond. In every totem tribe there must be members of two or more totem clans, because the males cannot marry the females of their own totem. If, then, a blood-feud breaks out between their clans, husband and wife will have to take opposite sides, and the children will be arrayed with one parent against the other, according as the custom of the people may be to trace descent through the mother or the father. Then, if anything happens to a man, all his clansmen are entitled to satisfaction, not from the aggressor alone, but from the entire clan to which the aggressor belongs. A curious illustration of this has been noted among the Goajiros of Colombia in South America. This tribe is divided into some twenty or thirty clans with descent in the female line; and it is said that if a man happens to cut himself with his own knife, to fall off his own horse, or to hurt himself in any way, his mother's clan immediately demand blood-money from him for injuring one of their totems!

Then, as to marriage, persons of the same totem may not enter into conjugal union. This rule is what is called exogamy. Some tribes say of those who marry within the clan, that their bones will dry up and they will die. Among the Australian tribes, death is the regular penalty for a breach of this rigorous rule.

Speaking generally, it may be said that marriage prohibition extends only to a man's own totem

clan. But there are also numerous cases where the prohibition extends further. Thus, a Panther of the Creek Indians may not marry a Panther; but he is also prohibited from marrying a Wild-cat woman. The Senecas were divided into two groups of four totems each: the Bear, Wolf, Beaver, and Turtle clans could not intermarry; nor could the Deer, Snipe, Heron, and Hawk clans; but a member of any one of the totems of one group was compelled to seek a mate in one of the totems of the other group.

This peculiarity seems most marked among the Indian tribes, but is also to be found among the Australians; and among these last, a very remarkable feature has been noticed—namely, that divisions of one tribe have recognised equivalents in other tribes even when the languages are different. Thus, a native can travel over hundreds of miles and be supplied with wives by the various tribes he sojourns with, for difference of language does not prevent him recognising the signs by which he can tell whether the tribal division is one into which he can legally marry.

It is impossible to go thoroughly into the origin and nature of totemism within the limits of an article such as this. But enough has been said to show that its main use among primitive peoples has been with reference to marriage. As to whether or not it took its origin in some religious idea, or whether the religious aspect has been an aftergrowth of the social custom, opinions continue to differ widely. In brief, it may be said that Mr M'Lennan thought that totemism was necessarily connected with animal-worship; that Mr Herbert Spencer thinks it was a confused sort of ancestor-worship; that Sir John Lubbock thinks it originated in nature-worship; and Mr Staniland Wake thinks that it had a good deal to do with the oriental belief in the transmigration of the soul, and was a combination of nature-worship and animal-worship.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,
Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER X.

It may be supposed that Isaiah made a purposed detour, or that his business led him away from the high-road. In either case the boys saw no more of him, though they bore straight on for some seven or eight miles before resting. They were excellent pedestrians, both; and after their parting with Isaiah they walked in better heart than before. They had an elder's sanction for their enterprise, however reluctantly expressed; and even John felt a little the brighter for the encounter, though in a twilight kind of way. They bought the envelope and the postage stamp, according to promise, and William wrote the address at the stationer's counter in his round school hand.

They were dusty and a little footsore when at sunset they entered the old-fashioned town of Warwick. Its cobbled streets and ancient gables looked unhomelike to William's eyes; and John clung to his protecting companion's sleeve, as if the strangeness of the place frightened him. Will's first business was to secure a lodging for

the night, but he was shy of making inquiries, and looked about rather hopelessly. People who walked briskly in the streets seemed too busy and important with their own affairs to be accosted, and idlers looked too unconcerned and unsympathetic. The two lads drifted hither and thither, reading the legend 'Lodgings for Travellers' or 'Beds for Single Men' in windows in some of the by-streets, but repelled by the aspect of the houses. Will was afraid of the inns because of the slenderness of his resources; and from a native and cultivated prejudice in favour of cleanliness could not bring himself to face the lodging-houses. The spring night was closing fast, and the air was growing chilly. It had been passably fine all day, but now a cold sprinkle of rain and a keen wind gave a spur to his halting intent. The street they stood in was quite lonely, and lights behind the blinds of the houses made the outer night doubly dreary by comparison with the possibilities of comfort and warmth within.

'Come along, Jack. We'll speak to the next we meet, and ask where we can get a bed.'

A brisk footstep sounded at the end of the darkening street, and they moved towards it.

'If you please, sir,' said Will, and the passenger pausing, looked down upon him, 'can you tell me where we can get a lodging for the night?'

'Where you can get?'—The stranger paused inquiringly.

'A lodging for the night.'

'I do not—know him,' said the stranger slowly. 'What is he?'

'We want to sleep somewhere; we want a bed.'

'A bed? To sleep? Oh yes. Come wiz me.'

By this time Will knew him. It was the stranger who had found him on Scott's Hills on the morning of John's disaster. If it had not been for the change in the foreigner's dress, he would have recognised him earlier; but, whereas, three-fourths of a year ago, he had looked altogether shabby and vagabond, he was now rather a dandy than otherwise, wearing a glossy silk hat and gloves, and carrying an umbrella. He made no claim on his acquaintance, but followed him silently, wondering at the chance, and feeling it to be a little adventurous and spicy.

The stranger walked briskly for a hundred yards or so, and then turned a corner, looking round his shoulder to see if the boys were following. A few yards farther on he thrust open a door which led from the street into a darkened passage. 'Come in.'

Will lingered, not altogether certain that the spice of the adventure had not a flavour of danger in it. A strange town, a lonely street, a dark house, a foreigner! A favourable combination for dealings not altogether favourable to safety.

'Come in,' the stranger repeated.

Will entered, and John followed, holding him by the sleeve. The foreigner closed the door, and left them in the dark. By-and-by they heard him calling: 'Madame! Madame Vigne!'—A female voice answered, in a foreign tongue.—'Pouvez-vous me dire?'—began the foreigner, and then plunging down a set of stairs, he became inaudible. There was a rapid smothered colloquy down below, and for all Master Will

could have told, it might have related to the sauce he and John should be cooked with. He wished he had not had the chance to address a foreigner, and had already formed some dim idea of bolting into the street and slamming the door behind him, when a streak of light appeared, and, a second or two later, a prodigiously fat woman, carrying a candle. She was still young in spite of her ponderous size, and she had a handsome face, so alight with good-humour and kindness that all the boy's vague fears vanished at the first glimpse of it.

Now it happened that Macfarlane's curriculum included a study of the French tongue for such as had parents who were prepared to pay for that luxury as an extra. Will had been a member of the French class for three or four years past; and had so profited by his studies that he had actually been able to identify the only words he had heard in the house as being fragments of the French tongue, and was inspired to conciliate this fat and smiling lady by addressing her in her own language.

'Noo voodrongs oon lee,' he said, therefore; and the fat woman, dropping as if she had been shot, plumped upon the stairs and laughed, with the candle held out towards the two young wanderers. She laughed with so extreme an abandon and helplessness that she seemed to hold out the candle in a comically despairing hope that somebody would take it from her; and John stepping forward relieved her of it. But at this she laughed the more; and since neither of the boys had the remotest idea of what it was that so tickled her fancy, they were a little inclined to think her mad. The swarthy-skinned, blue-eyed little foreigner stood by smiling, and the boys stared open-eyed.

'He speaks French, the little one,' said Madame Vigne in her own language, 'with what an accent! Oh, but with what an accent!' She wiped her eyes upon her white apron, and rose breathlessly from her seat upon the stairs. 'Where are you going, you children?' she asked in excellent English, with but the faintest tinge of a foreign tone. 'Where do you come from?'

'We are going to London,' said Will, 'and we want to get a bed for to-night, if you could tell us where, please.' He was not hurt or angry at the fat woman's laughter. Now that it was over, indeed, it seemed to make him more at home with her.

'You are going to London?' she repeated. 'What are you going to London for?'

'We are going to look for something to do there,' Will answered.

'They have run away from home,' said Madame in a rapid aside in her own tongue.—'Where do you come from?'

'From towards Liverpool, ma'am,' said Will, with perfect verbal truthfulness, but deceptive intent.

'Oh!' she answered, taking the candle from John's hand and looking first at his boots and then at Will's. 'You have not worn your shoes much to have travelled so far.—What is your name?'

'William Gregg.'

'And yours?'

'His name is John Vale.'

'He can answer for himself, I suppose.—What

is your name?'—John said nothing, but looked at her in a mild vacancy.—'What are you going to do in London, if ever you get there?'

'I shall take care of him, ma'am,' said Will; and John put a hand through his arm, as if accepting the proffered protection.

Madame Vigne laid her left hand on John's shoulder and turned him round, surveying him from top to toe. Then she went through the same performance with Will. 'They are respectable,' she said then, in another rapid aside, in her own language. 'They have run away from home, the little rogues.—You have money?' she asked a second later, addressing herself to John again.

'We haven't much, ma'am,' Will answered; 'and we must make the most of it.'

'Well,' she said, thrusting open a door which led from the narrow little hall, 'go in there.—Are you hungry?'

'Not very, ma'am,' Will responded.

'Not very,' she answered, hopping to a chair and pulling down a sliding gas bracket; 'but a little.—Very well. You shall have something to eat.—Are you a little hungry too, you boy—you with nothing to say for yourself? Are you hungry?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said John.

'Then you shall have something to eat also.' With that she lit the gas, and hopped from the chair to the floor with great apparent ease, but so heavily that she made the floor shake and the ornaments on the chimney-piece to clatter violently. 'Wait there, and see what I can do for you.—Keep an eye upon them,' she added to her small countryman, and so went from the room with a hop, skip, and jump, in odd contradiction to the massiveness of her figure.

'Be seated,' said the smiling little foreigner with a long pause between the two words, and a momentary triumph at having found the second.—The boys obeyed him, and he, seating himself opposite to them, leaned his arms upon the table and looked from one to the other.—'I have—seen you,' pointing to John; 'and you,' pointing to Will, 'before.'

'Yes, sir,' said Will; 'I know you have. I was very much obliged, sir, and so was John.—This is the gentleman who found us, Jack, the day that you were hurt.—I told him all about it, sir, afterwards.'

'Ah!' said the little foreigner. 'His fazer—where is his fazer?'

'He's dead, sir.'

'Eh, la, la! Zat is bad—bad; oh, very bad. Poor boy! He was good man, his fazer? Not?'

'Oh yes; indeed, he was, sir.'

The little foreigner nodded sympathetically and looked grave. He forbore to question further, but mechanically searching in his pockets, found the materials for a cigarette, and began to roll one with a supple dexterity of the fingers. When it was made he set it between his lips and rose to light it at the gas jet; but at the sound of Madame Vigne's footstep on the stair, sat down again without having done so. Madame appearing with a tray, set it upon a side-table, and proceeded to lay a snow-white cloth, upon which she set a dish of cold meat, a loaf, a jug of water, and plates and knives and forks for two.

'Pitch in!' she said when she had carved a liberal portion for each of the boys; and seeing that Will rather stared at this form of invitation, she dropped into a chair and laughed herself quite helpless. 'I hope that is English,' she said breathlessly as she wiped her eyes with her apron. 'You can understand? Very well. Eat. There is plenty there, and plenty more.'

The boys began to eat, gingerly and delicately, in defiance of appetite, feeling her eyes upon them.

'They are *géné*,' she said, turning away and addressing her countryman. 'They will be right by-and-by, if we leave them to themselves.—You boy, you who speak French, do you know what I am saying?'—Will's stare was certificate enough of ignorance, and she turned round again to her companion.—'They are not quite little gentlemen, but they are respectable. They have run away from home. We must take care of them, and find where they come from, and send them back again.'

'I have met them before,' the little man answered her.—'Did I tell you about the boy with the wounded head?'—Madame Vigne nodded.—'That is the quiet one. The other is the boy who was with him. They tell me that the quiet boy's father is dead. He looked well-to-do, and drove a beautiful horse. He offered me money for watching by the boy; I do not know how much, but a little handful of silver. I was indifferently dressed; I was rambling to sketch.'

Madame Vigne nodded again. 'You must expect to be treated like a beggar if you look like a beggar. You dress yourself to be despised, one would think.—Oh, you are better now.' This was in answer to an appealing odd little gesture which called her attention to his personal appearance.—'You are sure these are the same boys?'

'One of them knows me again,' he answered; 'and I know both of them.'

The fat good-natured woman turned and looked at the young wanderers with a new interest. 'Wait a little,' she said. 'I will not spoil their appetite by questioning them now; but I will find out all about them by-and-by.'

It was noticeable that John did what Will did, and that he kept a watch upon him for that purpose, as if he founded himself upon him consciously or unconsciously, and depended upon him in all things for guidance. When Will pushed his plate away, John followed his example; but they had both done ample justice to the meal.

'You have finished?' asked Madame Vigne. 'You have had enough? You can eat as much as you like.—You will not eat any more? Very well. Now we will talk. Your name is William Gregg, and yours is John Vale. Very well. Where do you come from?'—No answer, but John and Will looking uncomfortably at each other and stealing shy glances at Madame.—'Ah! you will not say? Very well. Why did you run away from home?'—Still no answer, but an aspect of increased guilt on both.—'Boys cannot be allowed to run away from home. It is very naughty in boys to run away from home. You must be kept until your friends ask after you, and then you must be sent back again.'

'We're not going back again, ma'am,' said Will

very quietly, but with extreme resolution. 'We can pay for what we have had, but you mustn't stop us, ma'am. If we were sent back fifty times, we should come away again every time.'

He had tied up the four half-crowns Isaiah had given to him and his companion in the same strip of rag with the money he had originally started with, and drawing this from his pocket, he began to unroll it with trembling fingers.

'Oho!' cried Madame. 'Fie for shame! A well-bred boy to offer a lady money. No, no. I did not mean to hurt you; but put up your money and come to me, and let us have a talk.—Now, sit down there and tell me. I will be your friend. I will not be unkind to you. Do you think I am cruel? Now, look at me and tell me if you think I am cruel?'

'No, ma'am,' said Will, looking up, with a fat coaxing forefinger under his chin.

'Very well,' she answered. 'I am not cruel, and I will be kind if you will let me. Now, you must know that you are silly boys to run away from home.'

'No, ma'am,' said Master Will with mighty seriousness, 'we were not silly, really. It was quite necessary, ma'am.'

'Oho!' cried Madame again, 'it was quite necessary? Now, what made it quite necessary?'

'They want to beat Jack every day,' said Will; but this struck him as being so inadequate to the case, and he felt so helpless to explain it all, that he went quite doggedly silent. Madame leaning forward, put an arm about him, and made a motion to draw him towards her. At that he winced and gave a quick short breath, at which Madame released him with a sudden raising of her eyebrows and a glance at her companion.

'Well,' she said, 'you shall go to bed now. You are very dusty and dirty with your walk, and you must wash first.—Come with me, and I will show you where you can sleep.—Go thou, Achille, and find Monsieur Vigne.'

The April shower beat noisily at the window, and the little man raised a hand and made a gesture to indicate it. 'Later on,' he said tranquilly.

Madame lit her candle and marshalled the boys up-stairs into a clean bare little room. There she superintended in a motherly fashion their toilet for the night, kissed them both, and left them to undress, warning them that the candle would be taken away in ten minutes, and bearing their shoes with her, as a precautionary measure against any attempt on their part to escape.

'Madame,' said the little man when she descended, 'permit me to tell you that you are a woman of a thousand. You have a good heart, Madame.'

'Is it to be a woman of a thousand to have a good heart?' Madame demanded.

'Ma foi, yes,' he answered. 'Your sex charms, Madame, and that is so much the worse for us. But the majority of you are not good for much. You are an angel; I admit it, I proclaim it. One woman? Yes. But women? Bah!'

Madame accepted the personal flattery and

impersonal blame with composure, and flourishing from her pocket a piece of knitting, began to work at it. Suddenly she looked up. 'The rain has ceased. Find Monsieur Vigne for me, Achille.'

He got up obediently and went out, returning in the course of an hour in company with a long lean Frenchman of about fifty, a stately man, so withered and dry that he might have been carved out of wood.

'Achille has told you of our little adventure of this evening?' his wife asked him.—He nodded in answer.—'You approve of what I have done?'

'Assuredly.'

'Come with me,' she said, pinching her lips and twisting her jolly face into an expression of mystery; 'I will show you something. But tread quietly; the children are asleep.' She led him to the chamber in which the boys were lying, and having first set the candle she carried upon the floor, softly turned down the bedclothes, and with a delicate womanly hand drew Will's sleeve higher than his elbow. Then she raised the candle and beckoned her husband, who raised his hands and his eyebrows and drew an inward breath.

'The poor little body is so from head to foot,' she whispered. 'I have looked. His face is so. Poor child!' She re-arranged the bed-clothes and beckoned her husband away.

'Who knows?' said he, turning to whisper on the landing. 'He may have merited it.'

'Jean!' she answered scornfully, 'how can a child of his years have merited that? He has not lived long enough to merit it, if he had been born wicked. It is only these English who treat their children so. If a man of our country did it, the people would tear him piecemeal.'

'There is cruelty everywhere, my dear Mathilde,' said the husband mildly.

'Jean,' said Madame Vigne, thrusting the candle upon him so that she might use both hands in wiping her eyes with her apron, 'if our poor little Hector had lived, and we had died'—

'My dear,' said Monsieur Vigne appealingly, 'why harrow me with these thoughts? Whatever you do, I shall approve it.'

TOOTHACHE CHARMS.

POSSIBLY there is no pain so difficult to endure, and one that meets with so little sympathy, as the excruciating agony of toothache. In Norfolk, the poor sufferer from this malady is, according to the Rev. T. F. Thiselton Dyer, jeeringly taunted with possessing the 'love-pain.' Dean Swift has recorded that

A coming shower your shooting corns presage,
Old aches throb, your hollow tooth will rage.

But the 'grim mischief-making chiel' appears to be much more prevalent during the present age of thriving dentists, and waits not for approaching rain. Shakespeare, however, was evidently acquainted 'with a raging tooth,' or he would never have written,

There was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently;

and later, Burns has anathematised this malady

in a poem of six stanzas. There is little wonder, then, that amongst the vulgar and superstitious, all manner of charms have been in vogue to release the victim of this painful disorder from its thralldom. Æsculapius is credited with the honour of being the first to advocate the practical cure of having the tooth pulled out; but this severe method soon denudes a mouth of its most useful ornaments. From *Notes and Queries* we learn that the gypsies of Lincolnshire were accustomed to apply a poultice of finely scraped horse-radish to the wrist as a cure for the torture; on the right wrist, if the tooth were on the left side of the face, and *vice versa*. We have also heard of mustard plasters on the elbow, tape fastened tightly round the thumb, and a roasted onion on the big toe. These remedies, ridiculous as they appear, may have had the effect of diverting the nerve-affection to another part of the body.

Among the superstitions connected with this popular disease we observe that recognised saints preside over those afflicted with this disorder. Thus, in the little town of St Blazey, in Cornwall, St Blaize, who was martyred under Lucinius, was honoured, and candles were offered on his shrine for his intervention. A statue is erected to his memory in the church. Bishop Jewel in one of his expositions remarks that St Apollonius was specially invoked for the toothache; and in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* we find the following quotation:

To Saynt Syth for my purse;
Saynt Loye save my horse,
For my teeth to Saynt Apolyne.

A church at Bonn, on the Rhine, contains a 'tooth of St Apollonia,' which is exhibited on the saint's particular day in a glass case, and kissed by devotees, to prevent the toothache, the priest carefully wiping the dental relic after each osculatory salutation. From Barnaby Rich's *Irish Hubbub, or the English Hue and Crie*, 1619, we extract the following: 'There be many miracles assigned to saints, that (they say) are good for all diseases,' and 'They have saints to pray to when they be pained with the toothache.' In Barnaby Googe's *Popish Kingdome*, in his translation of Naogeorgus, under the head of 'Helpers,' is the line,

Saint Appolin the rotten teeth doth helpe, when sore they ake.

Southey writes, in his *Life of John Wesley*—a man who had much superstition in his composition—that when his teeth ached, he prayed, and the pain left him.

Many are the charms devised to rid an afflicted mortal of pain in his dental department—curious fancies of the superstitious. Even the Immortal Bard seems to have been aware of their existence, though he causes the contradictory Benedick to doubt their efficacy. Sir Kenelm Digby speaks of the custom of scratching the gums with a nail, and subsequently driving the latter to the head into a piece of wood while the blood is adhering to it. In Scotland, according to Napier, they were not satisfied of the validity of the charm until the iron had entered an oak-tree; whilst the *Dublin Magazine* tells us that in Oldenburg still further details are necessary: the sun must not observe the action, strict silence during the performance is indispensable, and the object is only achieved

when the metal becomes rusty. Some Dublin natives think it expedient to procure a sharp piece of wood, and early in the morning push it into a newly-made grave by the agency of the aching tooth. Another singularly unreasoning remedy is to pare the finger and toe nails, wrapping the superfluities carefully in paper, and placing the parcel in a slit in the bark of an ash-tree. The story is told of an old Rossendale lady performing this feat when a child, and never afterwards being troubled with the toothache.

The belief that the pain is caused by a worm is more natural, and is also mentioned by the Bard of Avon. Some lines we have seen on the subject run as follows :

Ruthless tormentor ! who, with constant gnawing,
Scoops thy dark caverns in my aching grinder
Like mining mole !

Derbyshire folk have an odd way of extracting the supposed creature. A small quantity of certain powdered herbs being placed in a cup, a hot cinder is thrown thereon, and the smoke inhaled by the patient, who afterwards breathes into a glass of water, where they then expect to see the worm. We have been eye-witnesses to a very similar process, the smoke from the herbs being in the interior of a basin, and boiling water immediately afterwards poured into the vessel, the steam from which the operator endeavoured to inhale. Thorpe, in his *Northern Mythology*, mentions an eel-shaped grub as a German belief of the cause of their trouble, for which they possess an incantation commencing,

Pear-tree, I complain to thee
Three worms sting me.

Shortland speaks of the idea existing in China and New Zealand, where an exorcism equivalent to the following is recited :

An eel, a spinyback ;
True indeed, indeed ; true in sooth, in sooth.
You must eat the head
Of said spinyback.

An old lady wrote in a Devonshire newspaper, that when she was a child, her father caused her to bite the back of a snake, he holding the head and tail, as a preventive against toothache. At Churcham, in Gloucestershire, a nurse, with the same object, made a custom of washing a newly baptised child's mouth with a portion of the remaining sanctified water.

A ridiculous idea for prevention is that prevalent in Sussex—the clothing of the right foot before the left with stocking, trousers, and boot. The old fancy of salting a drawn tooth and throwing it into the fire is still known in Scotland. In Cornwall some of the inhabitants expect to obtain an annual release by biting the first fern appearing in the spring.

From an Anglo-Saxon *Leech Book* we cull the following cure for 'jowl'-pain : Burn a swallow to dust and mix it with bee's honey ; to be eaten frequently. The afflicted in Staffordshire and Shropshire must watch a mole-trap, and immediately it is sprung and before the poor animal dies, its hand-like paws are to be cut off ; subsequently, they are worn, a right paw for the right side, and *vice versa*. In Wiltshire it is simply requisite to wear the forelegs and a hindleg of a 'want' (mole) in a bag suspended from the neck.

Those who were troubled with *tic douloureux* at Stamfordham, Northumberland, were accustomed to walk to Winter's Gibbet on Elsdon Moor, ten or twelve miles away, for a splinter of wood, which they believed would heal their complaint. Some credulous people preserve a double-nut in their pocket for the same reason. Here is a curious remedy : In Denmark, an elder-stick is put into the mouth and taken out and stuck into a wall while saying, 'Depart, thou evil spirit.' Rabelais speaks of washing the tooth with elder-vinegar and allowing it to dry half an hour in the sun. The *Journal of the Archaeological Association* tells of the Christmas images carried about in Yorkshire and decorated with evergreens and flowers, a single leaf from which was a sovereign remedy. The Toothache Tree is an exceedingly small deciduous one, having foliage similar to the ash, and is common from Canada to Virginia. Its name is derived from the fact that the hot acrid bark is largely used for the relief of the pain. The Angelica Tree, in North America, is also styled by the same name as the foregoing. In the Orkneys and north of England the following cabalistic words are carried about, the former place styling them worrny lines :

Peter sat on a marble stone weeping ;
Christ came past, and said : 'What aileth thee,
Peter ?'
'O my Lord, my God, my tooth doth ache !'
'Arise, O Peter ! Go thy way ; thy tooth shall ache
no more.'

There are many variations of this, and in Berkshire they substituted 'Bortron' for 'Peter.' In Craven and elsewhere, according to Carr, quoted by Halliwell, the gates of Jerusalem and the garden of Gethsemane take the place of the marble stone. One of Ashmole's manuscripts reads thus :

Mars, hurs, abursa, aburse ;
Jesu Christ, for Mary's sake,
Take away this tooth-ache !

A similar charm to the Peter one is used in France for fever. But we have said enough. Many of the above 'remedies' are now obsolete, and those still remaining doubtless owe their efficacy—when experienced—to the virtue of faith and the healing power of nature.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

By CHARLES GIBBON.

CHAPTER I.—A LAST APPEAL.

BEFORE the mid-day train from London Bridge stopped at the Champion Hill Station, a man jumped out, staggered, and almost fell backwards. The porters shouted at him ; the passengers looked from the windows in alarm ; and the guard seized him till the station-master came up. His name and address were demanded with a view to ulterior proceedings for the offence of leaving the train whilst in motion.

The man was a stalwart young fellow, about twenty-eight or thirty ; good-looking, fair, with blue eyes and brown moustache and whiskers. He was pale, and evidently much agitated, not so much by the danger he had escaped as by other

matters which had induced him to risk it. He gave the required information calmly, producing letters addressed to him and to his employers to authenticate his statements, at the same time expressing his regret for being the cause of so much commotion. His name was Gilbert Astbury, confidential clerk to Messrs Ellicott & Co., ship-owners and ship-brokers, Fenchurch Street, and he resided at Herne Hill. He was at present engaged on most urgent business requiring his speediest return to the City, and that was why he had been so precipitate in leaving the train.

'Well, as no harm has come of it, I daresay you will hear no more about it,' said the station-master good-naturedly; 'but don't try it again, for that was a narrow squeak. I recollect seeing you at this station before.'

'Yes,' rejoined Astbury, smiling faintly, 'you may have seen me alight here many times before.—Thank you. Good-day.'

Clutching a little black leather bag tightly in the left hand and his umbrella in the right, Astbury made his way hurriedly along the then rural footpaths of Dulwich Fields. But he saw nothing of the bright spring verdure—the rich grass and the budding foliage of the trees—around him. At the corner of the old and long disused graveyard near the entrance to the village he turned up a green lane and hurried on, unconscious of the perfume from the hedgerows or the merry chorus of birds busy nest-building. Along the lane were the newly erected mansions of City magnates in glaring red brick pointed with white, and the glass of large conservatories flashed in the sunlight. But there was an ancient farmhouse with black-looking out-buildings and haystacks, round which were cocks and hens, whilst in the meadows cows were browsing on the rich pasture. Here and there, too, was an old-fashioned cottage, standing well back from the roadway, in the midst of a garden where the cultivation of vegetables was combined with that of flowers, and thus preserving some of the rural characteristics of the place. The gaudy and ugly new Dulwich College glared at the passer-by from a little distance; and farther on, the Crystal Palace glistened and shimmered dazzlingly in the eyes.

Before the white-painted gate of one of the old-fashioned cottages Gilbert Astbury halted. It was a modest and comfortable-looking dwelling, clematis, rose-trees, and Virginia creeper striving which should do most to adorn the front and curtain the windows; whilst a vine of many years' growth nearly covered the south, and thick-growing ivy the north gables. A small well-trimmed lawn was bordered with flower-beds, and the gravel path leading to the doorway was smoothly rolled. The kitchen and fruit garden behind the house was, as auctioneers would say, well stocked and productive. One experienced a pleasing sense of neatness and comfort even in looking over the gate, in spite of the gloomy but fine old cedar tree which stood in the centre of the lawn and gave the Cottage its name.

This was the residence of Mrs Silvertown, the widow of a medical gentleman who had left her with an annuity of four hundred, an only child—a daughter—and an orphan niece to take care of. The doctor had died at the comparatively early age of forty-nine, and circumstances had not enabled him to amass more than enough to ensure

for his wife the annuity of four hundred which expired with her. Cedar Cottage was, however, her own property; and being a shrewd practical woman, she succeeded in keeping her place in the 'fashionable society' of the district without incurring debt or displaying any sign of undue pinching to make ends meet. Indeed, some people said that she managed to make a greater show with her limited income than many could do with four or five times the amount. She certainly contrived to give her daughter Henrietta ('Hetty') the best education the girl could attain; and the orphan niece, Daisy, had a full share of these advantages.

As Gilbert Astbury passed through the gateway, a young lady, fair, tall, and with soft light-blue eyes, advanced from beneath the shadow of the cedar to meet him. She wore a simple dress of dark cashmere; and her head being uncovered, a mass of silken hair, plainly brushed back and plaited, was visible. The features were somewhat irregular, and yet there was an inexpressible charm in her expression—tenderness and trustfulness were in the eyes and on the soft nervous lips.

'Why are you here at this hour, Gilbert?' she inquired anxiously. 'Has anything been discovered?'

'Yes; I have discovered something which will make me happy or miserable for life. I have discovered something which will save your cousin or destroy her. Is she in the house?'

The girl's lips quivered, her eyes brightened as if tears were nearly forcing their way over the lids, and her whole form seemed to suffer from a sudden chill. But Gilbert was as unconscious of these signs of agitation as he had been of the aspects and voices of happy spring-time whilst coming along.

'Yes. But she is not very well, and—perhaps she will not be able to see you,' answered Daisy with hesitation.

'I must see her—for her own sake,' he responded resolutely as he passed on.

She looked after him with sad eyes for a moment; then she turned away, and with bowed head returned to the seat under the cedar and picked up the magazine she had dropped on seeing him at the gate.

He did not knock at the door, but opened it and walked into the drawing-room. Although the sun was bright, fires had not yet been discontinued for the season, lest stray visitors should find the afternoons chilly; consequently, there was a pleasant blaze in the grate. Finding no one in the room, Gilbert rang the bell, which was answered by a smart parlour-maid, who appeared to be surprised by the presence of the unannounced visitor. 'Please tell Miss Silvertown,' he said, 'that I wish to see her on business of great importance.'

'Miss Silvertown has told me to say that she is too ill to see any one to-day, sir.'

He took out a note-book and wrote hastily: 'The business on which I wish to see you concerns Dacon as much as myself. I ought to say, concerns him *more* than myself.' On a writing-table in the corner of the room he found an envelope, and into it he put his brief note. 'Give this to Miss Silvertown, please,' he said quietly.

The servant answered mechanically, 'Yes, sir,' and departed.

Whilst waiting her return, he placed his black bag on the table, unlocked it, and taking from it a small packet of papers, began to glance over their contents.

The servant returned in a few minutes with the answer: 'Miss Silverton's compliments, and regrets that she is unable to see you.'

He was bitterly disappointed; but he was too anxious to resent the refusal of an interview, or the cold conventionality of the phrase in which it had been conveyed. Such a response might have been made to a charity collector or a begging impostor, but was altogether an insult to an old friend who had once been regarded almost as a favoured lover. Moreover, as a distant relation of Mrs Silverton, he had been for years regarded almost as one of the family, and treated as if he had been the brother of the girls. He had never before, however, presumed on the freedom which had been allowed him in the house. He presumed now.

'Is your mistress at home?'

'No, sir. She went out after lunch, and said the young ladies were not to wait tea for her.'

'Very well. I am going to write to Miss Silverton, and when I ring, you can take the note to her.'

'Yes, sir.'

He sat down at the writing-table and wrote as follows, without any of the customary formalities of address:

'You must see me for your own sake and his. Proofs of guilt are in my hands, which I will use or destroy according to the nature of the answer you give me to one question I have to ask. But the answer must be given to me by your own lips—here and now. If you refuse, I go straight to Scotland Yard, be the consequences what they may to me, to you, and to others. You need not fear that I am going to plague you with any reproaches about my disappointed hopes, etcetera—the bitterness and pain with which that "etcetera" is put down here I hope you will never realise. I simply ask you to see me for a few minutes in order to help me to a decision in a crisis which will determine your fate and mine for good or ill. I am ready to bear anything—disgrace, ruin, even the doom of a convict, if I can only save you pain. But you must yourself help me to determine which of the two courses will be the most kindly to you.'

He affixed only his initials to the letter, and having enclosed it in an envelope, he summoned the attendant. She came quickly, for curiosity had prompted her to be close at hand. She took the letter to Miss Silverton.

Whilst waiting her return, he went to the window. He saw Daisy watering and tending the plants in the flower-beds as calmly as if she had no care in the world but them. 'Ay, there is the bliss of life,' was his bitter reflection, 'to care only for those things whose failure to answer our expectations can be remedied by the planting of a new seed or sprig. She does not know what it is to have only one flower in the garden of life—one flower which can never be replaced—and to find it withering in spite of the tenderest care. She will be lucky if she never knows it.'

The door opened and closed. Turning quickly,

he saw Henrietta Silverton. Like her cousin, she was fair; but the eyes were of a deeper blue, whilst the hair was lighter, the features more regular, and at a first glance the whole face more attractive—even beautiful. The lips were soft and ruddy; and yet they had a knack of contracting when she was annoyed, as at present, which gave them a false appearance of firmness. The eyes, too, when the long lashes were lowered, gave an impression of coldness which had really no part in her warm impulsive nature.

'You have forced me to come to you,' she began hesitatingly; 'but it is quite true that I am not feeling well, and I hope you will tell me at once what is this question you wish to ask me, on the answer to which so much depends—as you say.' She could not help the emphasis of doubt laid on the word 'you.'

His first impulse had been to advance and take her hand, but he checked it at the sound of the last three words. 'Everything depends on it,' he answered excitedly. 'The whole happiness of your future—of your mother's and of my future—depends on it.'

'Ask, then, and let me answer,' she said with apparent firmness, as if she had prepared herself for the worst ordeal through which she might be called to pass. But there was a nervous movement of the tapering fingers, as they played with the tassels of her scarf, which belied her courage. 'I count upon the promise in your note that you will confine yourself to this one question.'

He looked at her for a moment sadly and earnestly. He saw that she was really ill, and that it had been no mere conventional excuse which had been offered for her first refusal to see him. He wished he could spare her pain; but it was not in his power to do so. 'I shall be as brief as I can; but you must forgive me for dividing my question into two parts. The first is to me the least important. Tell me, in your thoughts of the terrible suspicion hanging over Henry Dacon and myself, which of us do you believe innocent?'

Whatever degree of trepidation she experienced at the first sight of his troubled face vanished now. There was an indignant flash in her eyes as she gazed at him steadily. 'If one of you two has perpetrated this fraud,' she replied deliberately, 'Henry Dacon is not guilty.'

'I expected that would be your answer; but I am too indifferent to my own fate now to mind it much. I would have liked, however, to know that you of all others had faith in me.'

'I did not say I believed you guilty.'

'You seemed to do so as plainly as words and manner could express your meaning.—But let that pass,' he went on despairingly. 'Here is the second part of my question—does your happiness depend on his safety?'

'My life depends on it,' she replied with a glow of devotion on her face and a fervour in her tone which left no doubt that she spoke from heartfelt conviction.

'Are you sure—quite sure of that? Would nothing make you change your mind?' He spoke with a faint tremor in his voice, as one who is making a last feeble appeal for the mercy

he knows will not be granted. 'Would no proofs—would not even his own words convince you that he has done me a cruel wrong?'

'No!—no proofs would satisfy me that he has done wrong to any man. Even if it were possible that I could have a moment's doubt of the honour of the man who is to be my husband, it would certainly not be inspired by anything *you* could say or show me. I am sorry that you should have again suggested it, for I was trying for the sake of our former friendship to think better of you.'

'I must thank you for the effort, although it has been unsuccessful,' he commented with a painful flicker of a smile on his now perfectly white face. At the same time he was busy turning over each paper of the packet in his hand, as if seeking some special one.

She was irritated even more by his smile than by his words, although they in her ears contained a sufficiently insulting sneer to rouse her indignation. But the smile she regarded as one of contempt—never thinking that acute pain was the more probable cause of it—and she spoke angrily.

'Even supposing you are blameless in this dreadful business, do you think I do not understand the motives by which you are actuated in attempting to dishonour Henry in my eyes?—You who should have been the first to defend him!'

'And wished to be.'

'Do you think I can forget, as you have done, that you owe him everything—your rapid promotion—your prospect of a partnership in a firm in which, but for his noble generosity, you might have gone on for years earning the wages of an ordinary clerk?'

'I have not forgotten anything he has done for me, and I am grateful,' said Gilbert huskily as he pulled out the document he had been seeking. 'I came to London with no better prospect of being speedily able to earn a living than thousands of others who arrive daily without friends or introductions. I had only two chances—the first that your mother might, on the strength of my distant kinship, recommend me to some one who could give me employment; the second, that my old schoolfellow Henry Dacon might in his proud position still remember me and help me. He did remember me—you did not know him then—and he did help me. He did more for me than my vainest expectations could have looked for. He helped me to a situation at once; by his assistance I won in a few years the position which gave me the right to think of you and even to speak to you—you did not know him then.—Oh, I remember all, and I am grateful.'

There was such a mingling of sadness and bitterness in his tone that it was impossible to divine which element predominated. He made no reference to the fact that his own ability had early attracted the attention of Mr Ellicott, the head of the firm, and won the rapid promotion which no influence unsupported by merit could have secured for him. As he finished speaking he unfolded the paper he had taken from the packet and appeared to read it.

'And you show your gratitude,' she exclaimed with increasing resentment, 'by this new attempt

to degrade him in my eyes! You do this—you, Gilbert Astbury—you who pretended to care for me so much that my happiness was your first concern in life—you who pretended that to ensure my happiness there was no sacrifice that you would not make. This is how you show the truth of your fine words—by making me miserable because I have chosen him instead of you.' She was conscious that in the presence of his apparent calmness her outburst of passionate reproaches was a sign of weakness, and she was ready to cry with vexation at her inability to control it.

'One word more,' he said earnestly. '*Suppose* it should be proved that he was guilty'—

She interrupted him with a cry of rage, and turned to the door. Passion again banished all weakness. 'Even if all the judges and juries in the land found him guilty of the greatest crimes and sent him to a felon's jail, I would still believe him innocent. I would wait for him ten—twenty years, and be the first to meet him when the prison gates were opened for him, and offer him my hand. I would try with all my life's affection to comfort and to help him to forget the degradation which he had been wickedly condemned to endure.'

As she made this declaration there was something strangely, almost startlingly beautiful in the fair face with the halo of impregnable, undoubting love upon it. To win such a love as that what would not any man give?—to be *worthy* of it, what would not any man sacrifice? So thought Gilbert as he carefully tore into fragments the paper he had taken from the packet, whilst he moved towards the fireplace.

'Do not go yet—stay only a minute. I am going, and you are not likely to see me again.' He was dropping the fragments of paper into the fire as he spoke, and they made a merry blaze which seemed to mock at his misery. When the last bit had turned into a black film and a draught from the partly opened door had whisked it up the chimney, he replaced the packet in his bag. 'There is no more to say. Good-bye.' He was at the door, holding out his hand; but she drew back, startled by his abrupt manner, and he misunderstood the movement for one of refusal to take his hand. 'Good-bye,' he repeated hastily. 'God bless you; and may you never have cause to be sorry for the answer you have given me to-day.'

The outer door had closed behind him before the dazed girl could recover from the bewilderment caused by his words and conduct. The burning of that paper with so much care and deliberation had perplexed her sorely; and rousing herself, she darted to the fireplace to see if any scrap remained on which might be found some legible words to give a clue to the meaning of his action. But the work of destruction had been too thoroughly accomplished to leave the faintest trace of what the paper had been, or what had been written on it.

Then the girl sat down and cried. Angry as she had been with her visitor, she was sorry for him, because she liked him. He had been a trusted friend and companion; and he had introduced Henry Dacon to her. Naturally, too, she had a kindly regard for the man who had wished to marry her, and who, until quite

recently, had borne his rejection patiently. But she could not help his disappointment when he discovered that she liked Dacon so much as to prefer him before all others as the man to whom she was ready to entrust her future. It was not her fault that she should prefer him. Love was not a fault, and could not be got up to order. Can love be regulated in its growth to suit convenience, prudence, circumstances, and climate? All history and fable answer—'No.'

But Gilbert had been a dear friend, and he was now under a very dark cloud. She would have liked to show her sympathy for him—would have been glad to speak any comforting words of hope at her command; but his conduct in attempting to shield himself from blame, as she fancied, by accusing his friend had closed her mouth and suppressed the sympathy she would willingly have given him. And now, when he had vexed and worried her almost beyond endurance, she could not help feeling sorry for him—he looked so very ill when he said: 'God bless you; and may you never have cause to be sorry for the answer you have given me to-day.'

The words, the burning of the letter, and his manner, bewildered and distressed her exceedingly. So she could only find relief in tears, and wish that Henry would come soon to help to explain Gilbert's mysterious behaviour. Of course, whilst speaking to him and in her rage, it had been all plain enough: a rejected lover was simply doing his best and worst to oust his rival from the first place in her regard. But now that he was gone, and she could remember the many traits of a brave, upright, generous nature displayed by Gilbert during years of friendly intercourse, in which, if there had been evil in his character, some sign of it must have been manifested—now, when she remembered this and could think over it, she could only feel bewildered and sorry for him.

The source of all the trouble lay in the recent discovery that a series of gigantic frauds had been perpetrated on the firm of Ellicott & Co., the extensive ship-brokers and ship-owners. No one had been yet directly accused of the crime; but investigations were in progress, and suspicion pointed to one of two persons, because they alone seemed to have it in their power to perpetrate the frauds. Henry Dacon, nephew of Mr Ellicott, the head of the firm, and a junior partner, and Gilbert Astbury, the confidential clerk, were the only persons in England who had the right of access to the documents and information, the possession of which rendered the frauds possible.

The position of the first named seemed to place him beyond suspicion; and little doubt was entertained as to who the real culprit must be. But John Ellicott, in his seventieth year, was still a clear-headed, strong-willed man, and sternly just. He would pronounce no opinion: he would accuse no one until the proofs of guilt had been fully collected. Therefore the investigation proceeded without any arrest being made, and the two suspected persons were presumed to be giving their utmost aid in its prosecution. The assistance of the police had not yet been called for, as Mr Ellicott desired to avoid fuss and scandal until he could say: 'There is the forger—arrest him.' He was the more strongly moved to this

course as there was a bare possibility that a third person might be involved in the crime, and that person was the most important and most trusted of the foreign agents of the house. The possibility was so very remote, however, that his name was not mentioned.

At Cedar Cottage the terrible cloud which hung over them had been talked about in confidence by Dacon and Gilbert. Naturally, it produced the greatest anxiety and excitement in the breasts of the three ladies, who had so far carefully preserved the secret from their most intimate friends. There were, however, mysterious rumours in the City and mysterious paragraphs in the money articles of the leading daily papers which at length so clearly indicated the house of Ellicott & Co. that the crisis was at hand when the whole transaction must become public and pass into the hands of the police.

It was at this juncture that Gilbert paid his hasty visit to the Cottage, and left it with that look of absolute despair which only appears when a man knows that his doom is sealed, and that no earthly power can save him from utter ruin and disgrace.

He did not observe Daisy put down the watering-can and advance to meet him as he was walking blindly towards the gate. She was frightened by his expression, and clasped his arm with her soft hand. 'You are very ill, Gilbert,' she exclaimed. 'What has happened?'

He smiled faintly as he took her hand, pressing it gratefully; for there was no mistaking the depth of the girl's solicitude on his account. 'Little more has happened than I expected, Daisy; and yet that little makes all the difference in the world to me. You will not see me again—or if you do, it will only be to shun me and feel ashamed that you ever called me your friend.'

'I shall never feel that,' she responded quietly; 'and you ought to know it. Whatever misfortune may happen to you it cannot alter my regard for you.'

'I believe you think so now,' he said with a melancholy movement of the head; 'but you do not know—you cannot guess what you will soon hear about me. All the same, I wish I could thank you as I would like to do for the comfort your words give me.'

'I won't believe anything I hear about you if it is bad,' was her decisive comment, and with shrewd instinct she went straight to the point: 'You have persuaded Hetty to see you, and she has been unkind to you. So you are in the dumps, and fancy that all the world is against you. You have been bothered and worried about this nasty business in the City. You have got ill over it, and consequently you are looking at everything through a false glass which distorts the appearance and meaning of all that you see.'

He smiled again faintly. She was so much in earnest in her endeavour to cheer him that she helped him more than she could have imagined to bear the heavy burden he had resolved to take upon himself. They were standing under the shadow of the cedar tree, and his voice was full of subdued emotion.

'Thank you again, Daisy, for what you have said. I shall remember the words all my life

—they will always be the most precious memories of this bitter day. Good-bye.'

Although he uttered the last word in the manner of one who is taking leave of a dear friend for a long time, Daisy refused to accept it in that sense. So, with affected confidence, she inquired: 'When are we to see you again?'

'I do not know—maybe you will never see me again.'

'Are you going away anywhere?'

'Yes; I start this afternoon on what will probably be a very long journey. I do not yet know what my destination is to be.'

'But you will write and tell—aunt?'

'There will be no letters,' he answered gloomily.

'I think you are trying to frighten me, Gilbert,' she ejaculated with a shade of impatience, as they parted at the gate.

She watched him hurrying down the green lane, and fancied that his steps were somewhat unsteady, as if from exhaustion. At the old graveyard he halted, looked back, and seeing Daisy, waved his hand. Then he turned the corner and was out of sight.

STATION-MASTERS.

BY ONE OF THEM.

THE position of a station-master is not arrived at in a day. The average number of years for which a man has to work before he attains this post is about twelve. There are men, and many of them of great practical experience, who have been aiming at this position for twenty years or more, and have not reached it yet; and may never do so. It is the same on railways as in the army, navy, and the professions: influence, to some extent, is almost indispensable; and though men of marked ability have risen in the railway service by virtue of their own merit, still these instances are few and far between. Soldiers and sailors cannot all be generals and admirals, neither can every railway servant become a general manager. The French soldier is taught to believe that he carries a marshal's bâton in his knapsack; so might every railway man be taught that the seal of a general manager is within his grasp. If these honours are never attained, both services will profit by the energy displayed by the members in attempting to attain a position that is held by very few men within half a century.

Simple though the duties of a station-master may appear, yet only years of experience can make him equal to his work. He has often to give orders and decide points which, without the necessary experience, would cause him to be in constant trouble. The ability to cope with his work has grown with him, and it is seldom that he proves incompetent in that respect. There certainly have been men appointed to this position who have been unfit for the post through want of knowledge and experience; but it is the same in almost every occupation. There are favourites at every court, and they can also be found in all grades of life down to the workshops, and their promotion has to be submitted to, whatever their abilities may be.

Into the ears of the station-master are poured all the grievances of railway travellers. He has to hear insult levelled at the Company which

he has the honour to represent. The wrath of the 'commercial' who has missed his connection with a certain train is poured on to this official's head, who for the time being is the Company, and who for the time being wishes he had not the honour of serving. Railways, like many other corporations, become fair game for the public to swindle and abuse: the abuse can be borne; but even railways show fight when they are being 'done;' and were it not for the sharp justice dealt out at police courts, railway investments would be about as lucrative as South American or Turkish bonds.

Station-masters are generally divided into three classes according to the importance of the station; but even then there is a great difference in the position of men belonging to the same class, so that six classes would show more correctly their relative position. From the highest to the lowest station is a very great fall. York and Birmingham are two of the largest and most important stations in the provinces, and Damems in Yorkshire is probably the smallest. The station-master at the latter place is signalman, porter, and booking-clerk combined; and the offices and waiting-room used to consist of one hut not much larger than a bathing-machine, and might have been carried away bodily by two or three men. Yet the official who represents the Company at this station can rub shoulders with his swell confrères at the two large stations mentioned. He of Damems is as much station-master as the others; and he knows when his orders are executed and when his work is done, and he accepts his wages with an easy conscience. At large stations, there is often a deputy or assistant station-master, who of course will have all the hard work to do; while his superior looks on and walks the platform as a captain does his quarter-deck. The deputy will give all orders to the men, having first received them from his chief, who is the responsible head of the station, which includes booking-offices, parcel, left-luggage, and telegraph offices. He also has a certain amount of control, as far as order is concerned, over refreshment rooms, lavatories, and cab-stands. He has no power to dismiss any servant of the Company, but can suspend them, which means that the servant so suspended ceases work, and does not resume it till his case has been considered by the superintendent of the line, who may fine or dismiss the person offending, as he thinks fit. Suspension is therefore the great deterring power in a station-master's hands. During the time that this edict is in force, the man's pay ceases, so that even if he is reinstated without a fine, he loses a considerable sum, as his case is hardly likely to be dealt with within a week.

To the general public, the station-master at large stations is unknown, and it cannot be said that his life is the common one belonging to this class. We must go to smaller stations to see the typical station-master. There he may be seen at all hours, and on all days attending personally to the trains as they come and go. He may be proud or affable, liked or disliked; but he is sure to be known, and it is to him that all travellers go when misfortune overtakes them. A person meeting with an accident, or a passenger being taken suddenly ill at his station, is under his care. If there is a drunken

row in a carriage, the guard appeals to him, and he decides what is to be done. A passenger is over-carried; he hears the case, and sends him back, or makes him pay the excess fare. An old lady losing her luggage appeals to him for his assistance to find it for her, but not always in a lady-like manner. At junctions, his greatest trouble is to decide whether connections are to be maintained when trains are running late. He may have certain instructions what to do, but they do not cover all contingencies, and his decisions may not always meet the approval of his superintendent; he will in that case get a letter, which will say just enough to upset him for a day or two, and everything will appear to be going wrong, for troubles do not come singly, not even on a railway. Besides his own mistakes, he is held responsible in a great degree for those of his staff. A stupid booking-clerk, who cannot or will not book passengers by right routes, will cause some more cutting letters to be received from headquarters; and if the station-master is a sensitive man he feels these rebukes; but, as a rule, his skin is pretty thick; and thick it will have to be if he intends to enjoy life under the usual conditions of the service. His time is never his own, at least theoretically, for he is not supposed to be absent from his station without leave; and even those hours claimed for sleep are sometimes surrendered to the service of the Company. A knock may come at his door in the small-hours of the morning, and a voice will call out: 'Up express off the road at Rolten Siding; both lines blocked, sir.' From his bed he will have to rise, whatever the weather may be, and act as pilot till the road is clear, or till some other official comes down to take charge. Some station-masters have had this sort of summons three times in one week; and when it is borne in mind that his wages cover all these extra duties, it cannot be said that his office is a sinecure.

As a rule, the station-master is not a grumbler, and lives and works in the hope of promotion—a hope that is often deferred, and that has often made his heart sick. Yet with all the petty annoyances he may have to suffer from the public, and the disagreeable letters he may get from headquarters, the life of a station-master may be a pleasant one. The peculiar excitement which most people feel who are travelling for pleasure is unknown to him; but in their outgoings and incomings he finds a source of great interest; and if he cares to study the phases of human life or character as depicted in the human countenance, he has on his platform daily the chance to do so. Strange faces pass him hourly, faces that linger in his memory for days together, and others that are no sooner seen than they are forgotten. To-day, a wedding party will occupy his mind; to-morrow may see his platform filled with mourners. Picnics, school-parties, partings and meetings of children with their parents, are ever engaging his attention, and the mutability of life is ever being brought to his notice. His life is a kaleidoscope, and no two days are the same. At times he may be curt and snappish, and so are we all; but as a rule he is affable, though perhaps a little distant; but no more should be expected from him than from any other public servant.

A house is generally provided for station-masters rent free, which also includes coals and gas. These houses, as a rule, are well built, but with no pretence to architectural beauty; a garden is often attached to them; but where there is not one, the adjacent embankment is brought under cultivation. On some of the lines, notably those running south of London, horticulture at the stations is encouraged, and prizes are given for those that are most ornamental and attractive. Of course a great deal depends upon the station itself, for some of them would defy the power of a Sir Joseph Paxton to beautify. The lines running north of London depend chiefly on the goods and mineral traffic for their dividends, and the appearance of stations then becomes a very secondary matter.

Gardening is perhaps the chief outdoor recreation of the station-master; he has no time for cricket, football, or angling; and even his walks must have a limit, for he must be near his station at all times, in case of emergency. But if he is somewhat of a prisoner in the summer months, he is better off in the long winter evenings; for though he has to be on the spot, he can finish his work when he likes, and indulge in the comfort of his own fireside to his heart's content. Many of them are well-read men; but a genius in literature has not yet appeared among station-masters, unless we can claim Patrick Brontë, brother of the immortal Charlotte Brontë, as one of us. He was for a time a station-master on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway; but his restless spirit could not exist in the monotony and confinement inseparable from a small country station, and he ultimately broke the bonds of discipline only to return home and go from bad to worse. There he ended his wild career in an early death, amidst scenes sorrowfully described by his sister Charlotte, who, though so good herself, could yet love and pity her erring brother. Had he lived and reformed his character, English literature would undoubtedly have been enriched by his pen.

Station-masters have risen to the highest office on a railway, and though with some men this position may be considered the end of their promotion, with others it is but the beginning. It is the first step in which a man comes in actual contact with officers of the executive, and his abilities become known to those who can further his advancement in the service. Many appointments in the colonies are open to him, as nearly all the executive officers of our colonial lines are filled from the home railways. As a class of men, station-masters may be said to live to a good age; there are many between sixty and seventy years of age who are in active service; but as a superannuation fund exists on most lines, they are expected to retire at the age of sixty. After a lifetime in the service, the peace and quietness of retirement is not always appreciated, and many of them leave their old surroundings with a miserable feeling of having nothing to do. They will go daily to the railway station, and each visit impresses more and more upon their mind the fact that they no longer belong to the service; they feel their position, and this feeling becomes a disease. It is noticed that they have not visited the station for some time, and inquiry makes the reason

known. They have taken to bed, worn out with the trouble of having severed their connection with the railway and having nothing more to live for. That they have arrived at the terminus of their life's journey is the next and last thing that is heard of them.

MY PET.

If you were asked, reader, to guess what my pet is, or rather *who* he is—for he is, I hope, important enough to admit of my dispensing with the neuter gender—I am sure you would not succeed in guessing. Well, then, I may as well tell you that he is a small orang-outang, or what should perhaps be more correctly termed a 'gibbon.' There are not a few who do not know what a gibbon is. Let those in ignorance of what a funny little animal he is, turn to that entertaining work called Wood's *Natural History*, where they will find the gibbon most accurately described. At the time, however, that the work alluded to was written, the gibbon of the island of Hainan (in the China Sea) was unknown, and is not therefore described in it. The white-faced gibbon of the Straits is mentioned; but his jet-black relative with bushy hair and handsome face was left out. What a true prize a black gibbon is! Most affectionate in his nature, possessed of a pleasing voice and winning ways, he is truly a good companion.

My office, in the last port where I was stationed, looked over the sea, and had a veranda outside it, which of course was kept sacred. I was sitting one day in my office-chair, looking out over the bay beyond, to collect my thoughts for a despatch then in hand, when I espied a Celestial coming along the veranda with some dark object in his arms, the dark object showing its appreciation of the attention it was receiving by placing two arms of inordinate length round the man's neck. I naturally rose up to see what this phenomenon was, and having been told that it was a rare animal, I at once made overtures for his purchase. As soon as negotiations were concluded, I fastened my purchase—a black gibbon—to my copying-press, instead of sending him up to my house, being anxious to introduce him myself to my two dogs and to Joseph the cat. I could not entrust a rare animal to my servants, lest the introduction through their agency to Joseph and the rest might result in some disaster. When I fastened the gibbon to the press I took no account of the length of the animal's arms, and I was therefore not a little surprised when a black hand took possession of a red-and-blue pencil and a black mouth began to eat it. Nature is said, in her beneficence, to instruct the lower animals what to eat and what to avoid. That no doubt applies to an animal in the wild state, such animal being directed by instinct where to find an antidote to anything deleterious which it may have eaten. An animal in captivity must, however, be treated differently, and must not be allowed to do as it likes. So I reasoned; and as I had no herb ready to correct the evil which I knew would result from eating a pencil, I proceeded to recover the stolen article. Though my new pet did not mind being touched, though he would jump into your lap and make himself at home, he strongly objected to part with anything which he had once got hold of, and a

good deal of diplomacy had to be used before I repossessed myself of the pencil.

Scarcely was this fun at an end, before some black fingers were dipped into the ink; and when the ink was removed out of reach, the gum-bottle was next turned over, the gum being particularly appreciated. Thinking that the animal might be thirsty, I put a saucer of water before him; but though easy to put the saucer down, it was impossible to pick it up again, even though there was not a drop of water left in it. It seemed to me, on reflection, that I had made a bad purchase. I did not clearly see how I was to feed an animal that was so intractable, and I had serious misgivings that my new pet would give me a lot of trouble, and quite likely would die in three months. Monkeys are generally supposed to be troubled either with heart-disease or with consumption, and to endure captivity for a short time only. Thus, I had given my gibbon three months to live, and I fully expected that before four months had passed he would be under a glass case in my drawing-room. I am extremely pleased to say that, at the time I write—more than two years since I purchased him—he is still alive, though I must confess it has not been easy to rescue him from the jaws of death on several occasions.

At first, the name of 'Sambo' was given to the gibbon, on account of its jet-black colour; then this was changed in course of time to 'Samuel,' the little fellow becoming too respectable to be called Sambo. At the last port at which I was stationed, the lower windows of my dwelling-house were provided with iron bars—about five inches apart—as a protection against thieves. These bars were a great convenience to me, as I could attach Sam to them at meal-times, thus keeping him out of mischief whilst giving him plenty of freedom. The question of feeding Sam was not an easy one to tackle. If we sat down and began eating before he was served, the most noisy protests were made; and when the saucer of rice was put down, there was no one courageous enough to recover the empty saucer. The point was often settled by Sam himself, who, having finished his rice, would throw the saucer into the air a few times—catching it very cleverly—and then hurl it away from him. A wooden bowl was found to answer better; but this also received much rough usage, and had to be repeatedly renewed.

One very noticeable feature about Sam was his extreme jealousy. If I stroked the cat in his presence, he used to get into a paroxysm of rage and make great efforts to bite me. He would be almost as much vexed if I patted the dogs. When a guest came to luncheon, he was so angry at the intrusion that he often had to be removed. He would absorb all the conversation until removal, it being quite impossible to keep him quiet. He had a singular objection—he has it now in a mild way—to anything being removed by the servants; and had he been fastened to my chair instead of the window, no plate once put on the table could have been removed. When in the drawing-room with me—and he was often there—he would even fly at my wife if she attempted to touch the tea-things. At this date he has sobered down a good deal; but even now, though a servant may bring me a letter, he must not take away a reply if Sam

is with me. He objects to any one coming near me; and if my wife shakes my coat, or even touches my shoulder, he catches hold of her, though now perhaps more in play than in anger.

His disposition has naturally changed during his long captivity, and I am therefore obliged to speak of his actions in the past tense. Sitting up, Sam measures sixteen and a half inches; but his arms are twenty-three inches long. He is jet black all over, has fur as thick as that of many animals which live in cold climes, and the hair on the top of his head grows up into a point, which naturally enhances his personal appearance. His nose is flat, and is doubtless more useful than ornamental. He has a good voice, and whether he calls out for his food or expresses his delight at seeing you, his notes are equally agreeable. When I take him his bread and milk at half-past six every morning, he shows his gratitude in a queer way: prostrating himself, he makes what no doubt are eloquent speeches in his own language. After he has spoken for some time and made numerous faces, he takes hold of my hand and hugs it. Until he has gone through this elaborate performance, he will not touch his food. Though his diet should consist of rice and fruit only, he often has bread and jam, and too often a slice of cake. He has no objection, moreover, to either rice-pudding or plum-pudding. When his appetite shows signs of weakness, an egg beaten up in milk revives him; and symptoms of fever call for a little quinine mixed with sugar. I never give Sam *tea*. Tea makes such animals nervous, and has other deleterious effects on their constitutions, which need not be particularised here. Orang-outangs taken to Britain are generally dosed with tea on arrival, and are given an inordinate quantity of fruit to eat. Very little fruit is required, and care should be taken not to give too much water. In their wild state, gibbons no doubt eat a large quantity of fruit; but then nature comes to their aid if ill effects arise, and points out to them the herb which will cure them. In captivity, they do not get much exercise, and science can do very little for them when bodily ailments occur.

If Sam breaks loose in the summer, he helps himself liberally to bananas: if his rope gives way in the winter, he makes his way to the drawing-room; there he warms himself, and having done this, he jumps on the sofa, pulls an anti-macassar over him, and goes to sleep.

When I go into the garden, I release him altogether. He jumps from tree to tree, to the great amazement of the Celestials, who watch his movements from hillocks outside my grounds, and occasionally he comes down to have a game with my two pups. It is not a common sight to see a gibbon loose, nor can you always get a picture of a gibbon and a dog rolling over and over each other in play. Perhaps some of my readers may at one time or another have kept gibbons. If they have, they must have been struck with the singular way in which gibbons quench their thirst. The young gibbon does not put his mouth to the water when he wants to drink; he dips his *left* hand into it and sucks the back of his fingers, the hair which is on them taking up about half a teaspoonful of water at a time. As he grows older, he shakes off this youthful folly, and then

dips his head into the water and sucks the fluid up in the same way that a horse does. What the gibbon lives on in his native wilds it is impossible to say; but he evidently has a predilection for spiders' webs. My pet clears away all webs within his reach, and not liking to leave the owners of them homeless, he devours them too. He is very fond of hard-backed beetles; but these delicacies are now strictly forbidden, as they are not calculated to agree with bread and jam or with rice-pudding.

It was not an easy matter to keep Sam alive in the tropics: now that he is not only well out of the tropics but in a region where the winters are severe, one may well despair of being able to preserve him. During the twenty-seven months which he has now spent with me, he has been my constant companion. He went with me to the office when I was in the south of China; he goes with me now that I am in the north. In the south he used to pull the hats of my chair-coolies off: here he continues this play, varying it by pulling my hat off and throwing it out of the chair. At the office he constitutes himself my special guardian, making strong protests against any one approaching my desk. He will allow a stranger to go up to him and scratch his head; but he makes the noisiest demonstrations possible if any one ventures to shake hands with me or touch anything on my desk. If I leave my house in the morning without him, he speedily lets me understand how sore in spirit he is, and I have eventually to take him. Sometimes I am reluctant to take him, as he pulls things about at the office, and on the way to the office he swoops down on any fruit which may be within range. If he captures a pear or an apple, he returns with it to the sedan-chair in great triumph, showing as much pleasure in his face, and making as much noise as a child does when given a piece of cake of more than ordinary richness or a lollipop of extra quality. I am so well known here, that itinerant fruit-vendors know where to apply for compensation for thefts committed. There is no ill feeling created; indeed, there are roars of laughter when the 'black monkey,' as they term Sam, makes a good seizure. I have to keep a string of 'cash' at the office to pay for Sam's depredations.

SOME SOCIAL SLIPS.

'I BEG your pardon, madam, but you are sitting on my hat,' exclaimed a gentleman. 'Oh, pray excuse me; I thought it was my husband's,' was the unexpected reply.—In another instance of conjugal amenities, a wife said to her husband: 'I saw Mrs Becker this morning, and she complained that on the occasion of her last visit you were so rude to her that she thought she must have offended you.' 'Nothing of the kind,' he answered. 'On the contrary, I like her very much; but it was rather dark at the time, and when I entered the room at first I thought it was you.'

'Poor John—he was a kind and forbearing husband,' sobbed John's widow on her return from the funeral. 'Yes,' said a sympathising neighbour; 'but it is all for the best. You must try to comfort yourself, my dear, with the thought that your husband is at peace at last.'

A gentleman had accompanied a friend home to dinner, and as they seated themselves at the table, the hostess remarked: 'I trust that you will make allowances, Mr Blankley. My servant left me very unexpectedly, and I was compelled to cook the dinner myself.' 'Oh, certainly, my dear madam, certainly,' responded the guest with great emphasis: 'I can put up with anything.'

Another amusing slip took the form of an unhappy after-dinner speech. There was an entertainment given by an earl deservedly popular. It was extremely handsome, and champagne flowed freely. The evening was well advanced when a benignant old gentleman rose to propose a toast. He spoke with fluency, but somehow he said exactly the opposite to what he meant. 'I feel,' said he, 'that for a plain country squire like myself to address this learned company is indeed to cast pearls before swine.' Never was so successful a speech made. He could get no further for many minutes. The company applauded vociferously and as though they would never cease.

'Now, Miss Brown,' said an earnest listener, 'won't you play something for us?' 'No, thank you,' said the lady; 'I'd rather hear Mr Jones.' Earnest Listener: 'So would I, but'—Here he was stopped by the expression on the young lady's face; and he looked confused for half an hour after she had indignantly turned and left him.—A person who was recently called into court for the purpose of proving the correctness of a surgeon's bill, was asked whether the doctor did not make several visits after the patient was out of danger. 'No,' replied the witness, 'I considered the patient in danger as long as the doctor continued his visits.'

A physician walking with a friend, said to him: 'Let us avoid that pretty little woman you see there on the left. She knows me, and casts on me looks of indignation. I attended her husband.' 'Ah! I understand. You had the misfortune to despatch him,' was the remark that slipped out. 'On the contrary,' replied the doctor, 'I saved him!'—A guest at a country inn exclaimed: 'I say, landlord, your food is worse than it was last year!' 'Impossible, sir,' was the rather ambiguous reply of the landlord.—'Why,' said a counsel to a witness, 'are you so very precise in your statement? Are you afraid of telling an untruth?' Witness (promptly): 'No, sir.'—At a recent inquiry into the sanity of a young man of large property, witnesses were being called to prove that he was unfit to manage his affairs. A curious slip was made by a schoolmaster when asked if he had formed any opinion as to the state of mind of the alleged lunatic. 'Oh yes,' he replied: 'I can certify he is an idiot. He was one of my favourite pupils.'—'I have met this man,' said a lawyer with extreme severity, 'in a great many places where I would be ashamed to be seen myself;' and then he paused and looked with astonishment at the smiling court and jury.

Here are a few other instances of something very like putting one's foot in it. The legislature of a Western state having a bill under consideration for the regulation of tax collectors, an honourable member got upon his feet and said: 'Mr Speaker, I go in heavy for that bill. The tax-collectors are all a set of knaves. I was one myself for ten years.' The bill

passed.—'How are you getting on in your new place?' asked a lady of a girl whom she had recommended for a situation. 'Very well, thanks.' 'I am glad to hear of it,' said the lady. 'Your employer is a nice person, and you cannot do too much for her.' 'I don't mean to, ma'am,' was the innocent reply.

Here is a naïve declaration from the prospectus of a weekly paper: 'The staff, with the exception of the editor, has been very carefully selected, and deserves to secure success.'—A Californian newspaper is said to have been sued for libel by a widow for speaking of her deceased husband as having 'gone to a happier home.'—'Dear sir,' said an amateur farmer just from the country, writing to the secretary of an Agricultural Society, 'put me down on your list of cattle for a calf.'—A certain caravan orator at a fair, after a long yarn descriptive of what was to be seen inside, wound up by saying: 'Step in, gentlemen; step in! Take my word for it, you will be highly delighted when you come out.'—'Allow me, madam, to congratulate you on your acquaintance with that charming lady,' said a gallant Hungarian; 'she is young, beautiful, and intelligent.' 'Oh, certainly,' replied the lady. 'But don't you think she is a trifle conceited?' 'Why, madam, just put yourself in her place, and say would you not be conceited too?' was the rather startling comment.

This social slip is even worse. A City man complained bitterly of the conduct of his son. He related at length to an old friend all the young man's escapades. 'You should speak to him with firmness and recall him to his duty,' said the friend. 'But he pays not the least attention to what I say; he listens only to the advice of fools. I wish you would talk to him.'

D I F F I D E N C E.

My lady sits beside me, and her eyes
Are deep with distant thought;
From pearl-strown Persian sands a richer prize
No diver ever brought.

For Love is purified by suffering;
The chambers of her soul
Have held the moaning of the tides that bring
Death's galleys on their roll.

Would that I heard the music of her speech!
Still in her silence she
Can teach what Wisdom's voice could never teach,
Were that to tutor me.

For Love himself is warder of the gate
That leadeth to her heart;
He oped the door for me, and there I wait
Till she bids me depart.

Planet and star rise clear and strong above;
Grant, Heaven, they be not all
The lights of the chapelle ardente of Love
Before his funeral.

J. WILLIAMS.

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CONFLICTING VIEWS OF HISTORY.

'HISTORIES,' says Bacon, 'make men wise;' and by 'wise' he probably meant sound in judgment, comprehensive in view, prudent in the ordering of one's own life. The famous saying of Archbishop Usher is to the same effect: not to know the past is always to be a child. 'History,' says Dryden also, 'is the most pleasant school of wisdom.' These judgments probably record the general opinion of the educational value of history; yet from this opinion there have always been eminent dissentients. Locke, and in our own day Mr Herbert Spencer, are far from having such a high opinion of the value of history, and assign it but a low place in their scheme of studies. At first sight it seems strange that difference of opinion should be possible on such a subject. It is from the experience of his own past that the individual learns the wisdom wherewith to direct his steps; and it seems a natural conclusion that the race as a whole should learn its lesson on the same terms. The artist, whatever be his originality, can but order in different relations materials already in his hands. So in the most revolutionary of social or political movements, the past is in reality directing and controlling all. For every deed of the French Revolution, a precedent can be quoted. If the past, therefore, be thus everywhere and always present, can there be a better school of wisdom than the records which will faithfully represent to us the actors and doings in that past, at once the parent and the schoolmaster of the present? Put in this simple fashion, the question admits but of one answer. Locke and Bacon would certainly not have disagreed thus far.

Unfortunately, however, the question does not admit of such a simple solution. Since history began to be written, men have been unable to agree as to what it is in the past that best supplies the lessons we seek. They have even differed as to the best methods of presenting that lesson when it has been found. The matter and the manner of history, therefore, are alike matters of

dispute. As history is thus at a singular disadvantage with certain other departments of human knowledge, we can scarcely be surprised that there should exist some difference of opinion with regard to its comparative educational value. A few remarks on the different conceptions of history that have prevailed even during the last two centuries will suffice to show that this is a subject on which unanimity need never be looked for.

Dryden was the contemporary of Locke; and as he was the greatest man of letters of his day, his views of history may be regarded as the most enlightened then possible. In an interesting fragment accompanying a life of Plutarch he has spoken at length of what he considers to be the proper domain and function of the historian. He distinguishes three departments of history—biography, annals, and history proper. The subject-matter of annals and history proper is identical: they differ only in their mode of presenting it. The historian proper must aim at a certain 'dignity and gravity of style,' and he is at liberty to indulge in legitimate guesses at the probable causes of events—always, however, on the condition that he sees to it that he is free from all prejudice and superstition. He must also be careful to pass by all 'matters of trivial moment as debasing the majesty of his work.' Here we have Dryden's conception of what is the true domain of history. Nothing must come within its province that involves a break in the majestic march of the historian's style. In other words, the *form* of the history is of graver importance than the *matter*. It gives us also a curious idea of the uncritical way of thinking about history in Dryden's day, when he tells us that the one British historian of the first rank is the Scotsman, George Buchanan. On the real value of Buchanan's History of Scotland it is sufficient to quote the late Mr Hill Burton, who was disposed to speak well of his celebrated countryman. 'Buchanan's History,' he says, 'is of no more use and value than as a bulky exercise in the composition of classical Latin.' As at least the first half of Buchanan's History is pure fable, this

judgment can scarcely be considered too severe. When we have a man like Dryden, therefore, with such ideas about history, we need hardly wonder that his contemporary Locke should think lightly of its educational value.

Voltaire was among the first to introduce a more rational conception of the true nature of history. He treats with contempt the two types of the historian of his own day—those who thought they did the world a service in publishing the petty gossip of courts; and those, equally foolish, who thought that history is but the detail of treaties and battles. In a few pregnant sentences in a passage published in 1744, he sketches what he thinks is the true field of history. To be instructive, he says, history should account to us for the growth or decrease of population in different countries; it should explain why one nation comes to be strong on land, and another on the sea; it should relate the introduction of the arts, commerce, and manufactures among different peoples; it should point out the radical vice and the dominant virtue of each nationality; and above all it should have for its grand subject the changes in the laws, customs, and character of men. The great histories of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon in large degree realised Voltaire's ideal, and it may be admitted that in many respects they are to this day unsurpassed. Yet even they are by no means free from the conventional notion of the so-called 'dignity of history.' Dazzling panoramic effect is their predominating aim, and not the single-minded desire to see and to expound the drift and scope of the great societies of men.

It is only in our own age that Voltaire's conceptions have been worked out with fidelity and adequate intelligence. Yet at no previous time have so many conflicting notions prevailed regarding the true scope and aim of history. Our historians cannot even agree as to what history proper really is. One eminent historian tells us that history properly understood is essentially the history of the *state*. We may have histories of art, of science, of literature, of manufactures; but the historian proper has no concern with these things. In treating of these he is poaching on another's manor, dissipating his own energies, weakening his own work. Each of these subjects should have its own special historian, who is yet no historian in the true sense of the word. On the other hand, we have another school who hold that the domain of the historian is co-extensive with the life of a people, that it has for its legitimate theme not only the work of statesmen, but of authors, of artists, of traders, and of handicraftsmen. For those who read and do not write history the dispute does not seem one of grave importance.

But this dispute is only one of many. Is it the primary aim of the historian to interest or to instruct? The difference of opinion here has arisen mainly in connection with Macaulay's

famous History. On the one hand it is maintained that the type of mind required to produce a work like that of Macaulay is essentially unhistorical. Its tendency is to search only for facts that will tell, and to relate them in a manner that indisposes the mind of the readers to receive the true lessons of history. Such a mind as Macaulay's, it is said, finds its true sphere not in history but in historical romance. With the best intentions in the world, a Macaulay unconsciously warps facts, and groups them in a manner that the scientific historian has but the invidious task of undoing. If it be said that Macaulay at least ensures readers, it is replied that this but makes matters worse. These readers have only had bad mental habits aggravated, and have but learned lessons which they will have daily to unlearn. Writers who reason thus maintain that the paramount duty of the historian is to eschew this desire to interest his readers. The author of a scientific treatise thinks only of how he may most simply and accurately state his facts and prove his conclusions; and in no respect is the aim of the true historian different from this.

It is evident that the question here in dispute is one that cannot be summarily settled. The writers of both schools agree in saying that truth is to be set before every other consideration; and they each maintain that their own method is that best fitted to elicit and to present it. When the question is closely considered, it seems to resolve itself into this—Is emotion or the absence of it more likely to mislead a writer? It is clear that no categorical answer to this question is possible. If emotion tends to obscure perception, the want of emotion is as likely to blunt it. Every event and every person connected with the French Revolution may be analysed with perfect precision and dispassionateness, but should we then be in a position to realise that demoniac burst of human passion? If we are to have the whole truth, imaginative presentment must have its place as well as scientific analysis, and Carlyle must at least supplement Mignet.

Another point keenly discussed at present by writers of history, and one of far greater importance than any of those already touched on, is the function of great men in the development of society. Carlyle's extreme views on this subject never perhaps found many supporters. That the bulk of mankind are but so many ciphers, and great men the figures that give them significance, is a conception pardonable only as a distortion of a great truth. Before Carlyle's day there was indeed no tendency to minimise the importance of great men. Hume, Robertson, and even Gibbon put their best work into their accounts of the great characters that came in their way. It would seem, however, that Carlyle's extreme views have brought about something like a reaction. The tendency at present is to dwarf the figures which have long seemed to tower above their contemporaries. In the latest History of the reign of Charles I. we have a signal example of this tendency. One of the great

traditional figures of English history is John Hampden, whose personality Macaulay has made familiar to every English reader. In the History of which we speak, Hampden is a dim figure in the background, who plays the pettiest part in the great struggle of his time. If common-sense revolt somewhat at Carlyle's conception, no more is it reconciled with this later view. Every age has its own great men, and we see for ourselves how in our own day one or two great men seem to absorb into themselves the life of a people. And if this is so in our own day, we may conceive that in greater or less degree it has ever been the same.

There is finally the great question whether a 'philosophy of history' is possible. As from a given arc we can determine the complete circle, may we from the facts of the past foreshadow what must be the course of the future? The question will probably occupy men's minds to the end of time; but meanwhile, according as he answers it must the historian be unconsciously biassed in his treatment of the past. If he believe that a philosophy of history is possible, he will inevitably manipulate his facts to suit his theory.

From all these conflicting views, we gather that history can never present us with a definite and perfectly coherent body of knowledge such as we have in the sciences. Yet it must surely be a wise instinct that has led every people to make the deeds of their fathers the first and chief study of youth. A fact of science and a fact of history differ fundamentally in this—that the former permits of only one construction, the latter of a thousand. It is by reason of this very peculiarity that the facts of history have a supreme value of their own in developing men's character and intelligence.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XI.

In the early morning, Madame Vigne crept quietly into the room where the two wanderers lay, and looked at them with an air which was motherly and almost proprietorial. They were both sound asleep, and they certainly looked innocent enough to awaken all the good creature's womanly sympathies. John, with his fair hair tumbled about his forehead and his cheeks a little flushed with sleep, lay with outcast arms and upturned face, breathing softly and regularly. His skin was of exquisite fairness, and he pleased Madame's eye more than the swarthy and bulldog William, who even in his sleep wore a look of resolution, and lay curled up doggedly with his face half-buried in the pillow, as if he slept with a purpose, and were determined to have full value for his time.

Madame Vigne herself was of a swart complexion. Madame Vigne was of Marseilles, and came of swart people, and had lived most of her life amidst a swart population. So John's delightful English fairness made him charming to her; and when she had stood looking at him for a time, she went round to his side of the bed, and sitting down there, caressed his hair with her dark plump hand, and smoothed it with great gentleness so as not to awake him.

'You will take care of yourself wherever you go,' she said to herself, nodding her curly head at Will, and silently apostrophising him. 'But this poor innocent!'—

The little Hector of whom she had spoken last night had had raven hair and lustrous black eyes and cheeks like a berry; but she found a likeness to him in John, somehow, as women will, and took a tender fancy to the boy, which was all the more pronounced because of her memory of his helpless looks of the night before.

When she had looked her fill, Madame stole softly from the room and, closing the door behind her with great caution, went silently down-stairs. There, aided by a rosy-cheeked damsel of thirteen or so, who answered to the name of Sar'anne—a Frenchified mutilation of Sarah Anne—she busied herself in household preparations until a moon-faced kitchen clock which struck the quarters announced half-past seven. At that she slid up-stairs again and knocked softly at three separate doors. M. Vigne answered grumpily from behind the first; the little foreigner responded chirpily from behind the second; and from behind the third, which was situated in the garret, no answer came at all. Madame opened the door and whispered: 'Mr Orme! Mr Orme!'

A voice which sounded as if it were obscured by bedclothes, answered 'Hillo!' and a snore followed so close upon the exclamation that it was evident that the speaker had gone to sleep again at once.

'Mr Orme!' repeated Madame in a sibilant whisper, 'if you do not answer at once, I vow there will be no breakfast for you.'

'What's the matter?' asked the inmate of the chamber in a voice at once unctuous and husky.

'It is time to get up,' responded Madame. 'Dress very silently; there are two children asleep below you, and I do not wish them to be wakened.'

Mr Orme, with a yawn which sounded midway between a moan of anguish and a groan of indignation, stirred in bed, and leaning over, artfully paddled with his hand upon the floor to impress his landlady with the belief that he had arisen.

'I know better than that,' said Madame, holding the door slightly ajar. 'Come and tap; I shall not believe you until you do.'

The invisible Mr Orme yawned again, and this time the note was all submissive. A moment later, a shuffling footstep crossed the room, and a set of tremulous knuckles rapped at the inside of the door.

'Be very careful,' Madame whispered, 'and make no noise.'

A yawn like the growl of a caged bear, with the words 'All right' somehow muffled in it, responded to this injunction; and Madame, stealing down-stairs again, peeped in passing into the room in which the young wayfarers lay, and finding them both still sound asleep, continued her downward course. A quarter of an hour later, M. Vigne, the little foreigner, and Madame were seated at breakfast; and when they were half-way through the meal, Mr Orme appeared. Mr Orme had so balloon-like a figure, and his arms and legs were so stiffly attached to it, that he had an air of being inflated, and could hardly have surprised anybody much if at any given moment he had floated upward and bobbed his bald head

against the ceiling. There was a contradictory sloth and weight in all his movements, and his face expressed a contradiction equally pronounced. Whether he were originally made to express the bitterest discontent with things in general, and had been persuaded after trial to accept his troubles comically; or whether he had been intended for a spirit of mirth, who had found his humour crushed by adverse circumstances, his face bore such a blending of humorous opposites that it would have been impossible to say. At one time the corners of his mouth would take an almost tearful downward curve, whilst his moist eye trembled, and his eyebrows twitched with what looked like hidden laughter; and at another the moist eye would express the profoundest melancholy, whilst the other features of his too rubicund visage seemed to be struggling with a hidden smile. His nose seemed to be on fire and to lend an actual radiance to the chamber; but the rest of his face was woefully pale in comparison; and these signs, coupled with the tremulous motion of his hands, seemed to indicate a fairly confirmed habit of intemperance.

'One can see where you're going, Mr Orme,' said the lady of the house severely. 'It is no fault of mine if your coffee is cold; and I suppose it is useless to offer you anything to eat.'

Mr Orme's pale baldness was sparsely interrupted by tufts of disreputable gray hair of that peculiar tone which seems never to belong to respectable or successful people. He put up his shaky hands and clutched a few of the tufts on being thus addressed, and groaned softly to himself.

'You will get no pity,' said Madame. 'Take your coffee and go to your work.'

He helped himself to milk and sugar with an air at once surreptitious and apologetic and drank in silence.

'The children, my dear Mathilde?' said M. Vigne, speaking in his native language. 'Have you thought of anything? Have you decided upon anything?'

'You know, Jean,' Madame Vigne responded, 'that I shall not dream of deciding upon anything until I have consulted you.'—M. Vigne nodded solemnly in assent to this statement.—'I ask myself first,' pursued Madame, 'what is my Christian duty. Perhaps they are young marauders.' She looked hard at her husband; and M. Vigne looked searchingly at her. When he had decided that he was expected to shake his head at this, he shook it vehemently. 'I knew,' she said triumphantly, 'that you would not think so. Perhaps they have been driven from a harsh home by abominable cruelty.'

'It is very probable,' said M. Vigne.

'I think so too,' Madame responded; 'but I will question them this morning and find out what I can about them.'

'That,' returned Monsieur, 'is what I should have desired.'

'Evidently,' said Madame, 'or I should have asked you first.'

Mr Orme, during this brief colloquy, except that he had groaned softly to himself at measured intervals, like a human timepiece constructed to compute the moments in that dismal fashion, had kept silence, turning his moist eye upon Madame

when she spoke, and upon her husband when he answered.

'Who are the children, Madame?' he asked in English. 'This is the second time I've heard of 'em.'

'I do not know who they are,' Madame answered. 'They were brought here last night by M. Jousserau, who met them in the street. They have come on foot from somewhere'—waving her fat hands hither and thither, as if to indicate complete incertitude as to the direction from which the wayfarers had arrived. 'They are respectable; they are dressed like little gentlemen. One of them is marked from head to foot—do you hear me?' (with a tragic wrath before which Mr Orme shrank and cowered)—'is marked from head to foot with cruel blows.'

'I daresay,' said Mr Orme, 'that somebody has beaten him.'

Madame hailed his inspiration with a glance of so much scorn that Mr Orme withdrew into himself and avoided her eye whilst he sipped the remnant of his coffee.

'It is time we went,' said M. Vigne, rising and addressing his compatriot.

'Do you hear that?' said Madame, turning upon her English lodger. 'You understand French fast enough when it is not your business. You are an omnibus to go to work, and an express to leave it.'

Mr Orme gathered himself shakily together and arose. 'I was only waiting, ma'am,' he said, standing before her, with his elbows glued to his sides, and his hands waving feebly like the flippers of a seal—'I was only waiting, ma'am, to indicate that in case either of the young gentlemen should be in want of employment, and should be qualified to undertake the very simple functions'—

'You will be late,' said Madame, cutting him short. 'In point of fact you are late already.'

Mr Orme said no more, but after one or two false starts, pattered aimlessly to the door, sighted a dingy silk hat upon a hook in the hall, pattered towards that, and after an interval for reflection, took it from the hook and put it on. Then he pattered towards the door with a curious air of going there by accident, and slipped furtively into the street.

Madame paid two or three visits to her protégés before they awoke, but at length found them half dressed. She kissed them both in a business-like way, and stood by to superintend their toilet, as she had done on the previous evening, retiring for a moment to bring up their shoes, which had been cleaned and polished with great fineness by the hands of Sarah Anne. When they were fully dressed, she ushered them down-stairs, and the little domestic appeared with a second edition of breakfast: a pot of coffee, by no means too strong, for Madame Vigne's purse was narrower than her instincts of hospitality, a great bowl of milk, a big loaf, and a small pat of butter. Both the boys had healthy appetites, and in spite of their hearty meal of the night before, they attacked these simple provisions with a gusto at which Madame looked on well pleased.

'And now,' said Madame, when Sarah Anne had cleared away, 'I must have a talk with you little men. What do you little men mean to do?'

'We mean to go to London, ma'am,' said Will.

'And what do you mean to do when you have got to London?'

'I shall find something to do there, if you please, ma'am.'

'Perhaps you may, perhaps you may not,' Madame responded. 'London is a big place, my child, and all big places are cruel.—Do you know anybody in London?'

'No, ma'am,' said Will. The question cast him down more than a little, and his face showed it. 'We don't know anybody in London.'

'Well now, tell me,' said Madame, drawing her seat nearer, and laying a kindly hand upon John's light head while she questioned his companion, 'why did you run away from home?'

There was something so very motherly in Madame's kindly face, something in the gesture with which she caressed John's curls, something even in the cushioning proportions of her overgrown figure, which invited confidence. Will began to explain, and she to question, and in a little while the whole story became tolerably clear. Madame looked more and more troubled, though none the less affectionate and kindly, as the tale went on.

'I do not know what I am to do,' she said perplexedly. 'It is not possible to find it in the heart to send you back again, and it is not possible to find it in the heart to let two babes wander all over the world alone. You must stay here until dinner-time, and then my husband shall decide about you.'

The boys were none too eager for a renewal of their march, for the first day's walk had left them sore-footed and stiff-limbed. Even Will was contented with an hour or two's respite from the road, and by-and-by John was perfectly happy and absorbed.

'Stay here,' said Madame; 'I will find you something to do.'

She bustled away, and in a little while returned with two frames, in either of which a clean unmarked sheet of drawing-paper was tightly strained over a sheet of glass. These frames being set in the window, a design in outline strained at the back of the glass came clearly into view. Madame produced two needles set in cork, and instructed the boys to prick upon the clean paper over the outlines indicated below.

'Now,' said Madame, 'anybody who chooses to be careful can do this work very nicely; and anybody who chooses to be careless can spoil the paper by pricking in the wrong places. That I am sure you are too kind to do, for the paper is cartridge paper, and every sheet costs threepence.—Look! Let me show you to begin with.' And Madame, taking one of the cork-set needles, pricked over the edge of a leaf in the left-hand top corner of one of the frames. John watched with great interest, and when she turned smilingly towards him, asking if he thought he could do that, he reached out his hand eagerly for the home-made stylus and set to work at once with great care and diligence. When he had pricked out the stalk on which the leaf depended, he turned round to Madame for approval.

'That will do excellently,' she said, clapping her fat hands together in applause.—'And now let me see what you can do.'

Will also received his lesson, and set to work; and Madame having watched for a minute or two went away to her household concerns. She sailed in at intervals to see how the work progressed, and was lavish in enthusiastic compliment, so that both the boys were contented with their labour and felt in a very little time quite accustomed to it. It was a simple and easy task, and to John's blunt mind it seemed even delightful. There was a bird upon the bough he had been set to trace, hovering with outspread wings above a nest from which were thrust half-a-dozen callow heads and open bills. This excited him so strongly that he must needs desert the other parts of the design for it, and he worked away with bright eyes and eager face and parted lips until he had followed every line of it actually. Then he let off an exultant crow, and turned so vivid a look upon his companion that Will was quite amazed at him.

'Why, Jack,' he said, 'you're like what you used to be.'

'Am I?' said Jack, without paying much heed to the exclamation.—'Look at it! Ain't it jolly? Wouldn't you think she was just flying? I say, how the chaps that do this must watch the birds. It isn't like drawing from a copy, because they won't keep still a second. She wouldn't be like that longer than it would take to clap your hands together.'

'Yes,' said Will, 'it's jolly pretty.' Then, after a lengthy pause: 'Do you think this is work, Jack?'

'I don't know,' Jack answered. 'It's jolly easy, if it is, and jolly nice as well.'

There was no trace upon him of the settled dullness into which he had fallen for months past, and he went back to his labour with the warmth and light of this new enthusiasm still upon him. But in a little while he tired among the intricacies of branch and leaf, and leaning his head on Will's shoulder, fell to watching him dreamily whilst he pricked away with a dogged and careful persistence thoroughly characteristic of him. With occasional renewals of enthusiasm on John's part, and slow, conscientious persistence on Will's side, the work lasted the morning through; and Madame professed herself delighted by their skill and industry when she came in to lay the cloth for dinner. There was such a community established between John and Madame in this brief space of time that he took her by the hand, and dragged her to the window to exult in his work with as little shyness as if he had known her for a year. Whilst she bent with clasped hands before it with ejaculations of simulated delight, John put his arm round her fat waist, and rubbed his head against her shoulder; and at these signs of confidence and affection she fled precipitately to the kitchen, where she threw her apron over her face and rocked herself to and fro for a minute, surrendering herself to memories of the little Hector. From these tender reminiscences she emerged instantly into a condition of beaming good-fellowship, and went to and fro in her preparations with such a swirl of petticoats that the house seemed full of her. Mr Orme looked like a balloon and travelled like a sloth. Madame in repose looked immovably weighty, and waltzed hither and thither when she gave her mind to

motion as if she were built in sylph-like lines and texture.

A few minutes after the hour of one, Vigne and Jousserau came in together, and shortly afterwards, Mr Orme presented himself. He brought with him a faint odour of rum, and was less depressed than he had been earlier in the day. Madame with much vivacity displayed the work of the morning and called upon everybody to praise it. It seemed that the whole household took its cue from her in most things, and a little more enthusiasm and admiration were expressed than perhaps the boys' labours actually called for. When due tribute had been paid, she whisked away, and returned with a tureen in which steamed the contents of a capacious *pot-au-feu*. The liquid, which was rich in floating shreds of vegetables and in pepper, was served first; and the solids of the dish, which were not quite so plentiful, came afterwards. Eked out by the great hunches of bread which Madame carved, there was enough for all; and when the meal was over, the four elders sipped a rather feeble black coffee, whilst the two Frenchmen smoked cigarettes, and Mr Orme puffed solemnly at a short well-blackened clay pipe.

'I was about to observe this morning, Madame,' said Mr Orme, gently caressing that incandescent nose of his, as if he warmed his fingers at it—'I was about to observe this morning, ma'am, when you reminded me that it was time to go, that there is an opening at the office for a youth. I do not know what your views in respect to these young gentlemen may be, but for an industrious and respectable youth there is an opening—an opening, Madame.' He described the opening with his trembling hands, as if it were something circular.

'I do not know,' said Madame, frowning thoughtfully, 'what M. Vigne will decide upon.'

M. Vigne had only spent twenty years of his life in England, and since he had resolved from the first that it was the business of people who desired to converse with a Frenchman to be acquainted with the only language worth speaking in the world, he had very easily contrived to remain in complete ignorance of the insular tongue.

'Jean,' said his wife, addressing him, 'it is very hard to know what to do. I know the whole story of these poor little beings now, and it would be shameful and impossible to send them back again.'—M. Vigne nodded in his stately and assenting way.—'M. Orme tells me there is a place vacant at the printing-office. They want a boy there. Do you think the dark one could go, and the light one stay here, and make patterns? They would earn their bread. We may know better what to do with them in a little while, and the fair boy is so good, so gentle, so docile. He reminds me of our'—There Madame choked a little, and the too ready tears of sympathy made her black southern eyes twinkle with sudden moisture.

'My dear,' replied M. Vigne, 'you have your health only to consider. It will put extra work upon you, and I sometimes think that you have too much already.'

Madame set her thumb nail behind her glistening white teeth and snapped it triumphantly.

'That for my health!' she said. 'I thought that you would agree with me.'

'My dear,' said M. Vigne, with stately gravity, 'you are invariably right.'

THE 'LADY BRASSEY' MUSEUM.

ALL admirers of the late Lady Brassey's books and marvellous collection of natural-history objects will be interested to hear of the Museum, which has just been arranged as a lasting tribute to her memory by her husband at his residence in Park Lane. The collection is one of varied scope and attraction, and is enhanced by the delightful manner in which it has been arranged. The entrance to the Museum is from the Durbur Room, which visitors will recollect having seen at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition; the room is much the same as we then saw it, with the exception of the windows, which are new and specially designed, and the door from Seherampore. Ascending the staircase, we come upon curiosities from all parts of the world, some of intrinsic value; whilst others are of interest for the associations and histories attached to them. Many of them have been gathered from countries seldom visited; and others—for instance, the beautiful sponges and corals—need depend upon nothing but their intrinsic beauty to make them specially attractive. Among the sponges are many species of such marvellous and diverse shapes as may well cause astonishment to those who are only acquainted with the common domestic variety. The corals, true products of Nature, bring vividly to the mind the incomprehensible greatness of mother Nature; lovely as they are when dead, it is only, as Lady Brassey points out in her book *Tahiti*, when they are full of life, and the myriads of polyp stars are in united action, exhibiting a perfect blaze of colour, red, purple, and emerald green, in their varied tints, that their splendour can be appreciated. The group of beautiful delicate lace-like sponge corals popularly known as 'Venus' Flower Basket,' is one of the finest specimens ever exhibited. The Museum is ingeniously lit by electric light, the light being placed behind different coloured shells, and this in the sponge and coral cases has a charming effect.

Next in point of interest to the sponges and corals comes the collection of antiquities from the island of Cyprus, the result of some excavations made specially for Lady Brassey in 1884. The objects collected include some three hundred and twenty pieces of pottery, comprising vases of various kinds, lamps, and figures or fragments of figures. The excavations were for the most part from one tumulus or collection of tombs in the neighbourhood of Kurnim; and the objects range in antiquity from the Archaic, Phœnician, and Greek periods down to the occupation by the Romans, and possibly even past the commencement of the Christian era. Besides the specimens of pottery and glass, there are earrings, pendants, fragments of funeral wreaths, and small objects in gold. Here we see, too, a thin gold leaf which appears to have covered the face of the dead like a veil. There are one or two fine examples of Phœnician glass, made probably at Tyre by Phœnician workmen. In these the prevailing colour is deep blue with wavy lines of colours; this is

best seen in a small amphora-shaped vessel, the body of which is so decomposed into granular particles that it can scarcely be handled without detaching portions. The elegant handles have been less affected, and appear to be of a dark orange colour. The greater portion of these pieces of ancient glass are remarkable for the iridescence they display, produced by the lapse of time; even a vase of pottery has become iridescent from having lain so long under ground. There is a wonderful play of colour on the glass viewed in different lights. In connection with these antiquities there are some from Central America displayed, comprising some ninety examples of gold ornaments and implements from the tombs of the ancient Indian inhabitants of the provinces of Antioquia, Cauca, Boyacá, and the republic of the United States of Colombia. This collection of itself is worth two thousand pounds.

The wonderful assortment of curios in the Borneo case forms a regular armoury with its display of *sunjutans*, gleaming creases, and other death-dealing weapons. A *sunjutan* is a weapon used by the head-hunter, being in the nature of a blowpipe, carrying within it a poisoned arrow, the arrow being made of the sago-palm. The creases vary. The ordinary *parang-latok*, which is carried by every man and nearly every woman, is a blade of steel nearly half an inch thick, of considerable sharpness, the sides being sometimes carved with engraved patterns, and adorned with trophies of human hair. In addition to these murderous relics, there are bracelets, anklets, tobacco boxes and pipes, betel-chewing instruments, raw gutta-percha, alligators' eggs, edible birds' nests, from India, Ceylon, Burma, Borneo, Japan, and the Straits Settlement. These treasures were brought home from the last voyage of the *Sunbeam*. Other curiosities are seen in the sun-baked pottery of the Orkney Islands, the quiver stone from the East Indies, flexible as india-rubber; the honeycombed ore showing chlorites from Australia, black granite from the hillside between Wairoa and the end of Lake Tarawera, which is now all changed since the volcanic eruption; a 'Zizyphus' or *Spina Christi* (crown of thorns) from the plains of Jericho; souvenirs of the Commune from Père-la-Chaise; fragments of the painted glass windows of the House of Commons damaged by the dynamite explosion in 1885; model of a sandstone ship from Burma, which floats, &c. The wonderful feather-cloak of scarlet and yellow *oo* and *mamo* feathers from the Sandwich Islands is exhibited. The cloak is made of one thousand feathers, taken singly and fastened into a sort of network of string. The yellow feathers are found only on these islands, and are always difficult to procure, because the use of them is a prerogative of royalty and nobility. There are only a few of these specimens of cloaks known of, one being in the British Museum, brought over by Captain Cook. From the Aleutian Isles comes a curious dress made of sea-birds' skins, beaten together. Some of the draperies on the wall are worthy of mention, noticeably those of Tappa from the various islands in the South Pacific. Tappa is the bark or pith of the paper mulberry. Its use is, or was, universal in the South Sea islands for mats and clothing, and it is made of many qualities. In

manufacturing it, the narrow strips of pith are laid lengthways and crossways alternately, so as to interlace each other, on a long narrow table, wetted profusely with water, and then hammered together with mallets.

There are ornaments and implements from nearly every uncivilised race in the world, besides choice specimens of European jewelry from Turkey, Bulgaria, and Albania. The Museum includes the original drawings by Mr Pritchett for the illustration of *In the Tropics*, *Trades*, and *Roaring Forties*; and a collection of photographs contained in about eighty folio volumes, besides Lady Brassey's original manuscripts. Lord Brassey is anxious the working-classes should reap the benefit of his varied treasures, and for this purpose the Museum will be thrown open for them to visit. There will be lectures explanatory of the curiosities, which will naturally add to the interest of those viewing them. Some idea of the graceful tribute to Lady Brassey's memory may be gathered from the foregoing description of this rare and instructive collection of natural and ethnological objects. These are a delight to both the naturalist and the artist; while even to the uninitiated the contemplation of such beautiful objects cannot fail to elevate the thoughts, stimulate the intellect, and raise the mind to a sense of the many glorious objects in the lower forms of life, such as are exhibited to the wondering gaze of those anxious to obtain a glimpse of the marvels of the deep, as well as of the curiosities of all times and climes.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—DAISY.

THE latest editions of the evening papers contained a brief paragraph under big headlines: 'GREAT FRAUDS IN THE CITY!'—'FLIGHT OF THE SUSPECTED CRIMINAL!'—and so forth. The information given under these startling lines was somewhat meagre. Messrs Ellicott & Co., the well-known ship-owners and ship-brokers of Fenchurch Street, had recently discovered that a series of ingenious forgeries had been perpetrated by some one in their employment. The sums obtained by these forgeries, so far as could be at present estimated, amounted to the enormous total of ninety thousand pounds. A rigid investigation into the affair was in progress, and in the meanwhile it was discovered that the confidential clerk of the firm, named Gilbert Astbury, had absconded. He had been aware for several days that he was under suspicion, and his sudden flight seemed to justify it. The police were on his track, and no doubt of his speedy arrest was entertained.

The news of Gilbert's disappearance was the cause of much excitement to the inmates of Cedar Cottage; but the views taken of it by each of the three women differed. Hetty regarded it as an unquestionable proof of the innocence of Henry Dacon; and whilst she lamented the position of his and her former friend, she was glad that her lover was thus exonerated from all possibility of

doubt as to his complicity in the fraud. Mrs Silverton was painfully conscious of the injury which her acknowledged relationship with the criminal—she had at once accepted the theory that he was guilty, since he had fled from the investigation—would entail upon her and hers. To Daisy the views taken by her aunt and cousin were incomprehensible. She could partly understand Hetty; but she could not understand her aunt.

‘If it is true that Gilbert has gone away,’ she said with quiet confidence, ‘it is not to save himself, but to shield some one else.’

‘What nonsense you talk, child!’ exclaimed Mrs Silverton, putting on her gold-mounted *pince-nez* to examine the girl attentively, as if to discover whether or not the defence was made seriously. ‘Gilbert is not a fool, and must have been perfectly aware of what his disappearance at this moment must mean to him. An innocent man never runs away when such a dreadful charge as this is hanging over him. Poor fellow—it is terrible and most incomprehensible. He had such a chance in life as few young men without fortune ever obtain.’

‘That is just it, aunt,’ persisted Daisy in her low voice, but without lifting her eyes to meet the glittering glasses which were fixed upon her. ‘He had the chance, and he was worthy of it. Therefore his conduct is, as you say, incomprehensible, and that is why I think he is innocent.’

‘Daisy!—My dear, I said that an innocent man does not run away.’ There was a degree of amazement in the tone of the exclamation, and a degree of reproach in the mild reminder of Mrs Silverton’s infallibility, which indicated that she was a lady quite unaccustomed to contradiction anywhere, and certainly not in her own immediate family circle.

Daisy was silenced. As a rule, she submitted without a sign of rebellion to her aunt’s verdict; but this time there was a slight flush on the pale cheeks and a compression of the lips suggestive of irritation at the widow’s self-sufficiency. Hetty was too well pleased to find that every possible suspicion was cleared away from Henry to pay much heed to the trifling passage between her mother and cousin.

Mrs Silverton was more astounded by the audacity of her niece than by the assumed guilt of the fugitive, although that was most offensive and, as she fancied, derogatory to her; for she had been his friend and sponsor. She had—when he seemed to be prospering—even admitted that there was a distant family relationship between them; and the remembrance of that admission rankled in her mind now. Instead of experiencing any sense of pity for Gilbert, she was angry with him, for his defalcation was a direct personal injury. She would have been relieved if there had been any way in which she could save her own reputation for perspicacity by hinting that she had always had a misgiving about the young man. But such consolation was denied her. His success had been so rapid; the favourable impression he made upon every one to whom he had been presented so marked, that she had not been able to resist the delight of playing the patron to the favourite of the hour. Thus she had committed herself too definitely as voucher

for his respectability to dare to shirk it now. She could only exclaim that she was horrified—that she had never been so deceived in all her life, and that it almost shattered her faith in the honesty of the whole human race. She had done so much for him—on account of his poor dear mother, who had been mercifully spared by Providence the spectacle of his disgrace—that she could never forgive him, or forget her own weakness in being led so far astray by misplaced confidence.

Her imagination so far exaggerated the benefits she had conferred on the ungrateful creature, that it misled her into the delusion that she had introduced him to Henry Dacon. The fact was that Gilbert had brought his friend to Cedar Cottage, thereby earning the special approbation of the widow, who saw in the nephew of John Ellicott of Overton Park a most desirable match for her dowerless daughter. She *had* thought of Gilbert as a possibly acceptable suitor; but she repudiated the bare idea of it as soon as Dacon frankly declared his intentions and was accepted by Hetty. She pretended to herself that she had never thought of such an alliance, and was angry with Gilbert for having been so ambitious as to fancy she would ever have sanctioned it.

Mrs Silverton was a plump, fair, lively lady, still on the hither side of fifty. She had a great deal of vanity, but it was carefully held in hand by a large measure of common-sense. She was good-natured to this extent—she would help anybody, if the help required did not tax her pocket, whilst it redounded to her credit. She was blessed with unlimited faith in herself, in her own wisdom, foresight, charitableness, and all the other noblest qualities of humanity; and she had admirers enough of both sexes—sincere and sycophantic—to sustain her in the creed which makes life most agreeable.

It was only this faith which enabled her to bear with equanimity the open rebellion of Daisy in regard to Gilbert. As she had forgotten the circumstance that it was he who had brought her into contact with the desirable son-in-law, so she had been long oblivious to the quarterly payment regularly received from the late Mr Forester’s executors which defrayed all Daisy’s expenses, and was pleased to think of herself as the generous benefactor of the orphan niece. Moreover, but excusably, she ignored the item that the girl was quietly making a way for herself in authorship, which might have permitted her—even without the settled provision made for her—to adopt an independent position.

Such a thought, however, never crossed Daisy’s mind. She had grown up under the influence of her aunt, who naturally held the position of a parent to her, and looked upon Cedar Cottage as her only home. She accepted so implicitly the theory that her aunt’s protection was a necessity for which the submission of a daughter was due, that she had never dreamed of asserting independence.

The advent of Gilbert Astbury had altered her views of everything. At first, it had brought new light and joy into her life: new strength, new hope inspired her visions of the future. He was poor, she knew; he was clever, she was sure; he was ambitious, she could easily divine. Might not she, somehow, help him to win the goal of

his ambition? Then for the first time she had begun to consider her position. She found out what means were at her disposal; and with the sanguine ideas which the first cheque from a publisher inspires in the budding author, she imagined that with hard work and an average continuance of the success her early efforts promised, she might be able to do wonderful things in helping forward the man she loved. The castles in the air thus built were very beautiful; and the dreams of bliss with which she filled them were very sweet. Then the castles and the dreams were all blown into thin air by one soft breath of the man for whose sake they had been all created.

Gilbert, attracted by her quiet, thoughtful, and gentle nature, had early accepted her as his friend, and he soon made her his confidant. When the rapid success he was making—and she was so proud of!—was confirmed by the statements of his friend Harry Dacon as well as by his own cheerful humour, Gilbert gave her the bit of confidence which for the time turned day into night. He loved Hetty. He worked and lived only for her.

Daisy was silent, stunned by the disastrous mistake she had made, and the utter darkness into which the sudden discovery thrust her. Yet she was not angry with the man who had blinded her. The golden fancies which had made the world so beautiful to her were all gone; and it was the more misery to her to know that he, too, must presently step into the same dark region, unpenetrated by any ray of hope to save him from despair. She shrank from telling him that she knew he must undergo the same pangs he had unconsciously and innocently inflicted upon her. She loved him so much that he was at once exonerated from all blame in her mind; and she felt pity for him as keen as for herself. Hetty had told her that she was engaged to Henry Dacon. Gilbert must find that out for himself. The bitter knowledge would come upon him soon enough, and, judging by her own sensations, he would be glad that she had left him a few days—or, it might be, even a few hours—to revel in the paradise of hope.

He did learn the truth soon; and then had followed much unhappiness for the two men and for Hetty, whilst Daisy looked on with her own sorrow hidden and unsuspected. She tried patiently and tenderly to help the others without one of them guessing that she herself stood in so much need of sympathy.

The discovery of the forgeries in which the names of the accepted and the rejected lover were involved had caused a diversion of the anxieties of the five people most interested in the result of the investigations which had been instituted. But Daisy had not the faintest doubt that whatever the upshot might be, Gilbert would come forth scathless. She had no thought that it would be so soon necessary for her to assert this faith against the commonplace inferences which directed her aunt's judgment of his conduct; and she was considerably surprised that Hetty did not attempt to speak one good word for him. She was satisfied, however, that this silence was not due to callousness, but to Hetty's anxiety for Dacon's appearance. She, too, began to wish for his arrival, so that some more light

might be thrown on the state of affairs. She had no doubt that he would come, from the way in which Hetty listened to the sound of passing wheels and her frequent visits to the window.

CHAPTER III.—FOR HER SAKE.

On leaving Cedar Cottage, Gilbert went straight as the pathways of the pleasant Dulwich meadows permitted to Champion Hill Station and took the first train to the City. A hansom conveyed him to the corner of Fenchurch Street, and he completed his journey on foot. His destination was one of those massive blocks of buildings containing the offices of some of the most extensive London firms. He ascended a broad stone staircase, and on the first floor the broad swinging doors of Ellicott & Co.'s offices faced him. He did not enter by them, but passing down a corridor, halted at a small door on which the word 'Private' was printed in gold letters. A latchkey with which he was provided gained him immediate entrance to a small but high-ceilinged apartment. It was well lighted by a large window, having a double frame of glass to deaden the din of traffic in the street. A rich Turkey carpet and massive oak furniture proclaimed this to be the sanctum of a person of some importance.

At the writing-table was a gentleman of thirty-five or so, who started to his feet on the opening of the door. He was tall, handsome, with trim mutton-chop whiskers, chin and upper lip cleanly shaved, and his head covered with bushy black hair. He wore the orthodox black cloth frock coat, and in every respect had the appearance consonant with his surroundings—that of a man of position and authority in a great commercial house. But when he saw who his visitor was, agitation displaced his dignity.

'I thought it was Mr Ellicott,' he said huskily. 'I am glad you have got back before him.—What is your answer? Have you seen her?' In his eagerness for the desired information, he paid no heed to the whiteness of Gilbert's face or his physical exhaustion, so plainly evinced by the manner in which he grasped the back of a chair for support the moment after putting down his bag and other things.

'Yes,' he answered faintly; 'I have seen her.'

'That was lucky. How did you manage it?—for she told me that nothing would induce her to speak to you again until—— But, good heavens, Astbury, you look as if you were going to faint. Sit down, man. Here is a glass of water.'

Gilbert took the water, but did not sit down. The draught seemed to revive him, for he spoke quietly and with more firmness than at first. 'I suppose the hurry and excitement have upset my nerves a bit. I shall be all right presently. As you say, it was lucky I saw her—lucky for you.'

'Then you have the answer I expected she would give?—What is your decision?' Henry Dacon's lips were parched as he put the question; his eyes seemed to start with terror as he waited for the response. Strongly built man as he was, his whole frame shook with the intensity of his brief suspense. In the momentary pause before Gilbert spoke there was concentrated an age of misery and fear.

'My decision is what I promised it should be if she satisfied me that her happiness absolutely depended on you.'

Dacon sprang forward and grasped Gilbert's hands, looking as if he could scarcely believe his ears. 'Do you really mean this, Astbury?' he queried, joy and doubt contending in his mind. 'Do you think you are strong enough to carry it out to the end?'

'I will try,' was the calm and resolute reply. 'The sacrifice is a terrible one—it seems too great for any man to make for another, however strong the bonds of friendship between them may be.'

'It is for her sake,' was the calm and solemn answer.

'True, true; it is for her sake. Heaven knows I accept it only because it is so. Had there been any other way to spare her—to make her happy, I would have done anything, rather than let you take this burden on your shoulders. There is no way out of it except this, and as you meant to go away at any rate if she told you that—that'—He became more and more confused, and his face so flushed that a fit of some kind seemed imminent. He did not complete the sentence, but ran on in another groove. 'It is hard for you—cursed hard. Will you not repent when you find yourself an exile, and think of what you know will be said here about you? Will you not, by-and-by, begin to feel that the sacrifice is too great, and seek to undo everything?' He had spoken with nervous rapidity, as if striving to drown in words the promptings of his better nature. His impulse in the first gush of admiring gratitude had been to say: 'No, Astbury: I will not allow you to do this thing even for her sake. I will bear the burden of my own folly—sin—madness—call it crime at once. You, however, shall not suffer for me.' But the weakness which had betrayed him into his present position proved stronger than his nobler instincts. Good and bad were so equally poised in his character, that temptation of any kind always weighed the balance down on the wrong side, although he suffered the acutest pangs of remorse afterwards.

His superficial impulses were always of a generous nature. Warm-hearted and fond of approbation, he delighted in doing a good turn for any one. Thus, when Gilbert first arrived in London, he cheerfully recognised his former schoolmate, and did everything in his power to promote the youth's prospects. But when driven into a corner, Dacon so intensely dreaded being detected in a fault, that he could not help trying to escape from it no matter who might be the scapegoat. He was bitterly sensible of all that Gilbert Astbury must hazard and lose by the course determined upon. He devoutly wished there had been any other way out of the hole into which he had tumbled; but there was none save the one Gilbert offered him. He persuaded himself that if Hetty's future had been as inalienably linked with Astbury's as it was with his own, he, too, could and would have made the same sacrifice for love's sake.

He tried hard to save his uneasy mind with that reflection and with the constant iteration of the argument: 'It is all for her sake. He wishes to make her happy. So do I. She has told him there is only one way of doing it, and he agrees. I, also, must agree.' All the same, he was at the

last moment miserably aware that he was doing a base thing, and was frightened by the idea that when Gilbert had got more time for reflection—more time to comprehend the degradation to which he subjected himself—he would recant and seek to restore his good name.

'I have given you my promise,' said Gilbert with an earnestness that reached the degree of solemnity. 'Keep your promise to me—make her life happy, and I shall not regret what I do this day.'

'If it is in the power of the man she loves to do it, I will,' was the fervent assurance given with full intention and determination to fulfil it.

'Then do not have any fear about me. But should you fail in your promise, I shall see what it may be in my power to do.—Have you written the paper I require?'

'It is here,' answered Dacon, drawing from his pocket a sealed envelope.

Gilbert opened it, and read the letter it contained. There was not the slightest change in his expression as he studied every word and weighed its purport, as if committing the whole to memory.

'Are you not satisfied?' asked Dacon nervously. 'Is it not plain enough?'

'Quite plain, and I am satisfied. This would be enough to convict any man, even if he attempted to deny his handwriting.—There; take it back with the other papers. I wish your mind to be free from any haunting dread of the power this thing would give me over you. I wish you to be free to devote your whole life to her.—Now, are you satisfied?'

Dacon grasped his hand again, and was for a moment unable to speak. 'If I fail to keep my pledge,' he said with bitter emphasis as soon as he had recovered control of his voice, 'I shall deserve the worst fate that can befall a man in this world and the next. I ask no mercy.'

'So be it,' was the comment; and then abruptly: 'Tell me what are the plans you said you would devise for my escape?'

'Everything is ready, and not a bit too soon.' Dacon spoke promptly, for he was glad of any change of theme. Besides, he was intensely relieved by the calmness with which Gilbert appeared to view the present position and the future.

'Has Mr Ellicott sent to Scotland Yard yet?' he queried as Dacon opened the door of a lavatory, on the walls of which hung several coats and hats.

'Not yet; but he has gone to see his lawyer, Ardwick, to tell him he may take action as soon as he thinks fit.'

'Then the police may be at work now?'

'Not before my uncle returns.—Here, put on this overcoat—it is big enough to cover you without taking off your own. In the pockets you will find everything you require in the way of money, and the necessary letters and papers to enable you to act as the owner of the steamer *Hercules*, bound from Bristol to Rio Janeiro with a general cargo. She lies under orders to be ready to get up steam as soon as the owner boards her. You are the owner, and your name is Edward Harrison. The money you have there and the goods on board the vessel will give you a fair start in Brazil; and of course you will

have whatever more you may require from me as soon as means of communication can be arranged.'

'Your plans of escape are marvellously complete.'

'They ought to be, for they were made for myself; and even at that moment of peril, Dacon could not conceal a gleam of pitiful pride at this acknowledgment of his ingenuity; 'so you can depend upon it they have been made as thoroughly safe as could be. The coat will do—wide enough and long enough to change your whole appearance.'

'We will put it to the test,' said Gilbert quietly. 'But before we part, let this affair be thoroughly understood between us. Accident placed in my hands the proofs that you had involved yourself in extensive speculations; and that to cover your losses you had, without authority, endorsed bills in the name of the firm to the extent of about eighty-four thousand pounds. On making that discovery, my duty was to inform Mr Ellicott. I have not done so, and therefore have made myself in some measure a partner in the—transaction we will call it. You know I am not a partner in it, and had no suspicion of it until a few weeks ago. I told you, and you confessed, because you could not help yourself. I owe you something for your friendly help when I needed help so much. You reminded me of my debt, and told me that your exposure would blight Henrietta Silverton's life, and I now believe it would. Then to save her, so long as you are true to her I shall be as one dead. All this is clear between us two; and now we have only to arrange how I am to get on board the *Hercules*. There is no one,' he added with bitterness, 'I have to regret my death, for death it is. You have many who care for you; and so it is better that I should go than you.'

'Don't speak that way, Astbury, or I shall cave in,' said Dacon, trembling, lest already Gilbert was repenting that he had undertaken the task of shielding him. 'I at anyrate will miss you.—Come, shake hands, old fellow. I shall not forget my promise even for a moment.'

'I hope so, for your sake and for hers.—What about the trains?' The question was asked with an abrupt assumption of devil-may-careness to hide the emotion his trembling lips betrayed.

Dacon looked at his watch, and then, to make quite sure of the time, stepped to the window to examine the dial of the church clock opposite. 'By taking a hansom,' he answered, 'you will catch the afternoon train easily. Get on board at once, sail at once, and then'—

He stopped, and there was such a look on his face that Gilbert was roused from the apathy which had taken possession of him.

'What is the matter?'

'My uncle is getting out of a four-wheeler below. Ardwick is following him, and next there is a stranger.—I believe he is a detective. Ardwick has decided that no more time is to be lost.'

'Then your plans are likely to fail at the first step.'

'Not unless you want them to fail,' rejoined Dacon in hurried and excited accents. 'They will go into my uncle's room first, and then send

for me. Here; go into the lavatory. After the clerk has come for me, we will know that the coast is clear, and you can get away by the private door.'

Gilbert submitted to be hustled into the place of concealment. Dacon, with heart palpitating painfully, seated himself. His hands trembled so that he was compelled to press them down firmly on the desk before him in order to keep them steady. He did not attempt to take up a paper, but pretended to be occupied in studying a foolscap sheet on which there was much writing, followed by many figures and red lines suggestive of an exercise in Euclid.

There was a tap at the door communicating with the general office, and, as he had anticipated, a clerk appeared in response to his ready 'Come in.'

'Mr Ellicott desires to see you immediately, sir.'

'I shall be with him in a moment,' answered Dacon, not looking up.—'Has he brought Mr Ardwick and the other gentleman?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Thank you.'

As soon as the door closed, Dacon sprang to the hiding-place of Gilbert and released him. 'Good-bye, Astbury. I am your debtor for life. If you should fail in your escape, trust to me. Good-bye again.'

They clasped hands, and debtor and creditor parted—the one standing trembling on the threshold of discovery, the other passing calmly under the cloud of disgrace.

Gilbert walked quietly and unobserved down the broad staircase, out into the street. He hailed a passing hansom, and was driven to the railway station, where he was to enter the train which would be his funeral car; for he was leaving behind all that a man values in this world—the woman he loved and the certainty of an honourable career. What did it matter how things might turn out for him now? His only prospect of joy was that of learning that Dacon proved true and made a good and faithful husband to Hetty. He carried with him to his exile the consciousness of innocence and the tender satisfaction of knowing he had done all it was in human nature to do to prove how much he loved. By-and-by, perhaps the memory of this would brighten his way.

As for Dacon, he stood for a few moments dazed, like one who has just heard the sentence of death pronounced upon him, and could not yet realise its full import. He would be safe if Astbury made good his escape—safe from all hint of shame or disgrace; safe from the contempt of the woman to whom he was devoted; safe from the scorn of that good, generous uncle, who trusted him, and had done for him all that the most affectionate parent could have done for a son. He would still retain his position in their esteem; still hold up his head in the City as the future chief of the great house of Ellicott & Co., whose wealth and integrity were undoubted. That reflection roused, but could not console him; for there came with it the bitter knowledge that he had this day hung round his neck the heavy chains of eternal fear and remorse.

A clerk came with a second message, and

Dacon tried to pull himself together in order to endure as calmly as he might the ordeal of the forthcoming interview with the head of the firm, the lawyer, and the detective.

THE OLD-TIME PROSPECTOR.

THE Prospector, as he is called, is as necessary in the mining camps as the farmer is in an agricultural country. Indeed, the discovery of mineral wealth, especially gold and silver, in any country is almost invariably due to the professional prospector. In the United States the most expert of these men are very often old '49-ers' from California. But of course such old-timers are becoming scarcer every year, while the army of prospectors is increasing in numbers; because in every newly-discovered camp novices follow the footsteps of the old-timers, and soon gain sufficient knowledge of the different formations to become authorities on the subject.

It is due to the restless and adventurous spirits of these men that 'stampedes' to unexplored regions in the Far West are organised. It is only necessary to hint that in a certain range of mountains gold ought to exist, to start the prospector on a tramp of discovery. In an incredibly short space of time—a few hours at the furthest—he will pack all his worldly possessions together with a supply of provisions on his *burro* or donkey; and with his rifle on his shoulder and revolver in his belt, will start out to walk, leading the *burro*, often a distance of hundreds of miles. His worldly possessions can be easily handled, for usually they only consist of a pair of blankets, pick, shovel, and gold-pan, together with the primitive cooking utensils used in camp. He is at home wherever night overtakes him; he asks no better roof than the heavens, and no softer bed than the earth. Once let a man start to prospect for mineral for a livelihood, and it is very rarely you see him forsake the business for any other. No matter how many new camps he explores, he is always ready and anxious to follow a stampede, even though, as is often the case, it results in failure. An experienced prospector can always command sufficient funds to enable him to follow the dictates of his restless spirit; for capitalist speculators are only too eager to furnish money and provisions in return for a share of the discoveries the prospector may make. This is one of the principal reasons why he seldom becomes a rich man; another is, that he rarely, if ever, saves his money.

Among the chief characteristics of the old-time prospector is his reckless extravagance and generosity. If he makes a rich discovery or 'strike,' he sells out the greater portion of his interest to the highest bidder—usually mining speculators, a class of men who are always watching for investments in rich discoveries which they partially develop, then form stock Companies to prosecute the work they have commenced, and usually realise large returns on their investment. The prospector, as soon as he has made his sale, usually lives in clover as long as the proceeds will allow him. The faro banks, dance-halls, and drinking-saloons reap their harvest; his life, as long as his money lasts, is passed in what he considers one continual round of pleasure; and when he is 'busted,' he

packs his *burro*, shoulders his rifle, and tramps over the hills and mountains once more, in search of another strike.

Throughout the mining regions the visitor will see hundreds of log cabins built by prospectors, and deserted; often you will pass through deserted towns where the log and frame buildings have been left so hurriedly that the shelving and counters still remain in the shops; and the painted signs on the buildings indicate the class of merchandise which had been stored within the walls at some bygone day when the adventurous prospector had made a rich discovery, but one which failed to 'pan out' successfully. One rich strike in a district is often sufficient to cause such a stampede of miners, store-keepers, saloon-keepers, gamblers, and the migratory population to be found in all mining camps, that houses appear to grow like mushrooms. If the strike is developed successfully and other discoveries are made in the vicinity, the town grows very rapidly; but if, on the other hand, it proves a failure, then the town is as rapidly deserted, for the merchants and business men of the mining countries are of the same restless spirit as the prospector, and move almost as rapidly.

What the old-time prospector does not know about practical mining and the tricks and devices adopted to persuade 'tenderfeet' to invest their money, is hardly worth recording. He will point with pride to some hole in the ground which, by salting with gold-dust, he sold to some Eastern capitalist as a discovery of a true fissure vein. He has a profound contempt for the college-educated professors who are often sent by syndicates to examine mining property. He will never acknowledge that men from Eastern cities in the United States are capable of managing a Mining Company successfully. In his eyes, no one but an old-timer from the Pacific slope can ever make a mine pay.

In a word, the old-time prospector is a character. His cabin or camp-fire is an asylum to all travellers; his hospitality is proverbial; no matter how slender his supply of provisions, he is always ready to share them with any wayfarer who comes along, and will consider the offer of remuneration as an insult. His yarns relating to his adventures are always interesting and exciting, if not strictly true. He is never tired of telling of the good days when Alder Gulch in Montana was discovered, and of the dust taken from the 'placer' mines by the early settlers; and is continually deploring the fact that the railroads and civilisation are pushing westward so rapidly; for it is the height of the ambition of your old-time prospector to be as far from a railroad and civilised people as possible.

Among the notable exceptions to the rule that the prospectors rarely become rich or influential men may be mentioned the present United States Senator, George Hearst of California; he is an old '49-er' whose good luck—as they call it in the mines—has never forsaken him; and this, aided by shrewd management, has placed him among the millionaires of America. Although he has become a rich and influential man, yet he will never forget his experiences as a prospector in the days of 1849, when California was first discovered; consequently he has a very soft place in his heart for any brother-prospector who has not been so

prosperous. His love for California is so devout that it approaches idolatry, and I have frequently heard him say that he would rather be governor of that State than President. The old-time prospector never tires of calling his listener's attention to the career of George Hearst or any other successful old-timer, with pride, without the least jealousy; but will invariably finish by telling you where he himself might have been if such and such a discovery had turned out all right.

THE TRUTH ABOUT FOX-HUNTING.

BY ONE WHO HAS GIVEN IT UP.

'My dear fellow, it's most awfully good of you; awfully kind. But I—I make it a rule never to hunt another man's horses—never.' I sit back in my chair as I say this to Pudgewood, whose guest I am, and assume a look which ought to convince him that I am making a sacrifice to principle which causes me profound regret and disappointment; but somehow he doesn't seem to believe it.

'Nonsense, Jones!' he says. 'I'll give you the old gray; he's the quietest hunter I have in the stable. Steady as a house, and as clever on his legs as a cat.—I defy you to bring that horse down, sir!' he concludes, with an emphatic thump on the dinner-table.

Now, strictly between ourselves, it had never occurred to me that there was the least likelihood of my bringing the horse down. Well-founded apprehensions lest it should bring me down prompt my disinclination to accept Pudgewood's offer; but of course it isn't necessary to tell him that. I was speaking the truth when I told him that I made it a rule never to hunt another man's horses; I made that rule long ago, and, never having hitherto met any one who tempted me to break it, have found no difficulty in adhering to it. When I told Mrs Jones to accept the Pudgewoods' invitation to spend a week at their place in Stoneshire, I quite forgot that Anthony Pudgewood was one of those few hunting-men who are generous enough to mount their friends. Had I remembered the fact, I should have come to Barnsdale forearmed with a sprained wrist, or something which would effectually prevent a man attempting to ride. It is quite obvious that Pudgewood won't be put off by my plea of 'principle;' so I must try another argument.

'I don't like refusing your offer, Pudgewood,' I say; 'and I should have enjoyed a day with the hounds immensely, but I have brought no riding things with me.' That ought to be conclusive, I think. But no.

Pudgewood casts a critical eye over my figure, and says thoughtfully: 'My clothes wouldn't fit you, I'm afraid.—But, George—you remember my brother George?—left all his hunting kit here, and he is just the same build as you are. I'll lend you some of his things.'

Every loophole of escape seems to be closing up. I cast an appealing look at my wife, who is sitting opposite me. She is a clever woman, Mrs Jones, though I say it; wonderfully ready, and of boundless resource. I give her a glance which is intended to convey 'Help me out of it;' but she fails to grasp my meaning, and helps me a little further into it.

'When Mr Pudgewood is so kind as to offer you a mount, Algernon, I really think you ought to take it,' she says.

'Quite right, Mrs Jones,' assents Pudgewood. 'I shouldn't like your husband to go away from Barnsdale without having a gallop with the Stoneshire Hounds. I know how fond of hunting he is; he has often told me of his doings.'

Things are growing worse. I'm afraid I must have given Pudgewood a wrong impression when I talked to him about hunting. My experience of the sport of kings has been that of an onlooker from the seat of a dogcart. I used to enjoy that thoroughly, particularly the lunching part of the day's business, when I was staying up in York-shire last winter. I have sometimes been for a ride along the road; but I never rode to hounds in my life, and ought to have mentioned the fact, which Pudgewood does not appear to be acquainted with. I wish there weren't so many people present; I really have not the courage to explain how I have gained the knowledge of hunting matters which I have been airing so freely all dinner-time before such a crowd. It would look too foolish.

'I'm desperately afraid that it's going to freeze to-night,' says a young gentleman, drawing aside the window-blind as soon as the ladies have left the room; 'it's looking horribly clear.'

The remark is received with a chorus of indignant dissent, in which I join feebly. Everybody has good reason to believe that it won't freeze; the thermometer has been rising, and the barometer has been steady all day. There's a south wind; and Jinks, the first whip, said only yesterday that there wouldn't be frost again for a fortnight. Jinks appears to be an infallible authority on the weather, judging from the manner in which his opinion is quoted and received. Everybody is soothed by the announcement; and we draw in our chairs, directing scornful glances at the upstart who took upon himself to look out of the window, and who now relapses into snubbed silence. I breathe an inward prayer for at least ten degrees of frost, and try not to hate the unknown Jinks. That is my one hope now; if it freezes I am saved; if it doesn't—

I must confess that there is something about hunting-gear which gives the wearer a feeling of confidence; and as I stand before the mirror in my dressing-room this morning, rigged out in George Pudgewood's buckskins and top-boots, which fit me admirably, I begin quite to look forward to the day's outing. It didn't freeze last night; on the contrary, there was a little rain, so the ground will be tolerably soft if I meet with an accident.

'I wish you had a red coat,' says my wife, who has come to inspect me; 'and—I may be wrong—but I think, Algernon, you have put your spurs on upside down.'

Mrs Jones's father was a noted hunting-man in the shires, and she ought to know something about these matters.

'Dear me! so I have. Thanks for noticing it. I'll put them right at once.'

They are soon readjusted under Mrs Jones's directions, and I go down-stairs to the breakfast-room. I had no idea it was so difficult to walk down-stairs with spurs on. Twice the

rowels catch in the carpet, and I only save myself from a bad fall by clinging to the banisters with both hands. Finally, I turn round, and walk down backwards, arriving in safety on the mat without being seen. I wonder how other fellows manage, for I don't recollect ever having heard any one complain of this difficulty before.

'Morning, Jones,' said Pudge-wood through a stratum of buttered toast. 'Come along; we haven't much time to spare. The meet's at Holly Copse, seven miles away, at eleven o'clock; and it's near ten now.—Will you ride out, or take a seat in the dogcart?'

If I could take a seat in the cart and keep it, I should select that without hesitation; but a little practice in the saddle will do me good, perhaps, so I say that I will jog out quietly.

Pudge-wood nods approvingly. 'Always best to ride to cover, I think,' he says; 'you have time to shake down in your saddle before the day's work.'

I hear the horses being walked up and down on the gravel outside, and the sound rather takes away my appetite. I should like to know a little more about the animal I am to ride before I mount, and therefore seize an early opportunity of asking Pudge-wood about it.

'This gray, which you have been good enough to lend me, Pudge-wood, have you had him long?'

My host screws up his eyebrows and makes a brief mental calculation. 'I've hunted old Diamond now for nine seasons; he's never given me a single fall, and I never knew him turn his head from anything yet.'

'Haven't you, indeed?' I ask faintly.

'Not once,' affirms Pudge-wood solemnly. 'He can take a five-foot wall as easily as you could jump over a straw. He loves jumping, that horse.'

Loves jumping, does he? I listen with sickly interest while Pudge-wood continues to dilate upon old Diamond's merits. He appears to be a horse of considerable strength of character, from his master's account; and I fear that if he insists upon indulging in his taste for jumping while I am on his back some difference of opinion is likely to arise between us. I do not 'love jumping.'

Pudge-wood is certainly a most thoughtful man. He arms me with a huge hunting-crop, whose horn handle, he says, will be useful to open gates with. It's a troublesome thing to carry, and gets fearfully entwined with the reins; but if it is to serve me as a gate-opener, no earthly power shall induce me to leave it behind.

I am mounted now. I felt a little pale when I came out of the house; but the exertion of climbing into the saddle, with the groom's assistance, has made me purple in the face, for I am a stoutish man of no great stature, and not so active as I used to be.

'E's a trifle fresh, sir,' says the groom as he puts my right foot into the stirrup. 'Don't touch 'im with the spur or ride 'im on the curb, and 'e'll go like a lamb.'

The horse is tossing his head and champing his bits with most unlamblike ferocity; indeed, his whole demeanour warns me to treat his peculiarities with the utmost respect. I screw my armed heels painfully far outwards, to keep the spurs off

his sides, and pick the bridle up very gingerly; I won't pull the curb-rein for any consideration. I try to look comfortable and happy as Pudge-wood rides up beside me and gives Diamond a long loving look over from his head to his heels.

'He will carry you splendidly,' he says to me. 'I shall expect to see you in the first flight the whole day.'

It's far more than I expect myself. I am not at all ambitious to be in the first flight—whatever that may be—and don't mean to let Diamond jump so much as a drain if I can help it.

The horse calms down by-and-by; and when we pull up at the cross-roads where the hounds are waiting, I feel much more at home in the saddle than I did when we started. There are at least fifty horsemen standing about, and numbers of carriages full of ladies. Everybody looks so animated and jovial, that I make a spasmodic effort to appear pleasantly at ease. I'm afraid the attempt is rather a failure, for the sight of the hounds has roused Diamond's spirit, and he is very anxious to be off. Presently the whole cavalcade is streaming slowly up a muddy lane behind the hounds; we pass through a gate into a large field; and the master, aided by the huntsman and whips, sends the pack into cover.

Pudge-wood trots up to give me a final word of advice: 'Don't touch his mouth once you put him at an obstacle; let him take his own pace, and you are quite safe.'

I nod a despairing affirmative; somebody beside me says, 'They have found,' and I sit in awful suspense awaiting the result. One of the whips appears at the corner of the wood into which the hounds were sent, and holds up his cap. Men throw away their cigars, button up their coats, and press their hats well home. I feel dreadfully limp as we trot towards a white gate in the corner of the field. Suppose it won't open, and that I am called upon to put Diamond at the railings? They are nearly three feet high, and look awfully strong. The gate is not locked, however; and when we get through it, we see the hounds pouring out of the wood, noses down and tails up. 'They've got the line,' says a man near me; 'come on.' He canters away, and in ten seconds more we are all galloping across the pasture after him. My hat gets over my eyes, and I can't see anything; I have lost a stirrup, and in my frantic plunges to recover it, I have spurred Diamond to the top of his speed, in what direction I have not the least idea.

'Hold hard, sir!' bawls a man as I flash past him; but I am oblivious to all things save the certainty of tumbling off if I don't get that stirrup back at once. 'Ware hound!' screams some one else, as a shapeless splash of liver and white, which I subsequently ascertain was a hound, appears below Diamond's hoofs, and howls piteously as we pass over it. I have got all the reins and my whip in one hand, and am holding on to the saddle like grim death with the other. Suddenly the stirrup swings itself back on to my foot again, and with a supreme effort I succeed in pulling the horse up. I don't like to look round. I hear floods of opprobrious language levelled at me, at which I must say I'm a good deal surprised, as I have always been told that the hunting field is the school for manners.

'Perhaps, sir,' says an old gentleman in whom I recognise the person Pudge-wood pointed out to me as the Master of the Hounds, 'if you cannot control your horse, you had better keep well in rear. You have already disabled one of my hounds.' He says this very authoritatively, and canters on without paying the least attention to my apologies. I quite agree with him about keeping in the rear, and shall be perfectly satisfied to stay there if Diamond will consent to the arrangement.

After we have gone a good long way, every one stops galloping, and I come up with the rest of the field. I am stared at a good deal, I don't know why, and I hear something said about a cheque, which I suppose relates to that stupid dog I rode over. It rather damps my ardour, for I have got on surprisingly well up till now; there has been no jumping, for all the gates are open, or there have been friendly gaps in default. I have been abused sometimes for not awaiting my turn at these places; but I can't explain that the anxiety to get on is all on Diamond's part and not on mine. I am glad to stop for a bit; but in a few minutes a man says, 'They've hit off the line,' and we are all thundering down towards a hedge of most forbidding aspect, and without a gap in its whole length. 'Now, then, Jones,' sings out Pudge-wood cheerily; 'sit down, and give the old horse his head.'

The advice is well-meant, but unnecessary; the old horse has got *his* head, but I have quite lost mine. We are at the hedge; there is a frightful lurch, and I am hoisted into mid-air, vaguely conscious that the saddle on Diamond's back is far away below me. After a wide parabolic aerial flight, I come down lengthways on the horse. Thence I rebound helplessly; and the next thing I am aware of is, that I am sitting in a very wet furrow, with my legs stuck straight out before me, scraping the clay off my face. I don't know where the horse has gone, and I don't want to know. I have had quite enough hunting for one day, and as soon as every one is out of sight, I shall make the best of my way homewards.—I find the road, and set out on my walk to Barnsdale, which must be a good eight miles off. Never mind; it's better than hunting.

Hallo! what's this? I am tramping steadily on, whistling to keep up my spirits, when the sound of hoofs falls on my ear, and sends a cold shiver down my back. It comes nearer and nearer, and my heart beats like a hammer, keeping time with the hoofs. I daren't look round. I *won't* look round. Pooh! after all, perhaps it's only a farmer on his way home. The villainous Diamond is not the only horse in Stoneshire. But even as I try thus to comfort myself and ward off apprehension, the animal comes up beside me, and a gruff voice says: 'Yer be thy harse, Meister.'

It is too much. I throw common-sense and truth to the winds at these appalling words, and repudiate ownership as fiercely as though I had been accused of stealing the creature.

The yokel on Diamond's back stares at me with his mouth open, in stupid amazement, for fully half a minute. Then he takes off a very old hat and scratches his head, as though friction assisted speech. 'But I see'd thee a-tumblin' off 'im in

the field tree mile back. Me an' my mate was harf a hour a-ketchin' of 'im.'

What am I to do? The man knows that the horse *is* mine, or that I was hunting it, and evidently doesn't mean to be balked of his expected tip. One point I am quite decided upon: I will take this countryman into my confidence; I will eat my humble-pie to the very last crumb if need be, but I *won't* ride that fiend miscalled a hunter home. That is a thing I will not do. But I wish I hadn't told the man that the horse wasn't mine. Never mind; it doesn't matter. I will offer him five shillings to take Diamond home for me and say nothing more about it. With this determination I stop and pull some money out of my pocket; the labourer sees it, stops Diamond, and before I can prevent him, has dismounted, and is holding the bridle ready for me to get up again.

'Now, look here, my man,' I begin. 'I want you'—

But the words die upon my lips. Just as I press the two half-crowns into the labourer's willing hand, there is a confused clatter of hoofs, and three men in pink come swinging round the corner. I will wait until they pass. Oh the mistaken kindness I have suffered from, to-day! They don't pass; they pull up with one accord, and hope that I haven't come to grief. I disclaim all need of aid and sympathy with frightful eagerness; but in vain. My hollow tones arouse their pity, and one of them jumps off his horse, and taking Diamond by the head bids the rustic 'help the gentleman mount.' The labourer seizes my left leg in a giant's grip, and I yield myself to fate, silent for very shame. The three officious good Samaritans ride with me just far enough to let the retreating labourer get well out of sight with my five shillings, and then bidding me good-evening, turn up across the open moor, leaving me to my enemy's mercy.

I am bound to admit that he goes more sedately now. How I would thrash him if I only dared! Fortunately for him, I would as soon try to fly as take such a liberty, and he is allowed to plod along as slowly as he chooses. By-and-by he begins to go very awkwardly; he stumbles and trips, until I am in momentary terror of being thrown over his head. He must be lame; and as the awful possibility, nay, fact, bursts upon me, I pull at the bridle till I get him to stand still; and climb down to see what has gone wrong with him. I can't see anything unusual about any of his legs; but there is no disguising the hideous fact that he is dead-lame. I don't waste time in making further investigations; I throw the bridle over my arm, and once more set out to walk home, with the horse limping behind me. I am dog-tired, very hungry, and my body aches from innumerable bruises. I begin, moreover, as I near the house, to feel that my personal appearance is rather depressing. My hat (new a week ago) would make an Irish beggar blush; my once spotless buckskins are boldly variegated with blots and patches of brown and green till they resemble a carelessly drawn map. Diamond and his trappings are no cleaner, and we indeed a sorry procession as we enter Barnsdale at sunset and are received by Pudge-wood at the hall-door.

'Hallo!' he says, 'wh'

'He's lame,' I respond in a ghastly whisper.

'Lame!' shouts my host, rushing down the steps and diving at Diamond's legs—'lame!' He feels each limb in turn, and then examines the hoofs, while I stand trembling like a pickpocket's apprentice caught in his first theft. Presently Pudgewood draws out his pocket-knife and with two taps knocks a stone out of Diamond's forefoot. Then he stands upright and pats the horse's neck. 'Jones,' he says with the gravity of a man whose painful duty it is to bring a serious charge against his best friend—'Jones, I'm afraid you're a duffer.'

And I am too completely crushed to reply.

I have never ridden to hounds since; and when fellows begin to talk hunting at dinner, I am silent. I consider that hunting as an amusement is greatly overrated.

THE SENSE OF HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

MOST of George Eliot's readers will recollect, and some know by heart, that very pathetic passage in *The Mill on the Floss*, where Maggie Tulliver, resisting Dr Kenn's advice to stay on at St Oggs, replied with great earnestness: 'Oh, I must go.' It seemed, says the writer, that she had told him her life's history in these few words. 'It was one of those moments of implicit revelation which will sometimes happen between people who meet quite transiently, on a mile's journey perhaps, or when resting by the wayside. There is always this possibility of a word or a look from a stranger to keep alive the sense of human brotherhood.' Dr Kenn understood in a moment that deep meaning and intention lay beneath these four words of Maggie's. It is one of the subtlest and most beautiful traits of the mind, this swift and mystical power of interpretation vouchsafed at certain moments of our lives to most of us: a single flash of the eye, or a few earnest words with perchance but little outward meaning, may communicate to a stranger a world of sorrow, a hidden depth of feeling. If it be sorrow that is hidden, then, like murder, it must out. A man may proudly lock up his grief in his inmost self, so that even his nearest friends may not suspect it; but suddenly, at an unguarded moment, as it were, the truth lies bare to a stranger. Often enough a gentle word or look is sufficient.

We English, are we not the proudest, coldest people in the world? For hours together, a dozen people may be congregated in a railway carriage without uttering a word to each other; each, perhaps, is shy of breaking the ice. And probably the higher you mount the social ladder, the further you will find this conventionality carried. Most people have heard the conventional tale of an Oxford student who refused to save a drowning fellow-collegian because he 'had not been introduced.' And yet through all this, human nature is ever thrusting and reasserting itself—bursting through the frail web that society weaves around us.

Strange faces, and even voices, often exercise definable glamour over us. After the lapse of years a face occurs to us again and again, a brief minutes—perhaps a little country railway

station: that once our eyes met, never to meet again, and straightway a quick understanding, nay, more, a dumb friendship sprung up between us. We still, at this day, see the face and meet the eyes while the train steams slowly away, and in a few moments is but a black dot in the distance.

Other well-known and oft-seen faces that we strive to recall either elude us, or flash dimly for a second on the mind's eye. As Tennyson so beautifully says:

I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know; the hues are faint,
And mix with hollow masks of night.

A curious thought this—two beings drawn gradually towards each other by countless chances, meet for a brief minute, and part again for eternity.

We see around us daily forms and faces for which we care nothing, whose presence we would often too readily dispense with, while in the obstinacy, as it were, of our natures we persistently regret the one face that we shall not look upon again—in this world, perhaps; and if we did, and were not in turn recognised, would not the disappointment be the keener? Forthwith the idol that we had cherished would fall broken to the ground.

This is an age when science and reason are working to divest us of all but their own unalterable truths, and when many an idea cherished from youth must stand confessed before the light of science as a mere fancy or illusion. Perhaps, then, there are few who will not attribute this undefined influence of strange men and women over us simply to that inherent desire for change and novelty deeply rooted in the nature of mankind. But to some few there may seem to be a deeper reason, namely, the 'sense of human brotherhood,' of which George Eliot speaks: a fact which, if it be true, does high credit to our natures, serving, amongst other ends, to give the lie to the cynic who wrote that men were to each other as wolves.

H O P E.

A SONG.

Oh, chide not Hope, though she deceives
The trusting heart so often;
The music of her whisper leaves
A spell our woes to soften.
She is not false! Her mission rare
Is this, to cheer by smiling;
For nought like Hope can lighten Care,
Whatever her beguiling.

Oh, paint her still the maid we know,
Upon her anchor leaning,
With sunshine on her lips, and brow
Aglow with joyous meaning.
Rebuke her not, lest with a sigh
She leave you in your sorrow,
And dread Despair, still how'ring nigh,
Usurp her sway to-morrow.

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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'BRIGHT STAR OF VENUS.'

CONSPICUOUS at present in the western sky is a star of great brilliancy. By those who even casually observe the phenomena of the sky, it cannot fail to be noted, all the more as it has lately increased much in brightness and risen higher in the evening sky. It is the Hesperus of the ancients, Shakespeare's 'bright star of Venus,' coming now into a more favourable position for evening observation than it has occupied for years. This planet has always been a favourite star with the poets. Milton describes how, when evening fell over Paradise, 'Hesperus, that led the starry host, rode brightest;' and in the same poem he speaks of it as

The Star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the Earth.

Hence, it may at this time interest our readers to learn something of this celestial wanderer, so prominently thrusting itself on our attention in the evening sky.

And first we may note the reason for the present brilliancy of the planet, which brilliancy will go on increasing until near the end of March, when it will probably astonish many of us and cause considerable wondering and inquiry. This excessive light is not due to any increase in the actual luminosity of the planet's surface; there is but little change in this, and that little is due to its slight approach to or recess from the sun in its orbital course. Its present radiance is wholly apparent, and due simply to its position in the sky with reference to the sun. We have ourselves seen Venus with the naked eye at two o'clock on a July afternoon, when it was almost right overhead in the blue heaven; yet at that time it was hardly noticeable in the evening, as it set so near the sun as to be dimmed by the glare of the twilight. It was intrinsically as brilliant then as now, only at its present appearance it is so placed as to remain visible for a long time after sunset. It is thus projected on

a very dark sky, and brightens strongly upon the eye by the contrast.

The movements which lead to this result are curious and interesting. If we could have the sun remain still in mid-heaven during one period of the planet's motions in the sky and could follow the latter with the eye, we should see something like this: Suppose Venus first placed away to the west or right-hand side of the sun, we should see it gradually approach the latter, becoming feebler in light as it did so; then passing the sun, it would slowly swing away to the east (or left-hand), becoming brighter and brighter, until it had gone, like a pendulum, as far in that direction as at first it was away to the other side. Still becoming brighter, it would commence its returning course towards the sun, until at a certain point its brightness would be at a maximum; then it would swing on, becoming almost invisible when passing the sun, until it had attained its first position on the extreme right. In its most simple aspect this motion is just that of a pendulum, the planet sweeping across the sky from side to side of the sun, only the motion is slow, taking about two hundred and twenty-four days for a double swing.

Now, in order to see how this motion affects the planet's evening brightness, we must note that the path it pursues is not directly across the sky from east to west, but *at present* it is diagonal; the planet, swinging eastward, swings also away up to the north—up over our shoulder, as it were, as we look south, so that, while it is increasing in brightness, it is also getting farther from the sun and farther northwards in the sky. Now, we know that the farther the sun gets north the longer he is in setting and the longer are the days. So the farther north Venus gets the later it is in setting; in other words, the sky has a longer time to get dark after sunset before the planet sets, and it is projected on a darker ground. Hence the later in the evening the planet sets the brighter it will appear.

But our readers will have noted that we spoke of its brightness changing as it moved; so, if we could only get a late setting-time for the planet conjoined with its time of maximum brilliancy, we should get the best possible effect of apparent light. Now, this will very nearly be the case at present. On the 25th of March it sets at about 10.30 P.M., while on the same day it is at its greatest brightness, and for several days at that time will form a splendid object, in a moonless sky. It will make a very good lesson in astronomy if our readers watch this remarkable change. Get some fixed object, hill, tree, or house, behind which the planet appears to set when you are standing at a certain point. Go back to the same point once or twice a week during the spring months, and note how many minutes later it sets every time until about the 22d of March. After that it will set earlier every evening with increasing rapidity of change until it is lost in proximity to the sun early in May. A simple exercise like this will do more to impress on the mind some facts of astronomy than the reading even of many books on the subject. It will let us actually *see*, for example, that the sun as well as the planet is in motion over the sky.

When the planet begins to set earlier each evening—that is, after about March 22—its change of time in setting is enormously more rapid than before. In fact, it set about 7.40 P.M. on 1st January last, and will take until March 22 to reach its latest setting-time, 10.35 P.M. (Greenwich time)—that is, nearly three months for a change of two hours fifty-five minutes. But in its return to earlier hours of retiring it will make such speed as to set at 7.38 P.M. on the 1st of May, doing nearly the same amount of change in about six weeks which before took nearly three months. This difference is due to the sun's motion. In the first case, Venus was, as it were, running away from the sun, while the sun pursued it, and the 'stern-chase' was a long one. In the second case, Venus will be travelling back towards the sun, while the latter still is coming on in his grand yearly course over the heavens, and the two will rapidly approach each other.

While watching these graceful windings of the planet, we naturally inquire as to its real condition. Readers are familiar with the idea that it is a world like our own earth, travelling in a smaller but otherwise almost similar orbit around the sun. On more minute inquiry we find that the likeness between it and our earth is in some points very great—greater, in fact, than in the case of any other planet. In the fundamental element of *size* they are almost alike, our earth being seven thousand nine hundred miles in diameter, and Venus seven thousand five hundred. The force of gravity on the surface of the latter is very nearly nine-tenths of what it is with us. Its density is almost the same fraction of that of the earth. These facts show that if transported to the surface of Venus we should feel more at home, so far as some essential features of experience are concerned, than on any other planet known to us. We should weigh just about nine-tenths of our present weight, and should find distances bearing much the same ratio to our muscular power of walking that they do in this world; while in all probability the surface rocks and

earth, if such be formed there, would be compacted and constructed like those we daily see around us. This would not be the case on planets so much smaller than the earth, as Mercury or Mars, or so much larger, as Jupiter, Saturn, or Neptune. Again, the year on Venus would be about two hundred and twenty-five days in length, a good deal more like what we have on the earth than is the case on any other planet. In the length of the day we should find a still more home-like experience, as the difference would be imperceptible except to careful observation. Venus rotates in twenty-three hours twenty-one minutes twenty-three seconds, and the earth in twenty-three hours fifty-six minutes four seconds. The *day*, of course, depends a little on the motion of the sun in the sky, but the difference between this as seen on our earth and from Venus would not appreciably affect the similarity of the days in each. These likenesses to the length of our day and year and to our world's density would cause a similarity, in all probability, in the important matters of mountain-form and of vegetation. In fact, so far, Venus is nearly the twin sister of our world.

But on turning to the scanty information collected by telescopic study of the planet's surface, we are baffled and confounded at the very outset. No planet has promised so much to the telescopic observer and performed so little. Its great light seems to indicate that any details on its surface will be easily seen. But on examination, the light is found to be too great, and no way of usefully reducing it has been found. The planet in a powerful telescope simply dazzles the eye, unless observed in the daytime, and then the eye has difficulty in discerning minute details. Indeed, the wonderful brilliancy of the surface and its whiteness are peculiar, and due to some physical arrangement not yet perfectly understood. The surface of the planet Mercury is between three and four times more brightly illuminated by the sun than that of Venus, and yet Mr James Nasmyth, observing them when close together in the field of his telescope, found that Venus shone like silver, while Mercury, by comparison, appeared like lead or zinc. This great brilliancy exaggerates the unavoidable defects of all kinds of telescopes hitherto invented, and is a great hindrance to the observer.

In the endeavours to explain this phenomenon, it has been conjectured that it proceeds from a cloudy envelope, surrounding all the planet, and turning to us its 'silver lining.' If this be the case, this cloud-canopy must prove a strong protection to the planet's surface from the intense solar radiance. It has been carefully calculated that such a cloud-canopy or envelope, in order to shine as it does, must reflect at least seventy-two and a half per cent. of the light falling on it from the sun. It would act thus like a solar helmet or artist's white umbrella, which are cool beneath in proportion as their white outer surface reflects the sun's rays. Even then, if the supposed cloud-canopy of Venus *absorbs* no light, it will only suffer twenty-seven and a half per cent. of what falls on its outer side to reach the planet's real surface below. The rest will be reflected in all directions through surrounding space. We may therefore roughly say that of the whole sunlight falling upon Venus only one-quarter will

reach its true land surface. And this quarter would equal about one-half of that received by the earth. Whether this theory be correct or not, it is certain that the visible surface of Venus is much more uniformly brilliant than it would be if it were either land or water such as are familiar to us. Our twin planet here fairly baffles scrutiny.

Still, various curious markings and appearances have been noted from time to time; for example, there is strong evidence that the planet is surrounded by a very dense and peculiar atmosphere. We know that the twilight which follows our sunsets is partly due to the refraction of the solar rays by our atmosphere. These linger longer on our clouds, because, coming past the horizon behind which the sun has sunk, they are bent downwards towards the earth. Hence the *zone* of twilight is enlarged and the *time* of twilight lengthened.

We have seen that Venus has nearly the same gravitational power as the earth. With a similarly constituted atmosphere it should have similar twilight. Now, we can see the twilight effects on its surface very distinctly. When it turns to us one half of its disc dark and the other light, like the moon in her first quarter, we can see the dim zone between the two where twilight lies, and measure its breadth. Studying this, we are met by the astounding fact that twilight has been seen to extend over the whole dark side of the planet; so that, when in crescent form, Venus has appeared like the young moon in the appearance familiarly known as the 'old moon in the new moon's arms.' But though the appearances are similar, their causes are different. The old moon shines on the new moon's crescent because it is illuminated by reflected light from the earth; but for Venus there is no reflected light strong enough to lighten *her* darkened side. Hence we conclude that her atmosphere is nearly twice as dense at her surface as ours, and is nearly twice as effective in refracting light. Apparently it will never be quite dark on this every way *luminous* globe.

It is possible, however, that this glow seen on the planet's dark side may be due to phosphorescence of the cloudy envelope or of the surface itself. In that case we are presented with a physical effect so curious and on so large a scale as but to emphasise our ignorance. It is as if half the world were covered with 'luminous paint!' Other indications confirm, however, the conclusion that Venus possesses an excessively dense and refractive atmosphere. These are chiefly the appearances presented when the planet crosses the sun in transit. Altogether, the dense *air* is most probably the real cause of the glow we have considered. And here again we are baffled when comparing such a world with our own. Another curious fact is that, while Venus waxes and wanes just like the moon, and from a similar cause, she does not do so regularly. When her light is waning, the lightened part of her disc is smaller than it ought to be, and the same is the case when her light is growing; so much so, that the different phases are respectively several days before and behind their proper time. Here, again, we have a problem difficult to solve, and indicating great difference between this planet and our world. Attempts have been

made to measure irregularities which from time to time show themselves on the surface of Venus. These have had such astounding results that we are led to doubt even what is attested by many competent observers. One mountain which MM. Arago and Bouquet de la Grye measured was given as sixty-five miles in vertical height! Schröter thought he saw another with a height of twenty-seven miles!

But perhaps the most remarkable fact of all is the detection of what appear to be polar snows, or at least patches, surrounding the planet's poles, which are brighter even than the rest of that bright globe. It is probable that conjecture as to a world so strange to us is at present nearly futile, and that time and patience alone can solve its mysteries.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XII.

WILL had his doubts as to the sufficiency of the distance between his new quarters and Castle-Barfield. London, both by reason of its magnitude and its distance, looked safe, and Warwick looked too small and too near to afford a secure hiding-place. But John's evident contentment with Madame's proposals, and the limited extent of his own funds, combined to persuade him; and before the little party left the dinner-table it was decided that Will should become a candidate for the vacant situation; so he and Mr Orme left the house together in search of the latter's employer.

Mr Orme, with his greasy hat set rakishly on one side, and his shabby neckerchief fluttering in the April wind, shambled on in silence for a time with his left hand in his trousers' pocket. A slow chinking of coins there, and an air of profound reflection in his face, seemed between them to indicate a close calculation of ways and means. The result would not have appeared to be altogether satisfactory, for Mr Orme, with a long-drawn sigh, withdrew his hand from his pocket and passed it across his lips, shaking his head somewhat dolefully meanwhile. His shuffling step took a more decided accent; but by-and-by the hand stole irresolutely back to the pocket, the slow chinking of coin began again, and his moist eye took once more the far-off glance of profound calculation.

'Your name, I believe, is William,' said Mr Orme, returning to a knowledge of common things, though still partially absorbed.—'William. Ah! yes. Exactly. William. Quite so. I have a call to make, William, a call to make. You will wait here for a moment; I will not detain you longer.' The call he had to make was at a corner dram-shop. He was out again in less than a minute with a bright and satisfied air. 'The gentleman was not there,' he murmured, smoothing his bibulous lips; 'I shall have to call again.'

Will marched on unsuspectingly beside him, and in the course of a few minutes found himself standing in a disorderly and unprosperous-looking stationer's shop, where a long limp man, with an aspect of resignation to unnumbered sorrows, sat behind the counter.

'I have found a boy who will probably suit you, Mr Varley,' said Mr Orme.

The long man arose limply and looked over the counter at Will, and sank back again despondently, as if the spectacle were almost too much for him. 'Very well, Mr Orme,' he said mournfully. 'You can teach him his duties; and if the boy likes he can begin at once. The wages are five shillings a week, and the hours are from eight to seven, with an hour from one till two for dinner, and half an hour from five till half-past for tea.' He made this brief announcement as if it were of the most sorrowful import in the world, and added with a heart-broken resignation which depressed Will's spirits for the remainder of the day: 'Saturday is a half-holiday.'

Mr Orme, being one of those people who find it difficult to bring an interview to a close, lingered for a while, and inspected the dusty cheap periodicals on the counter. He had a look of having something upon his mind which it was necessary to say, and of being shy of saying it. The look lasted until he had touched every article on the shabby counter, and then, with a sudden air of having said the thing, he shuffled off, taking Will in his train. They passed behind the counter and entered the domestic precincts. A whole tribe of children were playing at horses in the passage, and a boy of eight or nine nursed a Japanese idol of a baby whilst he drove in a harness of knotted cord a herd of six. Mr Orme becoming entangled in the harness, the team resolved itself into a body of Mayday dancers, with the new arrival for a maypole, and circled round him with obstreperous cries. This entertainment lasted until the sorrow-stricken proprietor of the establishment appeared upon the scene, when the children went suddenly quiet; and Mr Orme, released from his entanglement, took his shambling way into a weedy little desert of a garden, with a pigsty at one end, and a small barrack-like building of two stories at the other. The windows of this edifice were made of small square panes, which overlapped each other, and a fair half of them were broken. The breakages were patched with papers of all colours, so that each window had the look of a polychromatic advertisement sheet with half the divisions blank.

Such a limited wilderness of disorder as the interior of this building presented Will had never seen, or so much as dreamed of. A little regiment of broken and battered ink-cans stood in one corner, and every one of them seemed to leak—a thick gluey exudation of red, blue, black, green, and mauve. In an opposite corner was a great pile of waste-paper, into the base of which the waste water from a washing sink had run, apparently for years past, so that for nearly a foot upwards the paper was yellow and rotten with moisture. There were two old-fashioned printing-presses grimy with ink and oil and rust and dust, and looking as if they had been unused for a score of years past. Half-a-dozen rough wooden tables leaned forlornly to this side or that, their surfaces encrusted with old dirt; and the square brick-work of the floor was splintered everywhere, as if it had been beaten with a hammer.

A shaky flight of stairs led to an upper room, the crazy confusion of which made the apartment on the ground floor almost orderly by contrast. The unevenly boarded floor was half an inch deep in mourning under dust and ashes, and numberless little formes of type had been set upon it to be

kicked into disorder. Ramshackle shelves laden with worm-eaten wooden types held an insecure and precarious hold upon the walls; cases of metal type, meagre enough in number, stuck out from a rack at every conceivable angle; and every case seemed to be employed as a shelf for flat bottles, broken clay pipes, neglected granitic crusts, old pamphlets, tattered newspapers, old slippers, and half-a-dozen other ragged, tattered, and disgraceful articles of attire. A stone surface near the front window was cracked from end to end, and covered all over with an assortment of types of every size and character the place afforded.

In the middle of the room a stove was burning. It had at one time been too far heated and allowed to cool too suddenly, so that its cast-iron sides had broken into a blistered yawn, and the upper part was half severed from the lower. It was mounted insecurely on a shallow pan of sheet-iron, crammed full and overflowing with yellow ashes; and the pan in its turn was raised from the floor by half-a-dozen broken bricks. The stove-pipe was maudlin drunk, to all appearance, and swayed so far out of the perpendicular that it would have fallen but for a wire-hook, which, suspended from a piece of knotted string, hung from a rafter in the roof. Its wretched joints were held together by pasted brown paper, discoloured by heat, and in places almost dried to tinder. The leaky gas brackets had been repaired in the same orderly and efficient manner, and it would have been difficult to invent any sign of laziness and shiftless shift which the place did not include within its limits.

Mr Orme, removing his hat and coat, rolled up his sleeves, and ducked his head through the tape of an excessively dirty black apron. Will thought at first that this article had gone black in service; but a second glance assured him that the black was genuine and original, and that only the grayer tints upon it were the results of employment. When he had inducted himself into this workman-like garment, Mr Orme lit a pipe, and setting a shallow oblong box on end near the stove, took his seat there and smoked like a man on duty. 'If you've got any ambition, William,' he said, 'this is the shop to come to. Here's your avenue.'

'It's a printing office, isn't it, sir?' asked William.

'That's what they say outside, my boy,' responded Mr Orme.—'You haven't got an apron, have you? Well, you'll have to get some. In the meantime, you can go down-stairs and find a sheet of stiff brown paper and a piece of string.'

William did as he was bidden; and Mr Orme, first telling him to take off his jacket and roll his sleeves up, tied him in the brown paper wrapper as if he had been a clumsy parcel. When he had done this, he surveyed William with critical approval, and fell into a doze over his pipe. He woke from this to instruct his new lieutenant to feed the fire.

'And now,' he said, 'you're going to be initiated into the mysteries. Give me that sheet of copy on the longprimer upper case.'

William, discerning what he wanted by his glance and gesture rather than his words, brought him a thumb-marked scrawl, which he perused sleepily.

'Take that stick,' he said.—'No; not that

thing. The slip of mahogany with a brass slide on it.—Now, you see the bottom rack, left-hand side; pick the word "furniture" out of that.'

The letters in the rack were all higgledy-piggledy, and half of them were face downwards. By dint of five minutes' searching, Will found the necessary letters, and arranged them in the wooden composing-stick.

'Bring it here,' said Mr Orme. 'That's lesson number one. You've got all the letters turned the wrong way; but that's all proper and natural for a beginner. That's how they stand—on their heads. Do you see? If they didn't stand on their heads in type, they'd stand on their heads on the paper, and then anybody who wanted to read the bill would have to stand on his head to do it. The doctors won't allow that, because they say it's unwholesome for elderly people. Now, I want "Monday, May 10." You can get that out of the fat expanded Egyptian.'

'Yes, sir,' said Will, and stood expectant. Mr Orme, in his intense enjoyment of his pipe, dozed a little, and woke up with a start.

'Well,' he said, 'have you got the date?'

'No, sir,' said Will. 'You didn't tell me where the—the gentleman was, sir.'

The tutor twinkled all over, and taking a fallen cinder from the stove fire, threw it dexterously on to a line of dirty metal type.

'That's the fat expanded Egyptian.—"Monday, May 10." Put a comma after Monday, and another after 10.'

'I can only find one comma, sir.'

'Put a full point, then,' said Mr Orme. 'They'll think the tail has broken off. Put the full stop after "Monday;" it'll look more natural. Now you see, William—your name is William, isn't it?—you're learning the art and mystery dirt cheap. If I were selfish, I should do all this myself, and keep you in the dark. You understand that, don't you, William?'

William said 'Yes, sir' quite smoothly, but had his own opinion none the less.

When Mr Orme had made William do all that a boy so uninstructed and inexperienced could manage, he went lingeringly and unwillingly to work himself, and William stood by to assist, handing him all manner of oddly named articles: little bits of battered wood that were for some no-reason called 'furniture,' hollowed cubes of metal called 'quotations,' and finally being despatched in search of a mysterious article called a 'shoot-ing-stick,' which turned out to be a degenerate splitting of boxwood bluntly frizzled at both ends.

This brought Mr Orme to tea-time; and Will was despatched to the house with a teapot, which, like everything else about the printing office, was beaten out of shape and discoloured by long service, with instructions to get it filled from the kitchen with boiling water. Mr Orme kept a little assortment of tin cans for tea, milk, sugar, coffee, and the like, and had a small loaf, a pat of greasy butter, and a rusty, broken-bladed table-knife in a drawer. From these materials he made a meal, singeing slices of bread on the top of the stove, and growing quite unctuous and shiny with warmth and butter before the repast was over.

A fat watch this industrious workman carried seemed chiefly useful because it could be made to

indicate any hour its proprietor desired. He generally beat it upon his knee and held it to his ear before consulting it; but he professed as great a faith in it as if it had been the clock of a cathedral or a Greenwich chronometer. The minute-finger was dislocated, and could easily be induced by a persuasive shake to go backwards or forwards five minutes at a time, so that Mr Orme, by shaking it forwards once before tea-time and twice backwards after tea-time, secured an extra quarter of an hour's idleness, and at the same time comforted his conscience with a sense of the strictest punctuality.

When a proof-sheet of the auctioneer's bill had been pulled, a process in which Will was profoundly interested, Mr Orme put on a huge pair of spectacles and read the printed document solemnly aloud to the boy, who checked it by the manuscript. Divers corrections were made, and Will was then sent down to the shop with a revise. He had left Mr Orme apparently in the highest spirits, and was surprised to find him seated in an attitude indicative of the greatest personal discomfort at the bottom of the crazy stairs, where Mr Orme not only rocked himself to and fro with great violence, but emitted a very hollow and sepulchral groan. His assistant became really anxious and alarmed, and proposing to summon their employer, actually set off for that purpose. Mr Orme darted out after him with an unexpected agility and called him back.

'Don't tell the governor, William,' he besought him with a serious mien. 'If Varley knew that I was subject to these attacks—I don't want to take his character away, but Varley is not a sympathetic man, William—if he knew that I was liable to this, he might suppose that I was not quite equal to the work. I can endure it, William; I can endure in silence.' He had dodged out after William into the weedy little garden, and now went back into the office, leaning heavily upon his shoulder, and uttering low moans expressive of suffering and fortitude.

'Isn't there anything that would do you good, sir?' asked Will, to whom these distressing symptoms were altogether novel.

'There is a remedy,' Mr Orme replied, with a writhe so complicated and so agile that in a man of his figure it was quite phenomenal—'there is a remedy, but it is costly. I have expended too much in charity this week, William; but to-morrow is pay-day, and I had hoped from the symptoms—I am familiar with the symptoms—that the attack would have delayed itself until at least to-morrow evening.' Then he groaned again, and laid himself out face downwards upon the waste-paper heap, where he groaned at intervals like a minute-gun.

'Can't I do anything for you, sir?' asked Will, whose unsophisticated heart was quite pierced with sympathy.

'No, no, my child,' Mr Orme answered in a voice of anguished resolution. A moment later he straightened himself, and averting his head and grasping his waistcoat with both hands, abandoned himself to soliloquy. 'To think,' he said, 'that I should suffer thus for the want of ninepence.'

'O sir,' cried Will, 'I've got ninepence!'

'You have?' cried Mr Orme wildly. 'You

will preserve me. Run up-stairs. There is a flat bottle. A cork rim inside. A glass stopper. Seven cases down from the top, beneath the stove-pipe.'

Will tore up-stairs with an agitation perhaps more than equalling Mr Orme's own.

'Rum!' gasped the sufferer. 'They fill the bottle for ninnepence. Turn to the left as you leave the shop, and the place is at the corner.'

The mere prospect of the remedy did Mr Orme so much good that he rose with every trace of his disorder banished, and, to the tune of *Vilikins and his Dinah* waltzed slowly and solemnly round one of the rickety tables. He was dreadfully faint and ill again on the messenger's return, however; and it was not until half the contents of the bottle had disappeared that he could persuade himself that all fears of a relapse were at an end. By this time he had mounted to the upper story, and was well enough to sit by the fire, and even to smoke a pipe, whilst he sipped rum-and-water from the gallipot in which he had taken his rum-and-water an hour earlier.

'Alcohol, William,' he said with impressive solemnity, 'is one of the most valuable of therapeutic agents. Like fire, it is an excellent servant, but the worst of masters. I use it medicinally myself, and I find, employed in that way, that it does me good.' He arose with the apparent intent of stowing away the bottle, but was so suddenly arrested by an unexpected renewal of his pains, that he was compelled to finish it upon the spot. 'Say nothing of this at home, William,' he said, as he restored the empty bottle to its place. 'I prefer to suffer the pangs which are occasionally incidental to approaching age in silence—in solitude and darkness, William. I would not willingly become an object of compassionate scorn.' His solemnity was so great at this moment that his speech was scarcely so clear as it had been, and the weakness superinduced by his suffering was so marked that he tottered a little in his gait. 'Be careful, William,' he observed, with an almost tearful earnestness. 'Even the dictates of a philanthropic heart would urge youth to be economic. I shudder to think of what the consequences might have been to me if you had been unable to come to my rescue; if the natural affection of the youthful appetite for hardbake, ginger-beer, and lollipops had overcome your economic instincts. Remember, William, that a strict economy once enabled you to be of marked and striking service to a fellow-citizen, who is, unhappily, long past his prime, but who, believe me, William, is not ungrateful.'

FRENCH ENTERPRISE IN THE SAHARA.

DURING the last thirty years, a remarkable change has been taking place in the appearance of that part of the Sahara which is contiguous to the French possessions in North Africa. Much of what formerly was desolate and barren desert has now assumed a flourishing aspect; and places which not long since were, owing to their dried-up, lifeless state, quite unfit for vegetable or human sustenance, are now green with verdure and the abode of teeming populations. No longer, so far at least as these regions of it are concerned,

is the common notion of the Sahara as a bare and sterile country a correct one; and probably in the future we shall hear no more of those ruthless projects which aim at turning into an inland sea a country which can with care and enterprise be made so fertile. The experiments hitherto carried out by the French have been entirely successful, and the work of the energetic pioneers of this movement is now being richly rewarded.

The fact of the matter is that the Sahara is not so dried up as is popularly imagined. Although the general surface of the country is, owing to the dry climate and the sandy and rocky nature of the topmost strata, in its usual condition unsuitable for vegetation, yet there is apparently all over the Sahara abundance of subterranean or artesian water. The natural oases which are to be found here and there, are due to this water finding an outlet for itself through the softer soil or gravel laid bare by the deeper chasms or valleys which intersect the surface of the *hamada*, or rocky plateaux, which are characteristic of the region as a whole. While, therefore, the chalk or limestone and sand which compose the upper surface of these *hamada* are almost bare and without vegetation of any kind, yet, when one descends into the chasms or valleys just referred to, places are to be found with plants of various kinds and capable of being utilised for purposes of cultivation. If, too, we except the steppes, the meagre pasturage of which gives life to the wandering nomadic tribes and their herds, these valleys or oases are the only parts of the Sahara inhabited by man. They form, as it were, green islands of life in the midst of a vast lonely ocean.

What the French then are doing is to utilise their knowledge of the geology of the country, and, by boring, to make outlets for the subterranean water, which is plentiful, and so form artificial oases wherever the nature of the country permits. The chief scene of their enterprise has been an extensive low-lying district of the Algerian Sahara known as the Oued Rir. The word Oued, or Ouâd (Wady), it may here be remarked, means originally a watercourse, whether actually containing water or dried up, but from this has been applied indiscriminately to all valleys or crevasses in the Sahara. This Oued Rir, then, is one of the largest and most important of these valleys, and extends from north to south for a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles. At the time of the French conquest of this district in 1854, its resources were in a very poor condition, and it was rapidly sinking in importance. What were once oases had been allowed through want of attention to become desert; the population of the place was diminishing; and the palm-trees, upon the fruit of which they chiefly subsisted, were dying from neglect: the causes of all this being clearly traceable to the intestinal feuds which were constantly taking place among the native tribes.

Since 1854, however, a great change has in these respects been wrought. The centralisation of government brought about by the French administration has completely pacified the country, and the energies of traders have been directed to developing its resources. Many new natural wells

have been formed, and fresh oases have grown up in consequence; the population of the whole district has been doubled, and altogether a movement is in progress the ultimate importance of which cannot be foretold.

The first French well was formed in June 1856, and gave a flow of about nine hundred gallons per minute. As the inauguration of the new civilisation, it was called the 'Fountain of Peace;' and justly so, for surely nothing can be more likely to further the arts of peace than fresh impulses to the cultivation of the soil. Since that date, the work so auspiciously begun has been continued steadily and without interruption; and with such success, that on the 1st October 1885, there were in the Oued Rir alone no fewer than one hundred and fourteen French springs, and four hundred and ninety-two natural springs, yielding in all about fifty-six thousand gallons per minute. Moreover, a fact which was specially gratifying to the workers, was, that even the oldest wells were giving up their watery treasures in as large a quantity as when first they were formed. Naturally, so large a flow of water has resulted in the creation of large tracts of utilisable soil, and the oases so formed have been planted with young fresh palm-trees, while the older oases have been also carefully tended and cultivated. At the present time the Oued Rir contains more than forty oases with as many as five hundred and twenty thousand palm-trees of a full fruit-bearing age, more than one hundred and forty thousand trees of less than seven years of age, and about one hundred thousand other fruit-trees. The annual production of dates amounts to more than one hundred thousand pounds sterling.

The tree for the cultivation of which these oases are so suitable is the Date-palm. Nowhere else does this tree grow so well and so luxuriantly. Its natural wants seem to be exactly satisfied by the physical conditions of the Sahara. What it seems to require is a moist ground combined with a dry climate; and these two contrary states are just what the Sahara furnishes. That the outlay incurred by the planters is soon repaid may be seen from the Report of the 'Société de Batna et du Sud Algerien,' a Society which was founded in 1881 by M. Rolland and the Marquis de Courcival, with the express aim of developing the resources of the Oued Rir. This Society is there stated to have within the first five years of its existence formed three oases and three villages; to have sunk seven spring-wells, giving in all over 4600 gallons of water per minute; to have reclaimed one thousand acres of waste land; planted more than fifty thousand date-palms; dug ditches for purposes of irrigation to the combined length of twenty-five miles; and built houses for the cultivators and the Company's agents, with the result that already a revenue of, in round numbers, twenty thousand pounds sterling has been reaped. The total production of dates in the Oued Rir may be set down at from one hundred to one hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling per annum, and is constantly increasing. This fruit always commands a sale, for, independently of the quantities which are exported to European markets, it is the regular food of the natives of North Africa, being used by them as wheat is by Europeans or rice by Indians.

But the date-palm is not the only product of these regions, a large trade being also done in ostrich feathers. These last are not so plentiful as they might have been, had the French not, when they first came into these regions, indiscriminately destroyed the birds; but nevertheless the production is very considerable. The total annual product derived at present from all the French possessions in North Africa is worth about eight hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling; and no doubt this sum could be largely increased if ostrich-farming were also encouraged in those districts of the Sahara which are reclaimed in the manner above described.

Further, excellent means for the transport of the products of these oases in the interior already exist, and other reforms are in contemplation which will still further assist the cultivators. From Philippeville, on the coast, a railway runs by way of the important city of Constantine southwards to Biskra. This last place is only sixty-two miles north of the first of the oases of the Oued Rir, but a continuation of the railway is in contemplation which will unite Tougourt, the capital of the district, and the seat of the administrative government, with the coast. This line will pass through all the different oases which have been created, and when complete, will form a ready outlet for the products and commerce of the southern regions. In consequence of all this energy, the desert districts of Algeria seem bound to prosper; and if only the experiment thus tried is imitated in other parts of the Sahara, it would not be out of place to prophesy a great future for those extensive wastes which are at present lying useless in the heart of North Africa.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.—A PARAGON OF MANHOOD.

It was late when Dacon arrived at Cedar Cottage, so late that even Hetty had begun to despair of his coming. Her mother had delayed dinner for an hour on his account, and was not pleased by the inevitable consequence that the extra delicacies provided to tempt the jaded appetite of her future son-in-law were spoiled. After dinner, as was her custom when they were quite alone, she took what was euphemistically termed 'forty winks' in her easy-chair; as each wink occupied rather more than a minute and a half, she had usually a good hour's nap. She awakened under the pleasing delusion that she had only shut her eyes for about ten minutes, and was invigorated by the repose. She was as eager as ever to learn the details of what had happened in the City, and confident that 'Dear Henry would never think of leaving them in suspense for a whole night.' But as the hands of the clock pointed to eleven, she became decidedly impatient; and again when a vehicle stopped at the gate and the sound of footsteps on the gravel was heard, she immediately took credit to herself for never having had a moment's doubt of 'Dear Henry's' consideration for the anxious state of their minds.

'There! I told you he would come, my dears,' she said, as if Hetty and Daisy had been doing

their utmost to persuade her that he would not ; 'and sure enough, here he is !'

Hetty ran to meet him, and was startled to see how weary and almost haggard he looked.

'I was sure you would expect me some time to-night,' he said ; 'and late as it is, I have come as soon as it was possible. We have had a bad time in the City, as you can guess.'

'You seem to be quite worn out, poor dear,' exclaimed Mrs Silverton, sympathetically adding in a practical way : 'Take a glass of wine ; or will you have a little brandy ?—and have you dined ?'

'A little of this, thank you,' he replied, helping himself to brandy-and-water ; 'but I cannot eat. This has been the most horrible day I have ever known. The loss to the firm is very serious.'

'And is it true that Gilbert Astbury has run away ?' asked the widow with a severity of tone indicative of her resolution to have no pity for the young man who had so disgraced her sponsorship.

'He cannot be found,' was the evasive answer.

Daisy had been sitting in the shadow of a large screen, knitting ; but she had been observing all that passed and paying attentive heed to every word. She looked up now and spoke in her soft clear voice : 'Do you believe he has anything to do with these frauds ?'

Dacon was startled by this abrupt question from the hitherto unnoticed listener. 'I cannot say what he may have had to do with them, Miss Forester.'

Daisy rose and looked at him steadily as she put the next question : 'I want you to tell me, Mr Dacon—do you *believe* that he is guilty ?'

'I do not.' The emphatic answer seemed to jump out of his mouth involuntarily : there was not the faintest note of doubt or hesitation in its deliverance ; and yet there was a momentary disturbed expression in his eyes, as if he had heard the words spoken by some one else.

'I should be so glad if he could clear himself of all blame,' remarked Hetty with a sigh.

'Impossible, or he would not have run away,' insisted the widow, holding to her first judgment.

'Thank you, Mr Dacon,' observed Daisy earnestly. 'I also feel sure of his innocence, and sure that it will some day be placed beyond a doubt.'

'I am pleased that you should share my opinion, Miss Forester,' said Dacon, quite recovered from that flash of confusion which Daisy alone had observed. 'I am so satisfied on the subject, that I mean to do all in my power to help him.'

Mrs Silverton was breathless with astonishment, and relented having so hastily declared her decision. She put on her glasses and gazed at him with unbounded admiration. 'How good !—how noble of you, Henry !' she ejaculated. 'I cannot find words sufficiently strong to express my wonder and delight at such magnanimity ! You, who, on account of your friendship for the young man, must, like poor me, bear some reflections for his misdeeds—you are the first to speak in his behalf ! This is truly noble, and I wish I could think of him in such a Christian spirit.

But I am only a woman, and cannot so quickly overcome the—irritation—the annoyance I feel after having presented him to all our friends.'

Hetty's hand stole softly into his, and the gentle pressure of her fingers told him more eloquently than her mother's grandiose address what a paragon of manhood he appeared in her eyes. His hand gave a slight convulsive jerk as she touched it ; but this was no doubt attributable to his dislike of such open praise—although she thought the praise was not in the least bit exaggerated.

'I am only doing what I believe to be my duty to a true friend. Unfortunately, there is not much in my power to do ; for Mr Ardwick, our solicitor, has already made up his mind about the case, and his opinion is not favourable to Astbury. I made out, too, that *his* view was taken by the detective who was present at the consultation to-day, although he did not express it so plainly.'

'The detective !' All colour faded from Daisy's cheeks as she repeated the ominous word.

'Yes ; I am sorry to say,' Dacon proceeded deprecatingly, as if apologising for himself, 'the affair has passed into the hands of the police. My uncle would have put off that step for another day at anyrate, but Ardwick insisted that too much time had been already allowed to slip by before decisive measures were taken.'

'And what will they do ?' asked the girl in a frightened whisper.

'They must first find our friend, and then everything will depend on the evidence they can bring against him. As he had not been seen in the office since the forenoon, his lodgings were searched ; but nothing that could incriminate him was discovered. His landlady stated that he had gone out in the morning as usual, and she had seen no signs of preparation for a journey. She expected him back at his usual hour ; but he has not yet returned to the house.'

'He was here to-day,' said Daisy, looking at her cousin, 'and told me that he was going away, and would probably never return.'

Hetty's cheeks were tingling with the remembrance of the painful scene she had passed through. She had no thought of concealing the interview with Gilbert, although she had announced her resolution not to see him again until this dreadful business was disposed of one way or another. But she could not and would not tell her lover what wicked things Gilbert had insinuated against him, and how fiercely she had been compelled to defend him. The recollection of these insinuations reflected the more lustre on Dacon's conduct towards his would-be traducer.

'Yes,' she said, looking down, 'he told me, too, that he was going away.'

'I am glad you saw him,' was Dacon's ready comment ; 'and I hope you contrived to say something cheering to him, for he has been in very low water lately. Since he has told you that he was going, he must have meant it ; and I hope he will get clear away beyond the reach of the Scotland Yard people.'

Daisy regarded him with an expression of surprise, and spoke somewhat reproachfully : 'I thought you said that you believed him innocent ! If you meant it, you should wish him to be here to prove his innocence.'

'It is very difficult to know what one should wish under the circumstances,' rejoined Dacon uncomfortably, for he was taken aback by her keen glance and sharp rebuke. 'But we will see what to-morrow brings forth. I will let you know everything that goes on; and now I must say good-night.'

'You won't forget that I shall be dying for the earliest intelligence of anything that may happen,' said Mrs Silverton impressively as she was shaking hands with him; 'for, you know, everybody will come to me for information. I feel almost as if they would regard me as a sort of accomplice—it is so unfortunate that our names should be associated with—with such a'—she was going to say 'criminal,' but substituted the milder but in some intonations scarcely less offensive word—'person.'

Daisy fancied that he winced under the reiterated expression of her aunt's indignation with the supposed malefactor; but he spoke composedly enough.

'Do not disturb yourself at all on that score, Mrs Silverton. Everybody will be sorry that you were unlucky enough to be acquainted with a man suspected of a—blunder like this—for it is more of a blunder than a crime. But nobody whose opinion is worth a straw will dream of blaming you for the kindness you have shown him.'

'It is curious how he contradicts himself,' reflected Daisy. 'He says he believes Gilbert innocent, and now he speaks as if he thought him guilty.'

'I am glad you should think so,' rejoined the widow; 'but you are so generous and considerate in your way of looking at things, that you are incapable of guessing what ordinary people will say and what scandals they can make out of nothing.' This was said with a smile and an admiring shake of the head.

'I am glad you saw poor Astbury to-day, Hetty,' he said when they were alone together in the little hall and his arm was round her waist.

'He pleaded so earnestly to see me that I was forced to yield,' she answered meekly, but quite determined not to explain that it was the threat of danger to him which had overcome her resolution.

'You did quite right. I should have been more sorry than you can imagine if you had remained stubborn in your determination not to speak to him. Poor chap, he is in a bad fix. I did not like to tell you the worst before your mother and cousin. But every railway station is being watched; telegrams were sent late to-night to the police at every port in the kingdom to have him looked for and his movements watched. To-morrow morning, a warrant will be issued for his apprehension.'

'Should he be caught—what will happen? O Henry, I feel so sorry for him, because'— She hesitated; and a jealous pang shot through the man's breast, extinguishing his better feelings.

'Because what?' he asked with a gentleness the display of which required an effort.

'I do not know that I should tell you; but there should not and need not be any secrets between us.'

'Certainly not.'

'Then it is because I think—no, I am sure—

that Daisy is as fond of him as—as I am of you.'

He drew breath, and experienced a twinge of pain at the meanness of his momentary suspicion that he was her accepted suitor only because he was the heir of John Ellicott, whilst Gilbert was the man she really loved. He was glad, relieved, yet tortured by the consciousness of his own falsehood; but he was palliating it with good resolutions to fulfil the terms of Gilbert's bargain in the fullest measure. He would make Hetty's whole life one of unmixed joy so far as devotion and money could obtain that result. His voice was a little husky when, after a pause, he spoke.

'That is another reason why I must do everything I can to shield Astbury. At the same time it is a pity, for I see no chance of his coming back except as a prisoner.'

'Oh, that would be horrible, and Daisy would suffer as much as I would in her place.' She clung to him fondly whilst speaking; and he felt that she was shivering at the bare idea of him being in such a position. 'Do you think there is no hope of Gilbert being able to prove his innocence?'

The question stung him, and he answered with a curious note of pain in his voice, although the sound was scarcely above a whisper: 'I do not know. Men have been before now in as bad a fix as he is, and have come out of it all right, or at anyrate not much the worse for getting scorched in the fire. I mean to stand by him whatever turns up, and you can tell Daisy to be certain of that.'

This assurance was comforting to Hetty, and would have increased her love for him if there had been any space for its increase. On returning to the dining-room she was flushed, and there was a happy light on her face. 'We need have no fear about Gilbert,' she said, speaking directly to Daisy, 'for Henry says he will protect him, no matter what happens.'

'I am sure he will, and I have just been saying so to Daisy,' observed Mrs Silverton, who had been busy all the time extolling Dacon's virtues with the biggest adjectives she could think of.

Hetty was surprised that Daisy was not so enthusiastic as herself in expressions of gratitude, when she repeated Dacon's assurance of fidelity to his friend. More, she considered her reception of it ungraciously cold.

Daisy was certainly grateful for his emphatic declaration of faith in Gilbert, and yet she was puzzled by various eccentricities of tone and look. They had, somehow, suggested that the paragon of manhood was, to use an expressive vulgarism, 'shuffling' with an uneasy conscience. So, whilst the others were loud—and she could not deny, justly loud—in their laudations of the devoted friend, she was somewhat silent, wondering what it could be that made her suspicious not only of his generosity but of his truth.

She racked her brain all the night for some explanation of her doubt that should be natural and consistent with the characters and position of the two men. She was glad when morning came, and it was practicable to leave her room and go out without exciting too much astonishment in the minds of the domestics. She took a brisk walk in the keen morning air, through the meadows round by the Herne Hill road, with the fresh

foliage of its ancient trees sparkling with many delicate shades of green in the sunlight. Then down the steep brow of Champion Hill, through the meadows again back to the Cottage.

A telegram from Dacon arrived at luncheon-time: 'Nothing known yet, except that he has got away.' Later came a messenger with a note for Hetty. She was disappointed and distressed, but not alarmed by its contents. This was what she read to her mother and cousin: 'It will be impossible for me to call this evening. My uncle has had a serious attack of apoplexy—so serious that the doctor fears the worst, and I must remain by his side.'—(The lamentations of the lover for the joy he had to forego were judiciously omitted by the reader.)—'No trace of Astbury has been discovered; but it is painful to me to write that the bank officials are able to prove that he received the cash for most of the forged bills. The cashier who paid the money knew him well, and there can be no question as to his identity. I am truly sorry for this; but still hope that there may be some mistake, although everything is against the probability of it.'

A heavy cloud shadowed Daisy's face as she listened to these last sentences. Mrs Silverton scarcely heard them, for at the announcement of the dangerous illness of Mr Ellicott, her interest in Gilbert's fate was for the time extinguished by the more important consideration of the change which the uncle's death would make in 'Dear Henry's' circumstances. He would come into a vast fortune immediately; and—of course after a decent interval—she would see her daughter united to the chief of the great firm of Ellicott & Co.! But whilst thus cogitating, she was not unmindful of the conventional expressions of regret for the old gentleman's affliction and imminent danger.

'It is very dreadful, my dears, to think of the poor old man being so suddenly stricken. The last time I saw him he looked as if he would long outlive my time. Still, we must not forget that in the course of nature we have all to be prepared for the end; and Mr Ellicott has passed the allotted span.' She breathed a sweet sigh of resignation, leaned back in her comfortable chair, and devoted herself to pleasing speculation as to how many thousands a year her future son-in-law would inherit.

'Ah, here is something written inside the envelope,' ejaculated Hetty, as she stopped in the act of replacing the letter. 'He says: "I have just learned that Astbury was seen at Charing Cross railway station last night taking a ticket for Marseilles. A detective has followed"—O Daisy, I hope he will escape!' The expression was full of deepest pity for her afflicted cousin.

Daisy got up, looking very cold and bewildered as she moved towards the door. She stopped on the threshold, and turning her face to Hetty, said strangely: 'I hope he will not escape; I hope they will overtake him and bring him back.—There; do not mind what I say; I am out of sorts.'

Hetty did not follow, for she understood her sorrow, and knew that solitude would be most welcome at present. But she was utterly at a loss to guess why Daisy should wish Gilbert

to be captured by the police. She would have done all that a woman could do to hide the man she loved and shield him from such a fate. She did not divine how thoroughly convinced Daisy was of his perfect innocence; and how completely she was imbued with the idea that his only crime was in failing to come forward to assert it.

The next day, Daisy had recovered her habitually quiet demeanour. She was a little paler than usual, but, as she rarely had much colour in her cheeks, the fact did not attract attention. She had not confided her sorrow to Hetty, who had half expected she would, and was prepared to give her every help and comfort that sincere sympathy and affection could give.

The forenoon post brought the news for which they had been prepared by Dacon's letter. Mr Ellicott had died without once recovering consciousness or the power of speech. As the deceased gentleman had not been an intimate friend of the inhabitants of Cedar Cottage—although Mrs Silverton did her best to make him out to be so on the strength of his one visit, when he simply sent in his card by the footman—the ladies were only affected by his loss in so far as it concerned Henry Dacon.

The widow was delighted to learn in the course of a few days that Dacon was, as she had anticipated, left at the head of the house in Fenchurch Street; and although she was chagrined at the large amount of money of which he was deprived by the legacies to various relatives and charitable institutions, she was quite satisfied that the future life of her daughter was to be one of ease and splendour, as far as money could purchase these desirable conditions of existence.

In the City there was a profound feeling of astonishment and regret; for John Ellicott had been regarded as one of the most prominent of citizens and business men: a steady supporter of all City rights and privileges, and a true philanthropist, giving help freely wherever help was really needed. Moreover, it was very plainly said that his death was in some mysterious way associated with the discovery of those enormous frauds on his house. He had been seen on 'Change, and had transacted business requiring the clearest intellect on the forenoon of the day of his fatal attack.

Even the deepest impressions, however, are speedily cicatrised by the whirl of City life; and so, as when the king dies, the cry of 'Long live the king!' is immediately heard, Henry Dacon found himself recognised as the chief of one of the wealthiest firms within the sound of Bow Bells. He bore his honours modestly, and thereby enhanced the golden opinions he had already won from City magnates whilst he had held a subordinate position. The great fraud on his house was soon shelved for more recent wonders of the same character. It dropped into the category of those varying commercial legends discussed by junior clerks at luncheon bars in and about Cheapside.

In this case the legend was, that the confidential clerk had got clear away with his booty in spite of all the efforts of the police; and the amount of his plunder was estimated according

to the imagination of the individual at from eighty thousand to two hundred thousand. An action was brought against the bank to recover; but it was compromised without going into court, and the firm bore the loss, which was stated to be very much smaller than had been at first supposed. Mr Ardwick the lawyer declared that such a result would never have happened if Mr Ellicott had been alive. He attributed the failure of the case entirely to the half-hearted spirit in which the new chief of the house went into the proceedings, whilst he cleared out of them in direct opposition to the best legal advice. Henry Dacon was, however, content to let the affair drop, and was glad when it was disposed of, although he was so much the poorer by the arrangement. He was still a rich man; his wedding day was approaching, and it was natural that he should wish to be relieved from the suspense inevitably entailed by an undecided lawsuit, however certain the result may appear to be. 'Thank Heaven, it is all settled, Hetty,' he said, on the evening of the day on which the compromise was agreed to. 'We can start clear of worries, and know what we are about. Ardwick is wild with me for not going on; but I have had enough of it, and am easy in my mind so long as you say it is all right.'

And of course Hetty said it was all right, expressing at the same time her happiness in the feeling that on their marriage day he would not be harassed by the phantoms of law's delay, costs, and losses. She was quite sure that the lawyers only wanted to carry on the case for their own benefit.

There was, however, one person in Cedar Cottage who agreed with Mr Ardwick. That was Daisy; and for weeks she had been seeking an opportunity to speak to Dacon alone. He was instinctively aware of her desire, and contrived to avoid a tête-à-tête by one excuse and another. On the very eve of the wedding day, Daisy found her opportunity. Mrs Silvertown was busy in the drawing-room arranging and rearranging the marriage presents; and on an imperative summons from her mother to settle something about the disposition of the gifts, Hetty left her lover and cousin in the dining-room. As soon as the door closed, Daisy spoke hurriedly but resolutely: 'I am glad of this opportunity, Mr Dacon, to ask you where is Gilbert Astbury?'

'Astbury!—Well, really'—

She lifted her hand impatiently, to signify that he was not to proceed if he intended to repudiate his knowledge of the fugitive's whereabouts.

'You do know where he is,' she continued, 'and I want his address. It is now more than a year since he went away; and if you have not known it all along, you have known for some time where he might be found.—Please, do not waste time in denying it, for I wish to spare Hetty any unpleasant recollections, and she will return presently. I believe you have been acting as his friend, although acting under a mistaken idea as to what was the course a true friend should take. I mean to set him right before the world, and you must help me.'

She had made a bold hazard of a guess at the truth, and she had struck the mark. In the

meanwhile he had recovered from the first surprise at the vehemence of her attack, and answered quietly, even with the equanimity of one conscious of having done a good turn to his neighbour: 'Have you forgotten, Miss Forester, that I promised to do all in my power to serve him? I have kept my word; and you are right—I do know where he is.'

'Where?'

'In South America, where he is safe, prosperous, and, I believe, as happy as a man can be under the circumstances. At anyrate, he has made up his mind not to return to England.'

'Is he aware of all that has been going on here? Is he aware that he bears the brand of crime, although he has not been convicted except by his own folly in leaving the country?'

'Being conscious of his innocence, I suppose he is indifferent to all that. He says nothing about it in his letter to me.'

'Ah! he has written to you?'

'Yes, and forgets none of his friends in asking for news of home.'

He put a delicate emphasis on the word 'none,' to imply that hers had been prominent amongst the names mentioned.

'Does he know what is to take place to-morrow?' She put the question under the influence of a degree of anxiety which seemed to be stifling her.

'You mean our marriage?—Oh yes, and he sends us his kindest wishes for our future happiness.'

'Will you give me his address?'

He hesitated, and then said thoughtfully: 'If you will consider for a moment, you will agree with me that I must first ask his permission.'

She bowed her head in acquiescence, and the conversation was stopped by the return of Hetty.

SOME NICE POINTS OF CRIMINAL LAW.

BY A MAGISTRATE'S CLERK.

WE often ask ourselves why should not our laws be couched in plain language, devoid of all technicalities, so that 'he who runs may read,' and he who reads may understand? So far as this can be done, it is doubtless the duty of those who frame our laws to see to it; but it is too often forgotten that facts and circumstances connected with the commission of crime vary to so great an extent that it is almost impossible to word our laws in such a clear and intelligible way as to cover that varied state of things. Let us give a few illustrations of this.

We all know what is meant by the crime of burglary. It is defined in our law-books to be the 'breaking and entering of the dwelling-house of another in the night with intent to commit a felony therein.' Surely nothing can be plainer. The only word that appears to require defining is the word 'night;' and a statute passed in 1861 (24 and 25 Vict. chap. 96, section 1) has clearly defined that word by enacting that the 'night' shall be deemed to commence at nine P.M., and conclude at six A.M. of the next day. One would naturally infer, therefore, that there can be no difficulty in deciding when a person is guilty of the crime of burglary. But let us see. In the

first place, has the difficulty in connection with this very word 'night' been removed by the statute? Suppose a man, at five o'clock in the morning, breaks the skylight window of a dwelling-house, but in consequence of being disturbed, does not enter the house till a quarter past six, can he be said to have broken *and entered* in the 'night?' We must remember that the judges of our criminal courts interpret, and of course must interpret, the law literally as they find it. In the case supposed, therefore, though the house was *broken into* at a time which comes within the legal definition of the word 'night,' still it was not *entered* during the night as defined by the Act; and as both a breaking and an entering are necessary to constitute a burglary, that crime was not committed in this case. If, however, the burglar who was disturbed at five A.M. escapes, and at five A.M., or at any time before six A.M. *next day*, avails himself of the hole he had previously made, and enters the house with a felonious intent, he has committed burglary, for the simple reason, that the breaking and entering were in the night-time, though not the same night.

It now being made clear what is meant by the word 'night,' it may well be supposed that no further difficulty will be in our way of deciding what constitutes the crime of burglary. But not so fast. Are you clear what is meant by the word 'dwelling-house?' (I may mention that the Act of Parliament already referred to makes it burglary to break into any building connected with a dwelling-house, if such building be within the same curtilage, and immediately communicating with it, or by an enclosed or covered passage, leads to it.) I can imagine the reader exclaiming: 'What useless refining! Does not every one know that a dwelling-house is a house that a person dwells in?' Very true. But suppose Paterfamilias has decided to give his family a treat, and has locked up his house and drawn the blinds and gone to the sea-side for three months; and suppose the nocturnal and unwelcome visitant, on mischief bent, profiting by his knowledge of that fact, breaks into the house at the midnight hour and carries away his plate—has a dwelling-house been broken into? No one dwells in the house, nor has been for some weeks. Our learned lawyers have answered the question for us in the affirmative, and have decided that so long as Paterfamilias had not *permanently* vacated his house, but intended to return, it is no less his *dwelling-house*, though for the time being he may be snugly ensconced, or perhaps suffering martyrdom, in a small cottage by the sea some hundreds of miles away.

Let us, however, suppose that he has quitted his house, intending to go and live permanently in another house; that he has not taken all his valuables out of the house he is leaving; and let us suppose those valuables to be stolen by a midnight depredator breaking into that house; do our learned expounders of the law tell us that the crime of burglary is committed in this case? No. On the contrary the house is held *not* to be a dwelling-house, for the reason that the occupant has left it without any intention of returning to dwell in it. The writer remembers a case in point being tried in court. A woman was removing from one house to another, and was carrying her furniture up to eleven o'clock

at night; but becoming tired, she determined to lock the house up and go to rest for the night in the house she was removing to. Before she had gone to rest, however, she was told that a thief had broken into the house she was leaving, and carried away some of the furniture she was too tired to remove. This was held not to be burglary, inasmuch as the thief had not broken into a 'dwelling-house,' the woman having left it without any intention of dwelling in it in future. (Of course, the offence of larceny was committed.)

But suppose a man has two houses, a country and a town house; and he occupies the one in summer and the other in winter; and one house is broken into in the night and his goods stolen from it, whilst he is residing in the other house—can this house be considered the man's dwelling-house, seeing that for the time he does not dwell in it? Yes, say our lawyers; both are dwelling-houses within the meaning of the law. He does not, when dwelling in one, permanently leave the other. The reader will see by these examples how difficult it may become sometimes to define even the simple word dwelling-house.

Now, suppose I erect a tent or booth at a fair, and dwell and sleep there nightly, and a thief breaks in during the night and commits larceny, is he guilty of burglary? Our law-expounders say No. But why? Well, the tenement cannot be considered a dwelling-house: 'so frail a tenement,' it is said, 'is no more deserving of the name of a house than a covered wagon would be under the same circumstances.' And yet it has been decided that a mud and brick house, rented during a fair only, *is* a dwelling-house for burglarious purposes. Such are some of the nice refinements of law in connection with the word dwelling-house.

We have said that to constitute the crime of burglary there must be a 'breaking and entering.' Now, it may well be supposed that no circumstances can arise so as to create any difficulty in deciding what is meant by breaking into and entering a house. But it will soon be found by any one who sits in a criminal court constantly, that cases arise that make it extremely difficult to decide whether the circumstances constitute a breaking and entering. Let us take the word 'breaking' to begin with. If a man leaves a large hole in his roof, or if he leave his window open at night, any entry through that hole or window is not a 'breaking' in law. There may be an entry into the house, and valuable property may be stolen, but the house is not 'broken' into, and therefore no burglary, whatever other crime, has been committed. The reader might therefore naturally conclude that if a sweep quietly came down a chimney into a house in the night with intent to steal, he would escape the charge of burglary, as he had not 'broken' into the house. The reader, however, is not 'learned in the law.' If he were, he would no doubt agree with Justice Bosanquet, who has decided that to enter a house by the chimney is on a different footing from entering it through any other hole or an open window. A chimney, it is said, is a necessary opening in every house, and needs the protection of the law; but if a man leaves an opening in the wall or roof of his house, instead of a fastened

window, he must take the consequences—that is, the thief will not be guilty of the crime of burglary. This is a very fine distinction, it must be admitted.

But suppose a window be not left open wide enough to admit a person, and that the nocturnal visitant lifts it up and enters, would he have 'broken' into the house? No, say our learned lawyers. And yet, if he puts his arm through a broken pane of glass and accidentally makes the hole larger, and so reaches and undoes the catch; or if he simply lifts up a latch or lifts up a window which is down, he has 'broken' into the house.

Lawyers also talk of a 'constructive breaking.' If a man knocks at the door of a house, and on its being opened, rushes in, at night, to steal, he is guilty of burglary; or if he gets in on a pretence of taking lodgings and falls upon the landlord and robs him; or if a servant conspire with a burglar and lets him into the house, both are held to have 'broken' into the house, and therefore, under the circumstances named, to be guilty of burglary, as the entry is obtained by fraud. But what would the reader unlearned in the law say if he were asked whether there was a breaking into a house in a case like the following, a case which really did happen, and which is reported in the law-books? A groom meets a man named Jones, who proposes to him to rob his master of his plate. They agree to meet on a future day; but the groom in the meantime communicates with the police, and the master being out of town, the groom acts under the direction of these officials. He meets Jones and his companion Johnson, and the robbery is presumably concocted between them. The groom is to get the other servants out of the way on a particular evening, is to admit a number of police, and then to admit Johnson into the house. He accordingly opens the kitchen door and does so; and whilst Johnson is up-stairs, about to commit his deed of depredation, the police pounce upon him and lock him up in a room. The groom then admits Jones, who takes the plate basket from the kitchen. Surely there is here a case of constructive breaking and entering with intent to commit felony, and therefore a clear case of burglary. Now, let us see how our learned men of the law look on such a case. We know that the groom, though appearing to act in concert with the prisoners, did not really do so; in fact, acting under the directions of the police, he may be looked upon as acting on behalf of his master. The door was therefore lawfully open, and there was no felonious 'breaking.' The only offence remaining, therefore, was the stealing of the plate by Jones. And here another nice point arose: was Johnson also guilty of stealing the plate with Jones? No; it was held he could not be, because at the time Jones steals the plate Johnson is in legal custody, and therefore could not be guilty of the offence. He was, however, convicted of being an 'accessory before the fact.' The curious point, however, is, that neither of them was held to be guilty of breaking into the house; not even of 'constructive breaking.'

Let us take another case to illustrate the point of 'breaking.' A boy is left in charge of a house by his mother. Like many other boys in similar circumstances, he runs out a few minutes after 9 P.M. with the key in his hand, to suit a pur-

pose of his own. A female neighbour meets him, and says to him that his mother has returned and has sent her to him for the key, but that he can go on his errand. Believing her statement, he gives her the key, and she opens the door and enters the house and steals. Has she feloniously 'broken' into the house? Certainly. Why? She obtains the means of entering by fraud, and therefore is as much guilty of breaking as if she had done so by means of a false key.

So much for some of the nice points as to what constitutes simply breaking into a house.

THE STORY OF QUEX.

IN the isle of Thanet and the near vicinage of that favourite seaside resort of Londoners, Margate, is a residence bearing the somewhat un-euphonious name of Quex. This house is a modern building, and though not occupying precisely the same site, is the successor of an older mansion which was not wanting in historical associations, besides being noteworthy as the scene of the remarkable occurrence about to be narrated. From a view taken in 1781, the old house of Quex—or Quekes as it was sometimes spelled—appears to have been an extensive brick building in the ornate Elizabethan style, with decorative gables, but having large bay windows of stone. Yet even at that time it had fallen into an almost ruinous condition. Some of the dilapidated rooms had already been pulled down; others followed from time to time; and early in the present century the whole of what remained was, with the exception of some unimportant fragments, demolished. A cellar and portions of a garden wall are alone left of it, though panelling and some other relics were removed to the new house.

Such was its fate. Yet, in addition to that story with which we have chiefly to do, an interest attached to the old house at Quex as having been an occasional place of sojourn of King William III. If, when that sovereign was about to pay one of his numerous visits to his native country, he was detained by contrary winds, it was here that he was accustomed to take up his abode. The king's bedchamber was long pointed out. His guards encamped in the enclosures round the house.

This place was in ancient times the seat of a family who derived their name from it; but in the fifteenth century (about 1485) an heir-female of the Quekes brought the manor to a family previously seated at Stanlake, in Oxfordshire—the Crispes. That house became thenceforward of importance in Kent; and a certain Henry Crispe, who died in 1575, acquired so much local influence as to be commonly styled 'king of the isle of Thanet.'

In Commonwealth times another Henry Crispe, a grand-nephew of the king of Thanet, was master of Quex. This gentleman had acquired the nickname of 'Bonjour Crispe' from the circumstance that during a residence in France he had learned no more of the French language than

that one word. But if not distinguished as a linguist, his birth and position caused him to be respected among his neighbours. He had served his year as High Sheriff of Kent, and unlike many of his class, he had not been so indiscreet as to impoverish himself by any unnecessary display of loyalty for King Charles. He seems, indeed, so far as there is material on which to form a judgment, to have been one of those prudent politicians who endeavoured to stand well with both parties. At the time in question he was considerably advanced in years and in infirm health, and was leading a life of easy and affluent retirement in his paternal mansion.

But his dignified repose was not destined to continue. A warning was conveyed to Mr Crispe that he was in danger—that he had enemies, whose machinations threatened his safety. The exact nature of the impending peril does not appear to have been hinted, and indeed the whole warning seems to have been of the most vague and unsatisfactory description. Most men, perhaps, would have treated such an anonymous alarm with contempt; but it filled the worthy owner of Quex with uneasiness. He took measures for his own defence. He armed his servants; he caused holes to be made in the walls of his house in such places as he considered desirable for the more effectual use of firearms; and is said to have offered bountiful entertainment to all those of his neighbours who by lodging for a night in Quex might aid in his protection.

But the scare blew by. It seemed as if it had been a mere idle and groundless alarm. Indeed, the times were not now such as to favour any scheme of lawless violence. Oliver had seated himself firmly in the place of supreme power, and maintained order throughout the land with a hand of iron. Mr Crispe allowed his precautions to be relaxed, and life at Quex resumed its ordinary calm.

How or by whom the mysterious warning had been conveyed to Mr Crispe is uncertain. But it was no idle rumour; nor was the danger by any means past. His enemies were simply waiting for a convenient season in which to put their plans in practice; for a plot had actually been arranged in which this unfortunate gentleman had been marked out as a victim, and that plot was under the direction of a leader of no ordinary qualities or character.

Among the daring spirits developed by the great civil war there was no loyalist more enthusiastically devoted to the Crown, more fertile in expedient, or of more dashing bravery, than Captain Golding of Ramsgate. Had he been a rider instead of a sailor, he would have been a cavalier after Prince Rupert's own heart. One of his exploits during the Commonwealth had been carrying off a rich merchantman, the *Blackamoor Queen*; and after converting both ship and cargo into money, handing over the proceeds to the exiled Prince Charles, to whom at that time, perhaps, a proof of loyalty in no other form could have been so welcome.

Captain Golding it was who was the originator and moving spirit of the plot, and as a Thanet man, the house of Quex and all its surroundings were perfectly familiar to him. He proceeded to carry out his plans in due time. One night in the month of August 1657, Golding with a

number of resolute men, partly English and partly foreigners, landed unobserved at Gore-end, near Birchington-on-Sea, and marched to Quex. So well did he order matters that he was able to reach it and force an entrance without giving any alarm to the neighbourhood. None of those who had feasted on Mr Crispe's good cheer were there to defend him; not a shot was fired through the loopholes he had made; and his servants, taken by surprise, were too completely overawed and overpowered to offer the least resistance. The unlucky gentleman woke from his slumbers only to find his bed surrounded by armed men. He was ordered to rise, and the horses having been put to his own coach, he was placed within and escorted by his captors to the beach. When he became aware that he was to be carried beyond the seas, he made earnest entreaty to be allowed to take one of his own servants with him; but this was refused, though the state of his health rendered such an indulgence very desirable. He was thrust into an open boat and carried off to Captain Golding's ship, in which he was at once conveyed as a prisoner to the Low Countries.

The abduction of Mr Crispe of Quex is interesting from the fact that it is a solitary case. In modern times it has had no parallel in England. We have no other instance of an English gentleman of position being forcibly carried off from his home in an English county, although in some other countries such affairs have by no means been exceptional.

The unfortunate Mr Crispe was conveyed to Ostend, and thence to Bruges, both of which places were then subject to Spain, a power against which the English Commonwealth was at that time at war. No redress was therefore to be hoped for through the intervention of the Spanish Government, and indeed, as will be seen in the sequel, it was in his own Government that the prisoner found his worst obstacle to the recovery of liberty. However, from his prison-house in Bruges Mr Crispe was allowed to communicate with his friends, and in especial to inform them that a sum of three thousand pounds would be required for his ransom.

Mr Crispe had an only son, Sir Nicholas Crispe; but for some reason—probably owing to the declining health of Sir Nicholas—a nephew who resided not far from Quex, a Mr Thomas Crispe, appears to have been the relative upon whose good offices the captive chiefly relied. This nephew at once set out for the Low Countries. Arrived at Bruges, he found no difficulty in obtaining access to his uncle, to whom indeed, apart from the deprivation of liberty, no ill treatment appears to have been offered; and after due consultation, it was determined to agree to the terms proposed. Thomas Crispe accordingly returned to England to arrange with his cousin, Sir Nicholas, the means of raising the sum required—a far more serious matter in those days than it would be now—and to take whatever steps might be desirable to facilitate the payment of it. But the unhappy Squire was far from the end of his troubles; an unlooked-for difficulty was about to arise.

Various as may be the advantages of standing well with both parties, it has one disadvantage—the trimmer can expect to be trusted by neither side; and so found prudent Mr Crispe. Whilst

the Royalists regarded him as no better than a rebel and a fit subject for spoliation, Cromwell, on the other hand, suspected him of collusion with the king's friends; that he had, in brief, been a consenting party to his own abduction, and that the whole affair had been arranged to afford a colourable pretext for supplying the exiled Charles with English money. All power was now in the Protector's hands, and he caused an Order in Council to be issued in which any ransom whatever was forbidden to be paid for Mr Crispe.

Between Royalists and Cromwellians the poor gentleman was indeed in an evil case. A prisoner he had to remain; and whilst bribes and indirect influence of various kinds were being employed in all promising quarters to obtain a revocation of the vexatious Order, matters were still further complicated by the death of the heir, Sir Nicholas Crispe. The whole burden of his uncle's affairs now fell upon Thomas, who appears to have shown most praiseworthy zeal in their management. Six times in the autumn and winter of 1657-58 did he cross and recross the narrow seas to confer with and to console his afflicted relative.

At last the desired license from government was obtained; but the cost of obtaining it, with other necessary expenses, had so much impoverished the Crispes that it was no longer possible to raise the ransom without selling some part of the estate. To procure from his uncle the necessary legal authority for doing this involved another journey to Bruges on the part of Thomas Crispe. Eventually, by the sale of certain lands and the mortgage of the estate of Stonar in the isle of Thanet, the money was procured and paid over. Whether any part of it found its way into the coffers of Prince Charles is a matter of conjecture merely. It was only after a captivity of eight months that Mr Crispe was allowed to return to his home a free man.

It is recorded that after all his troubles he again lived in peace at Quex for several years. He died at that place on the 25th of July 1663, leaving, it is satisfactory to learn, his estate to that nephew who had so well done a kinsman's part by him.

It is satisfactory also to learn that Captain Golding closed his adventurous but somewhat dubious career with honour. Whilst Cromwell lived, he took good care to keep beyond his reach, and remained in high favour with Prince Charles throughout his exile. At the Restoration in 1660 he returned with his master to England, and, as his share of the good things at that time showered upon his party, received command of the *Diamond* man-of-war. In 1665 he fell bravely in battle whilst fighting his ship against four Dutch frigates.

In the church of Birchington-on-Sea, of which parish the manor of Quex forms a portion, there is a Quex Chapel. It contains monumental brasses and other memorials of the houses of Quekes and Crispe. Noticeable among them is the fine tomb of Henry Crispe. The brasses, six in number, are to the earlier line.

Since the extinction of the male line of the Crispes in 1680, Quex has had many owners. It was once purchased by the first Lord Holland for his famous son, Charles James Fox. But

that nobleman soon found himself obliged to sell it again; hence, among the associations of Quex it is unable to number that of having ever been the residence of the great Whig orator and statesman.

THE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.

THERE is in the very heart of most of our large towns an excellent subject for the painter's brush, of which, probably, he has never thought. Fancy has drawn him to Venice, and inspired him to paint a row of Venetian beauties stringing beads, or to Seville, where he has been captivated by the charms of the cigarette makers. But probably no one has hinted to him that there is at home here in London, Liverpool, or Manchester an equally good subject of the kind, which would have the merit of entire novelty, and be capable of bright, if not even romantic treatment—we mean a bevy of pretty English girls working a Telephone Exchange. Let us imitate Actæon, and take a peep into one of these secret haunts, where the modern Diana and her nymphs are playing at the Fates, and cutting or joining the lines of electric speech between man and man in a great city.

The scene is a long and handsome room or gallery in the Royal Exchange of Manchester. A strange piece of furniture like a long high desk occupies the middle of the gallery from end to end, forming the figure L. This is the switchboard where the wires from the subscribers' offices and homes are centred as in a nervous ganglion or knot; and where they are connected or disconnected in a moment by the telephone girls, to enable any two subscribers to converse together.

The board is of the type known as the 'Multiple Switchboard,' an American invention, by which the work of connection is divided up, and distributed amongst a number of operators. This is done by forming the board into sections, at each of which an operator presides. All the subscribers' lines are brought to every section, so that the operator can cross-connect any two lines in the whole system without leaving her place or asking the help of another operator. Each section of the board is, in fact, an epitome of the whole; but it is physically impossible for one operator to attend to all the calls of a large Exchange, and the work is thus distributed amongst the whole number.

The multiplicity of wires on a switchboard such as this, when the number of subscribers is large, say fifteen hundred, will be readily understood, when it is remembered that each of these fifteen hundred wires goes to every section of the board, and there may be as many as fifteen or twenty sections. The multiple switchboard is indeed a complicated and expensive apparatus; but so far it is the best yet devised; nor is it easy to see how a simpler plan for effecting the same purpose can be invented.

That maze of wires is, however, all concealed at the back of the board, where it is arranged by the electricians of the Telephone Company. The young lady operators have nothing to do with it; so much the better for them. It would puzzle

their minds worse than a ravelled skein of thread or an equation in mathematics. Their business is to sit in front of the board in comfortable desk-chairs at a running table, within reach of their telephones, and watch the 'calls' come in from the subscribers. The call-signal is given silently by the dropping of a disc, and the 'number' tells the operator who the caller is. She responds to the call, speaks to the subscriber by her telephone, hears what he wants—that is to say, the 'telephone number' of the other subscriber he wishes to speak to; and taking in her hands a pair of brass plugs coupled together by a flexible conductor, she joins the two subscribers' wires upon her section of the board. This is simply done by thrusting the two plugs into the two holes of the section corresponding to these wires. The subscribers are then free to talk to each other undisturbed, and the termination of the interview is signalled to the operator.

In the Manchester Exchange the board is divided into about twenty sections, and the same number of operators may be seen at work there, each sitting in her chair along the table of the board with her telephone before her; the Blake transmitter suspended in the air on a level with her mouth; the Bell receiver close to her ear; the terminals of subscribers' wires, and their signal discs rise, tier upon tier, in front of her, like the shelves of a bookcase.

The operators are all as busy as can be; for Manchester is a busy Exchange, especially in the middle of the day. Every instant the call-discs are dropping, the connecting plugs are being thrust into their holes, and the girls are asking: 'Hallo! Hallo!'—'Are you there?'—'Who are you?'—'Have you finished?' But all this constant activity goes on quietly, deftly, we might say elegantly, and in comparative silence; for the low tones of the girls' voices in making the necessary inquiries are in general soft and pleasing; and the harsher sounds of the subscribers' at the other ends of the lines are never heard in the room except by the operators listening in their telephones.

The young ladies who execute this work so skilfully and well belong, as a rule, to a very good class of society; they are mostly daughters of professional men or well-educated members of the middle class. There is consequently a superior tone about them; and the nature of the work is, on the whole, of a dainty and select order. It has its little drawbacks, of course; for example, the inconsiderate subscriber who wants to be 'put through' to his correspondent at once, and cannot understand that his correspondent's line is already engaged by another subscriber. But, on the whole, the system goes well; and the work appears to be adapted to young ladies. It demands tact, quickness, and a certain endurance; for the constant strain on the attention and the everlasting movement is such as children, boys, or young women can support, but men might suffer from. In short, it is lady-like employment, and the operators seem to enjoy it. It gives them an occupation, if it does not promise them a career; and there are cases of girls travelling up from the country every day to attend the Exchange, although their railway fare nearly swallowed up their earnings.

There is always a lady superintendent in the

Exchange, who walks about and oversees. Moreover, there are, at least in London, several higher lady officials, the chief and her deputies, who select the operators and superintend the entire female staff.

In Liverpool, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, the Central Exchanges are worked in much the same way as that of Manchester. In Dundee, a comparatively small Exchange, the subscribers have no telephone numbers, but simply give their names; and strange as it may appear, the operators cross-connect them without making blunders, though this implies their knowing the addresses of all the subscribers and their positions on the board.

The present writer happened to be in the Dundee Central Exchange not long since during a busy period of the day. He had not been in Dundee for many years, and though he had spent a portion of his boyhood there, he had lost all trace of his old comrades. What, then, was his surprise, while standing behind one of the lady operators, to hear her call out the name of a particular old playfellow, whom he believed to be in Manitoba, but who, it seems, had returned to Scotland!

No preliminary training is required of the operator beyond a good education. Her salary, small at first, is gradually increased as she advances in the service. The period of duty varies according to the shift; but nine hours a day is the limit; and the night-work in the Exchanges is comparatively light. With the exception of one or two in London, all the Exchanges are operated by young ladies.

PREFERENCES AND TREASURES.

BY CHARLES MACKAY, LL.D.

I'd rather drink cold water from the brook,
Than quaff excitement from a golden chalice;
I'd rather sleep on straw in shepherd's hut,
Than lie awake and restless in a palace.

I'd rather earn dry bread in lusty health,
And eat it with a sense of wholesome pleasure,
Than feed without the zest of appetite
Off gorgeous plate and unavailing treasure.

I'd rather have one true unfailing friend,
Than fifty parasites to crave my bounty;
And one poor lass who loved me for myself,
Than one without a heart who owned a county.

Nature is kind if our desires are pure,
And strews rich blessings everywhere around us;
While Fortune, if we pant in her pursuit,
Too often grants her favours to confound us.

Fresh air and Sunshine, Flowers, and Health and Love—

These are endowments if we learn to prize them;
The wise man's treasures better worth than gold,
And none but fools and wicked men despise them.

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THE RISING OF THE SAP.

SPRING is in the air, although snow may come again. This morning I heard the first thrush sound his jubilant clarion, although I could not see his dappled form because of a sudden shower of sleety rain which blurred the windows. By noon the rain had vanished, and with it the lingering frost, and now the sky is flecked with soft white clouds, and in the welcome azure the sun shines brightly once more. Why, therefore, should I stay in-doors and limit my thoughts to the four walls of my parlour, when I may have the illimitable air to breathe in, the green woods to walk in, and Nature's sweet society in which to expand my cramped ideas? In these grassy glades of Dunnikier I am certain that at last Nature is awake, and that her hidden processes of development are about to be revealed. I can trace the beginnings of spring in this delightful sense of rushing, dripping, twinkling thaw, which causes the little stream to flow so freely between its red clay banks, and sends it singing on its way with a merry clinking of broken floating ice.

Movement and sound are the heralds of spring's advent: the dumb monotony of the frost-bound months has fled, and every living thing hastens to renew itself and so fulfil the law of its being. Now the sap within the trees is steadily creeping upward; the rough bark feels the inward commotion and responds to its farthest tiniest twig, as the sentient sap strains and trembles towards the magnetic heat and light of the sun; and every unobtrusive bush has a crown of faint suggestive colour, a misty purple, a flush of palest red, or a tinge of warm brown to bear witness that it is alive once more.

How sphinx-like are those stately bare trees! How passive, how apparently unresponsive, they stand, and yet they are the embodiment of Nature's yearly purpose of revival. They symbolise the unconquerable longing for light; inarticulately, they utter that which is a universal prayer, whether heard in the cry of the dying

Goethe, or expressed in the blind striving upwards of sap and leaf and grass, and the eloquent devotion of sunflower and daisy.

In this secluded path, minute forms of vegetation have already pushed themselves above the moist soil; and indeed I did not realise how barren and drear the winter was until to-day, when I detect the various preparations which Nature is making for her spring transformation. Half hidden among bleached dead leaves and russet bracken peep the exquisite and perfumed blossoms of the wild strawberry, their tiny roses as pure as the snow which they have superseded; and daisies, too, are beginning to unfold their pink-tipped fringes. Soon they will shine in thousands, a milky-way of silver stars upon the nether firmament of greensward; soon, too, the many-jointed coltsfoot and the dandelion will strew their liberal coins along the path of the happy children who alone know the true value of Nature's gold.

Already the bristling green spines of the whins are pointed with a radiant hint of the coming carnival of scented golden bloom; and lo! here is the first, the very first, celandine of the year. Truly

Thou hast come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless prodigal!

With delight I hail the golden star shining amid its dark foliage of heart-shaped green at the foot of the sheltering whins that skirt the gloomy fir plantation: it is the identical spot where I have found the first celandine in this glen for years. For there is a kind of heredity in spring. This little flower, for instance, is but a transient blossom, yet it has sprung from past generations of its race; the enamelled golden star has shone here in springs gone by—long, long before I came to the woods to seek it; and it will shine in future springs to delight other eyes than mine. The laws of Nature are fixed and enduring; but the expression of these laws in plant, in bird, in season, is fugitive and transient; therefore is this little celandine the heirloom of the ages,

therefore it belongs not to me alone but to all mankind.

There is a quiet expectancy in the woods to-day which makes even the chance rustling of a leaf or the flutter of a hidden bird of importance. What does Nature see with that deep gaze of hers? For what is she waiting so intently?

Below the stirring of the sap, the pushing of many roots, the toilsome burrowing of mole and miner, below a hundred explainable noises, she listens for the vibration which accompanies the revolutions of the globe; she waits for the world to whirl round to the zenith and perfection of the year. How fast the world *is* whirling! Not for long shall spring-time tarry in its coming; already its initial wonders are completed underground—for Nature, like genius, develops silently and from within: soon, soon the desire of the living sap shall be fulfilled; it shall reach the light, and find its supreme expression in myriad glistening buds, that shall burst their sheaths and shake out their leafy greenness to the sweet west wind and magic rain of spring. Every tree shall be clad in silvan beauty; even the rugged evergreen firs shall light their cones of rosy flame, the down-trodden grass shall take heart again, and birds and insects and flowers shall rush into life with an impetuous haste defying all mere chronicling.

But to-day that fertile perfection is still afar; the trees are bare, and no screen of tenderest green swings from the undulant boughs of that mighty beech to veil the tell-tale initials which I see a love-lorn youth entrusting to the care of the sheltering Dryad; and the grass is strewn with the drifted dead leaves of last autumn, and the brown needles from the firs are heaped upon the verdant mosses. The woodlands are wet with the rime of the early morning, and a chilly white gossamer stretches among the naked bramble sprays. And yet what full delight there is in this hour with Nature! In her vague spring promise there lurks at once a retrospect and a hope; regret and joy are strangely commingled, unrest takes possession of the heart, the blood stirs in an eager fashion through veins long chilled by wintry dearth of thought and feeling, and the heart hastens to send forth fresh shoots of impulse wherewith to greet returning spring.

I follow the wimpling stream that babbles of the unknown sea to which it is hastening, as it winds between gaunt columns of red-limbed firs, and observe numbers of comical little birds hanging on to the clay banks in some inscrutable manner; others wading in the shallow current, and hopping from stone to stone in search of insects, or preening their piebald plumage on the mossy bridge formed by a fallen tree. These tiny birds are wagtails, and it is interesting to observe their quick erratic flight—a sort of airy see-saw, determined probably by the efforts to escape made by the flies which are to me invisible.

The rooks, too, are very busy in the tall elms beyond the firs; they rock amid the leafless

boughs as if they were testing the strength of the swinging platform whereon they intend to establish their commonwealth, and in another clump of elms they seem to be engaged in patching up their old nests, conducting their frugal economy with a most prodigal expenditure of talk.

The glen just at this point is somewhat solemn and oppressive, and my feet lag among the tangled creeping plants and trailing wreaths of frost-carmined ivy. The influence of the firs is upon me, and I know that a feeling of solitude is waiting to assail me within their sombre groves. I miss, too, the snowdrops that transform a certain brown hill into a white and tremulous alp, and the fragile white-hooded wood-sorrel that I know is blooming in another beloved wood, bending over its sensitive trefoil foliage with an evanescent grace that will depart long before the ash-buds burst their black sheaths; and never in this sombre wood have the 'peaceful spears' of the daffodils pierced the damp red clay. But thanks to the poet, we can enjoy the 'jocund company' of the wind-blown daffodils even in winter—even when the frost-flowers obscure the pane—by means of

That inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.

I will not venture to-day within the noble temple of tall firs whose vistas open out as far as eye can reach. It is a fit chamber wherein to entertain noble thoughts and to adore the spirit of beauty, who has a home here if anywhere on earth. But see you this mossy stump of a lightning-blasted oak? This is my chair of Merlin. Here in high midsummer I often sit and 'lose myself that I may save myself.' Will you try it? Mark how the enchantment of the magic chair begins to take effect. Lo! the dust which you share with Nature is transformed and purified. Inspiration begins to flow through your veins just as the sap flows through the passive boughs of the trees, and, before you are aware of it, a spring-tide of the heart is yours as surely as that leaves shall soon be green again upon every tree, for material Nature and material humanity have passed through the alembic of immortal spirit, and both are instinct with that essence which is the source of all life.

But now I have arrived at the top of the glen, and it is with a feeling of satisfaction that I find myself upon the broad highway, for there is no denying that in the green solitudes which I have left behind I felt merely an intruder and a spectator, of far less importance in Nature's eyes than the meanest hare that ever limped along her dusky moon-haunted leas. The highway stretches broad and gray between hedges of beech and hawthorn, through the leafless branches of which I obtain a glimpse of undulating furrowed fields, separated from the woodlands by green and winding footpaths that are a continual joy to the lover of Nature, for their leisurely curves are innocent of those perfidious 'short-cuts' that tell of human hurry.

Time is measured here by the slow-moving shadow of yonder solitary tree standing in the midst of that half-ploughed field from which a lark has just sprung singing into the sunny sky,

and by the ever-changing procession of the flowers which love to follow mankind, and to glorify with their bright approval the margins of his well-tilled fields.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XIII.

SNELLING, taking his seat at the breakfast table punctually at eight o'clock on the morning of John's disappearance, folded his paper conveniently for the study of the market quotations, poured out his coffee, and attacked the dish of ham and eggs provided for him like a man who meant business. He did a little Corn Exchange gambling in his way, and the quotations of that morning were unfavourable to his speculations, so that he was a little out of temper, and was prepared to be something more of a martinet than usual. A little temper, as he found by experience, gave an edge to appetite, and he cleared the dish before him with unwonted expedition. When he had finished, he gave an angry jerk to the bell.

'Where's that boy, Mrs Winter?' he asked, swelling himself with offended and offensive dignity. 'I look to you to teach him better manners than this—keepin' his elders waiting.'

'You don't seem to have waited, sir,' said the housekeeper.

'Hillo!' returned Snelling, 'you're a-beginning to chop logic, are you? I should ha' thought you'd had enough of that with that husband of yours. When I talk of the b'y keeping his elders waiting, I talk of the b'y's intent, and the hobvious natural result of his action.—Send him here at once; and tell him that if he doesn't come along pretty sharp, he'll find a flea in his ear when he does come. Just you tell him that, and don't take the trouble to answer me back again in future when I speak to you.'

The pale housekeeper accepted this with becoming meekness, and left the room. After the lapse of some ten minutes, Snelling rang again, and she returned.

'I've looked for Master Vale everywhere, sir, and he isn't in the house.'

'Very well,' said Snelling. 'Tell him there's no breakfast for him when he comes. Children must be taught orderly habits. I was taught orderly habits myself when I was young, and I've lived to be thankful to them as instructed me.'

Mrs Winter set the breakfast things upon a tray, and was about to leave the room, when her master again addressed her. 'Isaiah's got his orders for the day, and I've got business to do at Lichfield. I shall be back by tea-time. You needn't trouble to cook anything. You and Master Vale can make shift with the cold mutton, and we'll have it hashed for to-morrow.—You can go.'

There was something which soothed his vanity inordinately in the burly patronising dismissal

with which he always closed an interview with a dependent. He was better tempered after this slight show of authority than he had been before it, and he set out upon his two-mile walk to the railway station in tolerably good spirits. He rarely for a moment forgot in his waking hours that fell intent of his with regard to his ward and nephew, though he never allowed the veil of respectable purpose which overhung it to be withdrawn for more than the merest flash of time. It was not his fault, he told himself, if, in spite of the most earnest application on the part of John's schoolmaster, and of the most constantly tormenting vigilance on his own, the boy grew sillier and more vacant day by day. Mr Snelling had good hope, though he told himself that he had a serious fear of it, that in course of time his ward might degenerate into mere idiocy. He spoke about this with a weighty aspect of decent sorrow to a dozen people whom he met that day; and one or two of them, over a pipe and brandy-and-water after the farmers' ordinary, agreed that it weighed on Snelling's spirits, and was a sore affliction to befall any man who had neither chick nor child of his own.

He did his day's business, and went home again, to learn that Master Vale had not presented himself at dinner-time. Without being much disturbed in any way by this intelligence, but thinking that it might open up the way to wholesome discipline, he took his hat and walking-stick and strode off to see Macfarlane. The boy had not been to school. Even yet, there was nothing very surprising or remarkable. The day had been unusually fine for the season of the year, and Snelling decided that John had played truant.

The schoolmaster told him something of the events of the previous day, and Snelling nodded in grave approval of the history. 'He's played truant,' he said, 'to avoid a hiding. Now, if I had to do with a boy's education, that'd be as short-sighted a policy as he'd ever learn how to start upon.'

'Why, yes, sir,' Mr Macfarlane assented; 'it is not a long-sighted policy. But boys, Mr Snelling, live very much in the present, and are not accustomed to look far into the future.' Macfarlane offered this pearl of wisdom to his client with a manner so impressive that Snelling received it quite respectfully.

'You are experienced in their ways, Mr Macfarlane,' he responded, 'and I mek no doubt that you will be able to give an account of my neww John when the time comes.'

So they parted with the mutual unexpressed understanding that whip and rein should be applied to nephew John with increased severity; and Snelling went home to await the truant's return, and on his way prepared an address for which he augured the most pleasing results in his own interest.

When the early spring dark had fallen and John was still absent, the good man was troubled by conflicting hopes and fears. There was a railway cutting in progress in Castle-Barfield in these days, and a month or two before, a boy had been killed by a clay-laden line of lorries running down a steep incline. The memory of this disaster dwelt in Snelling's mind, and if

anything like it should have befallen John, he felt that it would only be fitting and natural. Providence would have dealt well with him in removing that absurd obstruction which stood between him and the estate he had so strong a moral right to. He was not an imaginative man by nature, but fancy woke at this delightful possibility, and he saw with unusual clearness the things that would happen if his thought were true. He even planned John's funeral, and practised a little bit of economy by a second employment of the gloves and hatband he had worn at the funeral of John's father. Then fancy carried him a little further, and he saw himself established in the house of the late John Vale, farming his own land, and respected on all sides as a typical English yeoman. If he had known better how to be ambitious, his ambitions might have soared higher with him; but beyond that estate of English yeoman he knew not how to carry himself in imagination. There was a desire in his mind—so deeply rooted that he was nine-tenths unconscious that he was unconscious of its value—to own land, to be an actual proprietor of so much soil. Very few of his ideas presented themselves with neat edges. He was a stupid man, and most of his mental perceptions were blurred; but the joy of being absolute master, lord, and owner of a single acre presented itself with a definiteness which hardly any other conception could have commanded.

He was an intensely respectable man, and went to church with admirable regularity every Sunday, and there welcomed the creed that he who wishes the death of another is in his heart a murderer. But there is nobody so morally hopeless as the man who being gangrened considers himself sound.

Snelling had his lecture ready; but John never came to hear it. He waited until midnight, and was more fluttered by his imagination than he ever had been in his life before. Isaiah had long since returned from his business excursion in the country, and Mr Snelling found himself at length so moved that he was impelled to send for him and ask his opinion of the case.

'Well, gaffer,' said Isaiah, when Snelling, with a laborious concealment of his own hopes, had laid the position of affairs before him, 'I should think the best thing to be done would be to give notice to the police.' He offered this advice half in uncertainty as to the wisdom of his own action.

'The lad may have stayed somewhere,' said Snelling, who was in too pleasing a state of doubt to desire to dissipate his own hopes too early. 'Him and young Gregg at the Hargate Hollow was always great companions; and as I learn at the school, where I've made inquiries already, John and young Gregg was both chastised there yesterday, and they may have played truant together in revenge. Then, it's quite as like as not as, being loaded with a guilty conscience, the b'y may have got himself smuggled in by his companion.'

'Well,' said Isaiah, with an air which might have betokened guilt to a more intelligent observer, 'it's like enough that there might be something in that idea, master. Perhaps I might walk over

to Farmer Gregg's in the morning and make inquiries?'

'You may, Isaiah,' said Snelling, with all the dignity appertaining to the position he had held in fancy for the last two hours. 'You had better set out pretty early. In the meantime, it's quite unlikely that we shall hear anything more of the lad to-night, and we'd best go to bed.'

'Very well, gaffer,' said Isaiah; 'I'll set off first thing.'

Snelling stopped him before he had reached the doorway. 'Hold on,' he said; 'I'll go myself. Have me called at six o'clock, and tell your missus to get a cup of coffee ready.'

This terminated the interview; and Isaiah, who was unused to concealment, was not sorry to escape. His wife was full of womanly doubts and terrors, and he had hard work to keep his secret from her.

Snelling set out next morning, according to promise, and found Farmer Gregg at breakfast. Gregg was a man whose long association with cattle seemed to have bred a certain bovine likeness in himself, a short-faced, red-complexioned man, with something of the immovable rigour and dull angry resolution of a bull going at a gate. He was thick-necked, thick-set, and short-sighted, and carrying his head always a little bowed and thrust forward, looked with his myopic scowl as if he were ready to charge anybody or anything at any moment. He was not a bad-hearted fellow in the main; but he had been bred in the harsh old school, in which pain was somehow supposed to be a good thing for children; and he thought that he did no more than his fatherly duty by carrying on to the account of his son the bitter and cruel sore a father built on his own pattern had so rigorously kept with him. For the rest, he was the soul of honesty and bull-headed self-opinion, as obstinate as he could stick, and utterly loyal to the convictions which had been born with him, whether they led him to despise the new-fangled invention of oilcake, to reverence the Church and Queen, or to hate and despise all foreigners.

In his own way he had been disturbed by his son's disappearance. The open door, the broken money-pot, and the ransacked box in Will's chamber, had already told him the story of a probable flight. So far, for he was a man who never thought in a hurry, he had resolved on nothing more than to repeat the dose which, to his mind, had brought on the disease. If any boy of his were so obstinate as to persist in refusing to be cured by that medicine, it was likely to go hard with him; and any notion of changing the treatment according to any symptoms exhibited by the patient was out of the question.

'That thee, Snelling?' said he, when his Castle-Barfield neighbour appeared. 'What's the news with thee?'

'I thought it might have happened,' Snelling answered, 'my nephew and your son Will being such close companions, as the lad might have been here. He's been missing all night; and seeing that he's no better than a bit of an idiot, and can't rightly be held responsible for his actions, I thought it my duty to make inquiries about him.'

'He's missing too, is he?' asked Gregg, glancing

short-sightedly at his visitor from under his brows, as if he were making ready to butt at him, and only waiting to choose the spot where action would be most effective. 'Ah! there's a pair on 'em, then.'

'You mean to tell me as your lad's gone too, Mr Gregg?' asked Snelling.

'Yes,' the farmer answered; 'he's made a clean bolt on it. He's broke his money-box, packed up a little parcel o' things, and was off yesterday morning afore daybreak. I gin him a lacing the day before yesterday, and I suppose he's took offence at it. I run away from this 'ere very house myself when I was a lad; but my feyther he ketched me up at Stafford, and gi'e me such a hiding then and there that I settled down in great contentment afterwards, and was no more trouble to him. I remember it as if 'twas yesterday.'

'Ah!' said Snelling slowly, 'they've gone away together, have they? And what do you reckon to do about it, Mr Gregg?'

'Reckon to do about it?' the farmer answered. 'Well, I don't know as I reckon to do anything about it in particular. To look for a runaway lad about the country'd be like looking for a needle in a haystack. He'll come back, I reckon; and when he does, we shall make up our accounts together and go on again. I don't bear the lad no malice for pluckin' up a bit of a sperrit; and when he's got tired of being hungry, he'll find his way back to the manger, and then we'll see who's master, him or me.'

Whether on the whole it were not as well that John should run away and be no more heard of, as that he should be got out of the way by any lengthier process, Snelling could not say for the moment. There was the possibility of a doubt everywhere. If he stayed at home, he might recover his wits in spite of the best intentions; and if he ran away he might come back one of these days to claim his own. There was a plaguey absence of certainty about the business as it stood.

'We must do something, Mr Gregg,' he said solidly. 'If there's no news of 'em in a day or two, we shall have to advertise.'

Gregg had a great respect for Snelling's intelligence. Snelling was not over-educated, to his mind, but had yet a trifle more book-learning than the run of people in his condition. There was a sensible difference between his English and that of the majority of his compeers; and though he talked in a good old-fashioned Barfield accent, he never condescended to thee and thou with anybody, and being a competent, solid, and well-to-do man, this reticence in familiarity helped to give him a certain personal weight. The idea of advertising was novel to the farmer, and on that ground alone would have seemed objectionable. Still, there was no denying that the world was changing, and that progress was the order of the day; and if so respectable and conservative-minded a neighbour as Snelling thought it was the right thing to advertise, perhaps it might be.

'Thee wootn't have had breakfast yet, Snelling,' he said, when he had given these dim reflections time to form. 'Thee'st better sit down and pick a bit. Theer's a cold goose i' the cupboard, and the beer's my own brewing.'

Mr Gregg had never yielded to the effeminate

innovations of tea and coffee, and he counted good ale among the greatest blessings which had been bestowed on man. In his childish days he had heard his grandfather speak with scorn of the village Squire who had 'gone foreigneering and had brought home yarbs to make slops with;' and the grandfatherly despite had entered into him and become a part of him. Snelling assented to his invitation, and did justice to the cold goose when it came. Before he left, it was decided that if the boys were absent for a week, handbills should be printed and placed in the care of the police, and that a joint reward of ten pounds should be offered for such intelligence of the fugitives as should lead to their return.

'It's to be understood, look thee,' said Gregg, 'as if my lad comes back and thine doesn't, I find a fiver for the man as brings him; but if it's thy lad as is found and not mine, it's thee as pays the money.'

Snelling agreed to this, and they separated to await events. Nothing being heard of the boys at the expiration of a week, the services of the Barfield auctioneer, who was an acquaintance of Snelling's, were called into requisition over a glass of grog and a pipe; and a description of the missing boys was drawn up, from which it might have been inferred that young Gregg was a hardened habitué of the Old Bailey in aspect, and that John was an idiot of theatrical pattern. Both the boys' names, their ages, and their dress were accurately set forth, and the names and addresses of Robert Snelling, Corn-Factor, Castle-Barfield, and William Gregg, of Hargate Hollow, Beacon-Hargate, were set forth in evidence of the responsibility of their owners. The hand-bills were scattered far and wide; but week after week went by and nothing came of them. Month after month went by and nothing came of them. Snelling made a mighty to-do in his own slow, respectable manner, as might have been expected of him. Farmer Gregg being tempted by the peculiar suppleness of a riding-whip offered him by an itinerant vendor on a market-day, bought it and laid it by as a means of welcome for Will's home-coming. But as the slow days and weeks and months dragged on, and brought no tidings, his mind changed slowly, and one night, about Christmas-time, he broke the whip into pieces and burned it, for his dour heart misgave itself, and some dim stirrings of fatherly affection made themselves felt there. But he said nothing, and was supposed to feel nothing; whilst Snelling was pathetic about his bereavement, and was popularly believed to be somehow aged by it.

It was in the likelihood of things that with every day that passed him by, his hold upon John's belongings should seem more and more secure, and that in a very little while he should begin to feel as if the landed and funded properties were actually his own. He was sole executor, and there was therefore nobody to come in between him and his dreams. In case of the boy's death or disappearance, he was heir-at-law, and he had undisturbed possession already.

When John had been absent for a year, Uncle Robert found an excellent opportunity for disposing of his business as a corn-factor. He had put a farm-bailiff into the house of his deceased cousin and had run the farm for a year past. He gave this personage a quarter's notice after the

sale of the business, and installed himself in the farmhouse with Mrs Winter as housekeeper, and Isaiah to assist in the superintendence of the mill and malt-house. He lived religiously on his own income, and kept books in which he set down to a farthing the receipts of his nephew's property. He was fond of displaying these to his cronies, and of saying what a pretty penny the lad would have come in for if he had never taken it into his poor injured head to wander off, Heaven alone knew where, and leave these fair possessions behind him.

'Dear, dear,' Mr Snelling would say, 'if this had only fell into my hands 'ears ago, I might have married a second time and had children o' my own. And now, even if the poor lad should never turn up again, what's the good of it to me? I've more than enough of my own, and riches is nothing but a trouble to a lonely man.'

So altogether Mr Snelling was highly respected, and grew in favour and repute.

FOREIGN TITLES.

CONSIDERING the marked love of everything aristocratic with which we as a race are credited, there is confessedly an inconsistency in the manner in which English people generally regard the matter of foreign rank. Whether it be that the veneration in question has been too cruelly played upon by a number of unprincipled adventurers bearing high-sounding titles, or whether it be that a century or so of continental revolutions has driven to our shores a crowd of sorely impoverished noble *émigrés*, it is impossible to deny that we show a marked indifference to the claims of foreign rank to that awe-inspiring power which is possessed by titles of native origin. To some extent, of course, this feeling may in a sense be traced to the absence of any easily available means of reference as to the social status of any new acquaintance claiming to belong to the foreign nobility. Burke, Debrett, or Lodge are practically within a moment's call to settle any dispute or doubt respecting English persons of title; but not so the *Hof Kalendar*, the *Almanach de Gotha*, Bachelin-Deflorenne, or Count Litt's bulky tomes.

On account of this difficulty of obtaining accurate or even inaccurate information respecting the foreign nobility, there exists in the Anglo-Saxon mind on both sides of the Atlantic a nebulous state of knowledge as to the bearings of foreign rank, and apparently a depreciatory estimate of its real social value. Perhaps this in a measure is due to the fact of the very large number of persons who by foreign rules of heraldry enjoy the privilege not merely of noble birth but of its attendant right to title, a view to some extent justified by the statement that in one Russian family alone, the Galitzins, six hundred of its members are entitled to rank as 'Princes.' In this connection, perhaps no foreign title is more generally misunderstood in England than that of 'Prince.' Though we in our country solely associate such a title with the children of our sovereign or those of a reigning foreign ruler, it should not be forgotten that, heraldically speaking, all English Dukes, Marquises, and Earls are 'Princes,' a statement which will perhaps serve

somewhat to explain how it comes about that it is not every foreign Prince who is a 'Royal Highness.' There are indeed foreign Dukes who rank above Princes: the Italian Brancaccio family were created Princes in 1391, and Dukes only three hundred years later. In France, which though at present ruled by a republic, still tenaciously retains socially many of its monarchical traditions—there are Dukes whose eldest sons bear the title of Prince. Thus, the children of the Duc de Broglie, who is a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, are all Princes, and their lineal descendants in the male line. The children of the Belgian Duc de Looz are likewise Princes and Princesses. Though abroad it has of late grown into a too commonly observed custom for those of recognised noble birth to be addressed by the title of their fathers, yet heraldically, as with us, that right rests solely with the head of the house, the eldest son, while assuming the family name, taking the next rank. Thus, the eldest son of a Duc de Choiseul will be a Marquis de Choiseul; his second son, Comte de Choiseul; his third, Vicomte; and so on.

Had such a custom prevailed in England as exists abroad, and which permits each member of a noble family to assume the rank of its chief, it is curious to think how numerous would be the personages in this country bearing titles. Allowing that all the posterity of the head of the Buccleuch family, whom we may term Baron Scott, belonging to the lesser nobility, claimed a right to bear his title, Barons Scott would have been counted by hundreds. It is not, therefore, very astonishing to learn, on the authority of Sir W. Lawrence, that in Russia there are over half a million of nobles; in Austria, some three hundred and forty thousand nobles; in Spain, a century ago, there were nearly half a million; while in France at the Revolution there were three hundred and sixty-five thousand noble families, though of these latter there were only four thousand of ancient gentility. The very considerable number of nobles is of course explained by the fact that the class whom we should term 'gentry' are, abroad, included among the nobility.

But if we in England show our ignorance as to the real value of foreign titles, nothing could be more amusing than the erroneous impression held even among educated foreigners as to the relative position of our nobility and gentry. Of this latter and most important factor in our social system, continental society takes no account, as being unprovided with any title; a similar distinction accorded to the younger sons and daughters of peers, whose right to nobility it is very difficult to induce a foreigner to understand. On the Continent, the impression prevails that no Englishman can be noble who does not bear the title of 'Lord,' and it is a point which demands no small linguistic fluency to succeed in convincing a German that our English barony of the realm is not of the same rank as the pettiest Austrian Baron who can buy his title for a few pounds. That there should be Baronets whose families, like those of the Temples, the Watkin Wynns, the Tichbornes, the Chetwodes, and the Burdets, were noble long prior to the Conquest, while the Premier Baron of the House of Lords (Lord De Ros) dates only from a century after

that period, constitutes a source of dire perplexity to the foreign mind, which freely confesses to an utter inability to seize the exact heraldic and social position of a Baronet; and yet in Germany, and indeed all over the Continent, the *uralt*, or nobility whose patents were granted so long ago as to be 'time out of mind,' are held in the highest esteem. The fact that there exists no established canon by which accurately to gauge the relative values of English and continental titles has often been a source of much heart-burning and mortification to travelling Britons of gentle birth but untitled rank, and of no small social advantage to many a petty foreign nobleman exiled to our shores.

Among the foreign nobility, none hold a higher or prouder rank than the so-called mediatised Princes of Germany, the descendants of those rulers whose principalities, on the dissolution of the German Empire in 1806, were annexed and absorbed into the kingdom of Prussia, the rulers of the separate states forming which, still retain their titular rank and are accorded semi-regal honours. Such mediatised Princes enjoy the style of 'Prince,' and are addressed as *Durchlaucht*, or Serene Highness. Of the many German Princes who belong to this rank, none, perhaps, is better known in England than Count Gleichen, who, before his marriage into our English aristocracy, bore, as brother of the then reigning Prince, the title of Prince Victor of Hohenlohe-Langenburg. The nephew of Her Majesty, Prince Leiningen, finds a place in the list of the mediatised Princes; next to whom, in foreign titular precedence, rank, by a decision of the German Diet some sixty years ago, the Counts who are entitled to the style of *Erlaucht*, or Most Illustrious. Directly associated with the 'Most Illustrious Counts' may be reckoned at least one English peer, the Duke of Portland, who, as a descendant of Bentinck, the favourite of William III. of Orange, is thus closely allied to one of the noblest of the foreign patrician families, the head of which, Count William Bentinck, resides in the country of his family's adoption.

In the consideration of the questions of foreign titles, few points are more interesting than this close connection of our aristocracy with that of the Continent, not merely through marriage, but through direct descent or personally gained dignity. Thus, on the long list of the Princes of the Holy Roman Empire who follow in rank 'the Illustrious Counts' may be enumerated no fewer than three English peers: the Duke of Marlborough, the Duke of Leeds, Earl Cowper; Lord Arundell of Wardour and Lord Denbigh being Counts of the Holy Roman Empire. Though the present heads of the Denbigh and Howard families respectively are permitted to bear their foreign titles, it was not without some opposition from the government on their original assumption. The Fieldings—who claim to be a younger branch of the Hapsburgs, Emperors of Austria—were plain 'Esquires' in the land of their adoption, and only obtained their Earldom through their connection with the Villiers; while Thomas Arundell of Wardour, in spite of his services against the Turks, only received his peerage at the hands of Queen Elizabeth, his cousin, in order that his English rank might outbalance that of his foreign title. 'I would have my dogs wear

my own collar,' shrewdly remarked Queen Bess on the occasion; and this is the view that to our own day has been retained in this country respecting the English assumption of foreign titles, which are only borne by direct permission of the sovereign. By this right, and this right only, the Duke of Hamilton bears the French title of Duc de Chatellerauld, in France—long disputed with him by the Duke of Abercorn: by this right the Duke of Wellington bears the style of Prince of Waterloo in Belgium, and other foreign titles; the Earl of Nelson, Duke of Brontë in Italy; the Earl of Clancarty, the additional style of Marquis of Heusden in the Netherlands; and before his recent accession to the English peerage, Lord Rothschild, the Austrian barony by which he was so well known.

On any other ground, the assumption of foreign titles in England is purely a matter of courtesy, which might possibly be set aside by a punctilious Lord Chamberlain, if the holder desired to be 'presented' at court. Socially, however, such delicate points are not pressed; hence, a titled foreigner enjoys many advantages in that complicated code of precedence, the adjustment of which causes so much trouble to hostesses who entertain distinguished guests, and in the legal arrangement of which the bearer of foreign rank finds no place. None the less, it is a courteous concession for the head of a foreign house of undisputed nobility, whether Prince, Duke, or Count, to take his place after an English Duke. The existence of such a concession is traced to the still surviving traditions of the fascinating days of chivalry, when in the lists of a tournament a foreign knight's rank was never questioned, but precedence freely allowed him.

No foreign, though more particularly no French title holds a more esteemed place than that of 'Marquis,' which, indeed, socially may be said to rank above that of Duke, for the very simple reason, that while the First Napoleon created a large number of Dukes and Princes, he patented no Marquises, who, unless the sons of Imperialist Dukes, are therefore known to be of creation belonging to the days of the monarchy. Such points are of course difficult to determine without ready sources of reference; but in foreign society such distinctions are as familiar as are with us those which regulate the relative social position of the members of our aristocracy.

It is a distinction not always thoroughly understood, that which exists between political or peerage nobility and nobility of blood. A gentleman of blood being already noble, cannot be further ennobled by being raised to the peerage, though his rank and privileges are thereby augmented. This is a point which, if it is not always clear to the English mind, it is difficult to explain to the foreigner. He, however, perhaps better than the Briton, can grasp the meaning of the amusing anecdote of the Spanish grandees, who, signing their consent to the accession to their throne of the French Philip V., wrote each against his name, 'Noble as the king;' one, however, adding, 'and a little more;' 'for,' he said, 'Philip V. is a Frenchman; while I, I am a Castilian.' Though it is a colloquial fiction that every Spaniard is of noble birth, it must be remembered that it is only the heads of the Spanish noble families who bear the title; the eldest son

of a Duke being known during his father's lifetime simply as 'Don Alfonso di —.' It is perhaps not familiarly known that a Spanish title is by no means an inexpensive luxury. The rank of grandee costs about one thousand pounds; and while with us a dual title entails an outlay of about thirteen hundred pounds, it must be remembered that it is only the original recipient who pays this sum, which in Spain is renewable on every fresh assumption of the title. This is but poorly recompensed by the right enjoyed by all Spanish grandees of remaining covered in the presence of royalty, a privilege confined in this country to the family of Lord Forester and Lord Kingsale.

The mention of Spanish nobility affords an easy transition to that of the Netherlands, the bluest blood of which traces its origin to the days of the Spanish occupation. The holders of title in Belgium are divided into two classes, the former of which derive their titles from the old Austrian Empire; those ennobled by the successive rulers of the Netherlands since Napoleon's conquest taking in the social hierarchy a very much less enviable situation, however high-sounding their titles.

Amidst the complications of the code of precedence, which abroad causes no less trouble than with us, deserves mention from its connection with our country the hotly disputed quarrel of the Maltese nobility as to this very point, which was only finally settled by the Foreign Office determining that there existed twelve noble Maltese families, whose precedence should be regulated by the respective dates of their creations; in accordance with which simple arrangement the social machinery of Maltese intercourse has been able to proceed with less friction than formerly.

Rank in Italy is neither so rare nor so costly as in Spain, not a few titles, such, for instance, as that of Prince of San Donato, being derived from the possession of certain estates, a relic of feudal law long since abolished with us, but, curiously enough, still technically retained in the case of Arundel Castle. The Princes who enjoy the equally feudal privilege of erecting a *baldacchino* in their great halls are, however, an envied minority. Customs vary in Italy respecting the social assumption of title. In Northern Italy, the son of a *marquese* is styled *cavaliere*; while in Roman society he would probably be known by the same title as his father, though the younger son of a princely house will simply have engraved on his visiting card his Christian name and surname with the addition '*de Principi di —*,' and above this a princely coronet.

Few points are more puzzling, alike to the foreigner and the Englishman, than this matter of the right to the use of the coronet, it being a cause of surprise to the former that a baronet, and still more the younger son of a peer, who, he is informed, is of 'noble' birth, have no right to a coronet. Thus it comes about that the younger son of the peer whose courtesy title of 'Honourable,' it may be mentioned, is utterly untranslatable, holding a diplomatic post abroad, but without a right to use a coronet, is given no credit for being the equal of the youngest son of a baron whose father was perhaps a court-tailor.

So little, indeed, is this question of 'nobility' understood even by English people, that there are sons of peers who in foreign society, if asked whether they were 'noble,' would perhaps thoughtlessly answer in the negative, because not bearing any title, when, as a matter of fact, they might claim precedence on the score of birth over many a Graf, a Comte, or a Marchese. Should he endeavour to explain that as a member of the Lower House he was merely a 'Commoner,' he would probably simply succeed in impressing his foreign friends that he was nothing but a plebeian. The relative positions of the 'gentry' and the 'nobility,' which with us are, by those interested in such matters, thoroughly understood, might perhaps be best summed up to the inquiring foreigner by stating that what we call 'gentry' they would term 'noble;' and what we call 'noble,' they term 'high noble.' This, indeed, is the gist of the explanation once afforded to a German by the author of a curious little work anonymously produced by 'A Traveller' in 1842, entitled *British and Continental Titles of Honour*, a little volume which owed its existence to the many errors that the writer found to prevail as to the relative rank of those bearing titles at home and abroad. The reciprocal puzzles of English and foreign titular rank are indeed many, nor are they likely, in an age like the present, to be more satisfactorily regulated than they have been over the many centuries during which their peculiar significance, freely though it has been acknowledged, has steadily tended to lose ground.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V.—ALMOST 'TOO MUCH JOY.'

OVERTON PARK was within an hour's easy drive to the City, and one of the prettiest places in the picturesque district of Norwood. The grounds extended to about fifteen acres, and were surrounded by magnificent beeches, oaks, and elms. The house was outside in the style of a baronial castle, with minarets, buttresses, and a clock tower; but within, it was arranged on the most approved modern principles of comfort and convenience. There were green terraces reaching down to an extensive lawn, surrounded by a dense shrubbery of holly and rhododendrons. Beyond was the park, where all the year round a few deer might be seen tamely nibbling the rich herbage, undisturbed by the two cows which shared the pasture, or the traffic along the beech avenue. The place had been purchased by the late John Ellicott from the executors of an eccentric gentleman who, combining admiration for ancient architecture with a due sense of the advantages of modern improvements, had built the house and arranged the grounds according to his own views. Overton Park was now the property of Mr Ellicott's nephew, who brought his young wife home after a pleasant sojourn on the Riviera.

There never had been such a tender and devoted husband as Henry Dacon, not only

during the honeymoon, but in the months and years that succeeded it. The chief aim of his existence seemed to be the discovery of some new means for affording his wife pleasure; and he was brimful of joy whenever he succeeded in giving her some unexpected and pleasing surprise. She had no wish, no whim even, however extravagant, which was not immediately gratified. He passed the recognised bounds of a husband's most transcendent proofs of affection—he not only made his mother-in-law welcome to the house, but he showed her every token of respect at home and abroad. No mother had ever before known such a paragon of a son-in-law. He had made the most liberal settlements on her daughter, and by his attentions made her the envy of all the matrons in her circle who had daughters married or to marry. The widow fully appreciated the advance in social estimation thus gained, and was intensely proud of it. But she contrived to wave the flag of triumph so discreetly that few could say she was unduly vain of the good fortune which had befallen her and her daughter.

Every one who had any intimacy with the young wife assured her that she had drawn a big prize out of the matrimonial lucky-bag; and she would answer frankly that she knew, and was glad and grateful for it. She began almost to fear that Dacon was too good. As long as a year and a half after marriage, when baby Hetty was full seven months old, she had the exceptional privilege of chiding her husband for his too great eagerness to satisfy all her fancies. 'I do think, Henry, you want to make me believe that I am the mistress of an enchanted palace where I have only to wish—say, for the moon, and it would be brought to me.'

'Or you might be whisked up to the moon,' he answered, laughing as he kissed her. 'Why, what is there in the world that I care for except to make you glad?—always glad that you chose me for better for worse. I have got the "better," and I hope you will never think that you have got the "worse."'

'No—never, you foolish old man,' she rejoined, patting his cheek fondly.

'Well, you have not wanted anything out of the way yet—at any rate, nothing that the simple signing of a cheque could not provide.'

'Are you not afraid that by being too good to me, you will bring on a fit of satiety, and I may grumble because you cannot give me something that is beyond the reach of cheques?' she asked with playful gravity.

'I would try to get it,' was the cheery response, 'by favour or force; and if I failed, then I would trust to your wise head to understand that it was not my fault.'

'But if my wise head would not understand, and I still cried for the unattainable—what then?'

'I should be wretched until you came back to your senses and did understand.—You are dreaming about something unusual now. What is it?'

They were in Hetty's boudoir—a place sacred to themselves except on 'company' nights—and she was resting on his shoulder, passing her fingers fondly through his hair. He looked up smiling at the prospect of some easily satisfied

demand being the finale to this portentous introduction.

'I was thinking about Daisy.'

'You say that as solemnly as if she were laid up with some serious illness. Certainly, we do not see so much of her as I know you would like; but we must make allowances for an authoress who is absorbed in the production of a *magnum opus* which is to set the Thames on fire. Let us hope it will, and that she may be content with the blaze. But I hope you are not going to charge me with the task of seeing that the fireworks go off properly, for that would be too much for me.'

'I don't like you to make fun about her work, Henry—she is so earnest over it; and you know that some publishers have acknowledged she has talent.'

'I am sure she has, and I had not the least intention of jesting about it. My little joke was meant solely to drive that shadow from your face. Is there anything the matter with her?'

'I am afraid there is,' continued Mrs Dacon pensively; 'and you have made me so happy that I feel her grief the more distressfully.'

'What is the trouble? Can we do anything to relieve her of it, or at least to lighten it in any way?'

'I wish we could, and I know that you wish it as much as I do. But I fear we cannot do anything.'

'Then, as we cannot, you must take comfort from the old saying, "What can't be cured"——'

'Don't!' exclaimed the young wife, laying a finger lightly on his lips. 'You must be serious, Henry, or I shall be silent. The something which cheques cannot enable you to do for me has turned up at last.'

'There are few things which love supported by a good bank account cannot accomplish,' he rejoined encouragingly. 'Come, out with it, and give Sir Galahad a chance of proving his mettle.'

'You are not serious yet,' she said with mild reproach, 'although I have told you that the subject is distressing me so much. But I will tell you what it is. Daisy is very ill—she is moping her heart out because Gilbert is banished, and she will never know happiness until he is brought back.'

He became serious enough as these words were spoken, and the wife felt that he involuntarily drew a little away from her, whilst she in surprise clung the more closely to him.

'I have not annoyed you, Henry; I hope I have not done that?' she pleaded.

'No, no, Hetty,' he answered gravely; 'not annoyed me, but bothered me, for you have found out the thing I cannot do for you. Remember, even if I could bring Astbury back to England, I could not compel him to love your cousin. You cannot have forgotten that it was another person he cared for, and she knew it.—I am sorry for her; I am sorry for him; but I don't see how to help them in the way you want.'

'Yes, I know it is impossible, and wish I had not spoken about it; but she is suffering so very much, and all the more because she tries to hide it. If she would only unburden her mind by telling her sorrow to somebody, she would be better; but she will not say anything even to me.'

'It is better that she should not,' he said abruptly, as if irritated; but he instantly subdued his voice and continued: 'Still, seeing you so anxious on the subject, she might have told you that I have already done all I could for them both.'

'You have!—O Henry, you make me glad again. She must have said something to you, then?'

'Yes—not much; but remembering the information you gave me I understood her, and opened the way for them to correspond.'

'Then you knew where he was!' she exclaimed in amazement.

'He wrote to me,' was the reply, with a restlessness he had not previously exhibited in their private conversations.

She clasped her arms round him, her heart throbbing with pride and affection. 'You knew all the time, and yet incurred that great loss rather than betray him!'

He endured the embrace; he could not respond to it. 'I told you at the time,' he said coldly, 'that I did not believe Astbury guilty. But I think, Hetty, a little reflection will convince you that the seldomer his name is mentioned between us the more comfortable it will be for me.'

'I will never speak of him again,' was the impulsive promise. 'But it is a pity, since you are so sure of his innocence, that he cannot return. They might come together and be happy—like us.'

She did not return to the subject after his declaration that it was unpleasant to him—although her notion was that it ought to have been quite the reverse, considering how nobly he had acted throughout towards a rival who would have triumphed by defaming him. But, of course, she had not told him what Gilbert had suggested, and she had so sternly repudiated. She kept her resolve, and never did tell him.

Dacon had spoken truly. He had done his best to meet Daisy's wishes. He not only asked Gilbert for leave to give her his address, but frankly told with what fervour the girl, strong in her conviction of his innocence, had declared her resolution to bring him back to England, in order that his good name might be cleared of every stain with which calumny and misapprehension had daubed it. He went further, and told Gilbert that if ever a woman loved a man, Daisy Forester loved him; and added—with unintentional coarseness, arising from his selfish desire to get her out of his way as much as to console the exile—that it would not be difficult to persuade her to emigrate to South America.

That letter brought one from Gilbert to Daisy by the next mail. 'The account Dacon sends of your faith in me,' he wrote, 'has given me unspeakable comfort; and if I could only know that Hetty shared it with you, I should be quite happy. I can now tell you, for your satisfaction, that my complicity in the affair is to this extent: I discovered who the culprit was, and for reasons of my own, determined to hold my tongue, even if the blame should fall upon me. What these reasons were I cannot explain even to you; but you may be sure that they were strong ones, or I would not still be an exile and a dishonoured man in the eyes of almost every one who knew

me as Gilbert Astbury. I am now Edward Harrison, accounted here a most fortunate man, for my success has been beyond my most extravagant expectations; but it does not compensate for what is lost. I shall be glad to have news from you whenever you care to write, and above all things, glad to learn from you that Hetty is happy.'

In this he delicately indicated that the old love was still strong within him. If Daisy had entertained a hope of her cousin's marriage having so changed the nature of his regard for her as to permit his affection to settle elsewhere, it would have been dispelled by this communication. But Daisy was not thinking of winning him for herself. Feeling sure that no matter what happened to him—whether he died or married—she could never love any other man sufficiently to become a wife—she was equally sure that his affections could never be transferred to her or anybody else. But because she loved him so, she wanted to see him put right before the world. She wanted to see him back in his native land, and able to hold up his head amongst those who now believed him guilty. She was irritated at the idea of him skulking in a foreign land under an assumed name, and it was no consolation to her to know that he was successful in business. All the riches of Golconda were in her eyes worthless if good name had to be sacrificed for them.

But what could she do? Tell him that she was angry with him, that she utterly disapproved of his conduct, and that, after racking her brain for every conceivable excuse for the course he had adopted, she could find none? She did tell him, and the result was the sad response that he could not attempt to justify himself to others because the motive which actuated him could only be understood by himself. He did not mean to return to England unless he learned that Hetty was unhappy and in need of help. He implored Daisy not to despise him for his weakness, but to continue writing to him, for her letters brought the sunshine of home into his exile's dwelling-place, making him feel strong and content.

She wished him to return; but she could not offer him the one inducement which he declared would bring him back. She could not tell him that Hetty was unhappy and needed help; for every day she saw fresh proofs of her cousin's perfect contentment with her lot, perfect satisfaction in her husband and her pretty little daughter. Daisy could only report these facts again and again, but without once expressing surprise or curiosity at the singular condition on which Gilbert would alone attempt to reverse the doom of banishment he had accepted. Before this correspondence, she had suspected the reason why he had become a fugitive, and now she knew it. She believed he was wrong; but she could not endure to vex him by the constant iteration of that verdict. She wished to help him; and so wrote as pleasantly as she could, giving in reply to his minute inquiries every detail at her command of Hetty's life and of the growth of little Hetty—the prettiest, fairest, and merriest child that had ever been born.

The letters became to Gilbert the most important of each mail, the first sought and the first opened. He could fancy that he heard Daisy's

voice as he read the words she penned; and he could see her quiet sweet face watching him with that earnest sympathetic expression he remembered so well in her soft blue eyes. He gave her by every mail a sort of diary of his progress, as some small compensation for the labour he entailed on her in his greedy desire for news from home—news of herself, her aunt, and of the Overton Park family. She, with no other desire than to console one who had sacrificed and suffered so much, replied faithfully and truly to each letter. Unconsciously, she saved him from falling into the morbidly bitter state which is often the consequence of disappointment on an ardent generous nature. The activity with which he pursued his work after receiving each missive made him aware of the happy influence she was exercising over his career, and he was profoundly grateful to her. When he said 'good-bye' to her at the garden gate of Cedar Cottage he had fancied that he was passing into the valley of gloom, from which he would never again emerge. But youth and health were on his side; and Daisy had raised a beacon to guide him through the darkness of a troubled mind. He began to wonder sometimes, in a vague, dreamy way, why such a woman, beautiful, gifted, and capable of great love, should not yet have found a companion-soul worthy of such a treasure.

It seemed strange to him now, that he had never thought of this before; and with the thought came a chill as he reflected that her letters would cease when—as must happen some day—she married! He had not forgotten Dacon's assertion that Daisy's heart had been given to himself; but he had put the idea aside as one of his friend's feeble efforts to console him at any hazard so as to keep him quiet. Daisy was, as she had been always, his dearest friend; but she having been his confidant all along, could have no feeling of the kind for him, or she could never have endured his constant harping on the one theme of his lost love. As he considered the prospect of the cessation of her letters, he became conscious that whilst the memory of Hetty was like that of one who had died years ago, Daisy was a living, near and dear presence to him.

One mail arrived and brought no message from her. He was uneasy, but concluded that she had somehow miscalculated the date of despatch. Another mail arrived without anything from her, and then he realised how precious, how necessary to him were those tokens of remembrance from Daisy Forester. He felt like one who has been toiling through a long dark night and has just caught the first glad signs of a bright dawn when he is suddenly stricken blind. Was the prospect of happiness which he had begun to see through Daisy's agency to be denied him? He did not like to telegraph; it would startle without enabling her to understand that he was mostly alarmed about herself, for he thought it could be nothing but serious illness that had arrested her pen.

He wrote; and his letter was crossed by one from her. Dacon had been very queer for some time, and Hetty was much distressed on his account. He was as fond and kind as ever, devoted to his wife and child—madly bound up in the little one, with whom he spent all his leisure, inventing amusements for her, and only

smiling when he was romping with her, capering about the lawn or the nursery with her. But he was not well, and Hetty was very miserable about him.

A REMNANT OF PAGAN SCOTLAND.

ON the southern shore of the Moray Firth, along six miles of the Elgin coast, runs a range of mighty cliffs wonderful to the geologist and the antiquary. They are indented with deep gloomy caves, formerly the resort of smugglers, and latterly the home of wandering tribes of Scotch gypsies. Several of these caves bear marks of their former occupants; and rude stairways cut in the face of the cliffs ascend to the top, where it is said the warlock laird of Gordonstown held converse with the smugglers; and by the compact which he had with the evil one, he was enabled to tell them whether their next venture would be successful or otherwise. The walls of one of these caves are curiously sculptured with mystic symbols, some of which are supposed by antiquaries to be of Eastern origin and of great antiquity. The cliffs also show peculiar and uncommon instances of false bedding and curious jointing; and where there is any considerable portion of flat surface exposed, gigantic footprints of extinct reptiles and other monsters of a far-past time can be distinctly traced. A little farther inland, the fossil remains of some of those creatures have been found in considerable numbers; and it was here the creature was first discovered which enabled Huxley to overturn the opinion of Agassiz, and which raised the famous geological dispute connected with the Elgin sandstones. But great as is the geological interest attaching to this bit of coast, the antiquarian is perhaps greater. There is here a custom, called 'the burning of the Clavie,' which though at one time observed all along the Morayshire coast, is now observed in Burghead alone. This custom, as we shall see, probably points back to a remote antiquity.

At the western end of this remarkable range there is a headland running out into the sea, and crowning it is a quaint fishing village called Burghead. This headland was for ages held by the marauding Norsemen, even after their final overthrow by Malcolm II. in 1010; but before the Norsemen set foot upon it, there are those who believe that it was held by the Romans, and that it was the northernmost point reached in Britain by the conquerors of the world. Historical authorities, however, are not agreed as to this point. But be that as it may, there is one mark of paganism and one mark of civilisation which are both unique and difficult to explain. The former is the extraordinary custom already alluded to, 'the burning of the Clavie,' a custom of unknown origin and of unknown antiquity. This ceremony, which is annually performed on the 11th January—New-year's Eve, old style—is fast degenerating into a mere masquerade, and will probably in a few years be left in the hands of children or allowed to sink into oblivion. On the evening mentioned, all the fishermen in the village gather at a given point for the construction of the Clavie. At the present day this consists of a small barrel, which is cut into halves, one of which is filled with

wood and pitch. It is then fixed to a pole five or six feet long. The fixing must be performed with a stone, no metal hammer being allowed. When this is done, the pitch is fired by introducing a piece of burning peat. Coal dare not be used. When the flames arise, one of the fishermen seizes the Clavie and rushes along one street, followed by the entire male population, at the end of which he is relieved by another fisherman. In this way every street in the village is gone through, the Clavie being replenished from time to time. When the procession has passed through the village, the Clavie is deposited on the top of a little mound called 'the Doorie,' and there it is kept burning far into the night. It is then broken and the embers scattered. The people rush upon the pieces, and every fragment is carefully gathered up. Each individual secures a part; and so the ceremony ends.

Some years ago every boat in the harbour was visited by the Clavie-bearer, the intention being to purify and purge them from evil spirits, and especially from the baleful influence of witchcraft. The fragments gathered by the people are for the same purpose, and they are stored away during the year. Several rules connected with the ceremony have to be rigidly observed; for example, no landsman can take part in the programme under pain of death. Indeed, strange fishermen are looked upon with suspicion, and not allowed to participate in the ceremony. Sixty years ago, a colony of fishermen from Campbelltown (Inverness-shire) settled in Burghhead. After a few years' residence they were allowed to accompany the procession. The strangers grew and multiplied until they became as numerous as the original Burghheaders. Feeling their strength, they conceived the idea that it would be more in order with the fitness of things if the Clavie was burned on the evening of the 31st of December instead of the 11th of January. The innovation was fiercely resisted, and after a protracted struggle, the strangers had to succumb. A strange superstition connected with the ceremony is, that should any one fall in the rush along the streets it is a sure sign that that person will never be present at another Clavie-burning. So sure are they of this, that should the Clavie-bearer for the time fall, another at once seizes the fiery mass; and without waiting for the fallen man to rise, the crowd rushes onward, probably trampling him under foot.

This remnant of paganism, now slowly dying out in the lone village of Burghhead, was once common throughout Scotland. Some say that it is of Scandinavian origin; and others, that it is purely Celtic. There is no authority for either statement. The ceremony was probably performed by both races. It is certain that in the beginning of last century the kirk-session of Inveravon forbade the 'heathenish custom,' and took steps to put it down. A minute to that effect is recorded in the session books. Inveravon is a parish in the Highlands of Banffshire where probably the foot of Norseman never trod, thus showing that the ceremony was practised by the Highlanders. To argue either side would be vain. What is of greater importance is that the mysterious rite is probably of much greater antiquity than is generally supposed. It is believed that it was originated for the purpose of frightening witches. No doubt

the belief in it among the fishermen degenerated into something like that; but the origin of the Clavie lies deeper. The use of a stone hammer instead of an iron one in constructing the Clavie, is by some held as indicating that the ceremony was in existence in the Stone Age. The Clavie, in short, appears to be the remnant of a religious belief, and is probably connected with fire-worship.

The unique mark of civilisation alluded to above, is a large cavity cut in the solid rock and known as the Roman Well. The cavity is about eighteen feet square. There is a platform three feet wide all round the well, and the remainder of the space is filled with water. The apartment is lofty, and it is neatly vaulted over with masonry. A stairway cut in the rock leads down to the platform, from which one can descend into the deep dark pool. Several antiquarian wars have been fought over this well; but no satisfactory conclusion has ever been arrived at. Burghhead is altogether a mysterious place. It is a veritable 'place of skulls.' A large ridge runs for a considerable distance between the village and the sea, composed mainly of human bones. When the wind is high and the firth is lashed into foam, it is alleged that these bones have been heard to rattle, and mysterious groans and deep mutterings to proceed from the mound. To the east of the storm-swept headland, the sea is gradually retreating; while immediately to the west of it the waters roll over a buried forest. Five strange sculptured stones, unique in Britain, have been discovered during the past fifty years on the headland. Each of them represents a bull. They are sculptured in the fine siliceous sandstone of the district, which is more enduring than marble or granite. The lines are strong and beautiful, showing that the sculptor had a high idea of art. Like the Clavie, these stones are a mystery, and belong to a far-past time. They, too, may be a remnant of paganism.

A CLUB STORY.

THE talk in the smoking-room at Holthorp last Christmas Eve ran wild and brilliantly for a while, then suddenly ceased. Everybody became so silent that the melancholy moaning of the wind round the house and down the wide chimney seemed to be finding its echo in some of our breasts, judging by the solemnity with which cigar or pipe was puffed. The cheeriest face amongst us was, as usual, poor Billy Fane's. At no time would you ever suppose he could not see you as he turns his eyes straight upon yours. Presently, as he looked round quickly, saying, 'Come, wake up, you fellows—don't go to sleep,' you would have thought he was taking a survey of the whole company. 'Hang it all!' he continued, 'don't condemn me to silence as well as darkness. One would think you were in training for a deaf and dumb asylum.'

'Well,' says Colliston, a distinguished landscape painter, 'we shall be very deaf indeed when we cannot hear your voice, Billy. If your eyes were only as good as your lungs, you'd get on, wouldn't you?'

'Yes, indeed; I'm all right there,' answers

Fane. 'If I could only see whether there was room, I could wheel a battalion of the artists' corps into line as well as the colonel yonder; or paint you a golden harvest picture equal to our Colliston here.—But please go on talking; don't waste the fleeting hours by sitting mum-chance all the evening. Drop politics, and talk about art or the musical glasses—anything.'

This little rally set tongues wagging again, and two or three of the men present began in an undertone questioning whether it was worse to be blind or deaf. Then, after a minute, Sir Joseph, our host, delicately broached the subject to Fane, asking him which he considered the worse.

'I hope you don't mind, Billy,' he went on, 'but you should be an authority. Would you rather be as you are, or deaf?'

'Ah! I can't say,' was the reply. 'I know it is pretty awkward sometimes to be blind; but it is so old a story with me, I don't think much about it now. On the whole, though, I fancy I'd rather live in darkness than in silence; but then, as I say, I'm used to the one, and you fellows seemed inclined to give me a dose of the other.'

'Pretty awkward to be blind,' mused Sir Joseph. 'Yes, by Jove! I should think it was. That's a very mild way of putting it. I say, Fane, would you mind telling us the worst time you ever had of it throughout your affliction? I mean, when did it give you the greatest—I mean, when did it put you in the greatest fix apart from the general trouble of it? I suppose you have read *Called Back*? You were never in such a corner, for instance, as that fellow found himself in, I hope? You were never present at a murder, were you?'

'No; not quite so bad as that,' answered the blind man. 'But I was once in a very terrible scrape. Some of you might have heard of it at the time, if you were not all so inconveniently young; it is nearly twenty years ago now.'

'Indeed! What, through not being able to see your way about?' asked the host. 'Where did it happen? I never heard of it; but then, to be sure, we have not known you twenty years.'

'No, of course not. There were none of you born then, perhaps!'

A hearty laugh ran round the little assembly at this sally; and presently, in compliance with the general desire, Fane agreed to tell his story.

Sir Joseph Winch's acquaintance was like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, curious and varied. He delighted, especially at Christmas-time, to gather round him all sorts and conditions of men—bohemian, aristocratic, political, artistic, commercial, and scientific. But these details concern us not; this is but the record of an experience told by Fane, and which served to make that particular evening the most notable and amusing spent by Sir Joseph Winch's guests during their winter visit. They now eagerly settled down to listen to their blind friend, who, after a few preliminary words, thus began:

Remember, twenty years ago my loss of sight was of recent date, and although I was growing accustomed to it, and making the best of it even then, I had not abandoned hope, and was still under treatment. People say I am naturally

dodgy in my ways, and so I suppose I contrived to get about rooms and staircases, when I once knew them, more readily than many fellows would have done. At anyrate I was as much at home at our little club, 'The Wits,' as in my own rooms, and could go up and down stairs and find my way all over the house without assistance. Not so, however, in the streets or strange places; and therefore I always have a young lad in my service as guide and escort, who fetches me, and, as I might say, carries me hither and thither! Friends have always been very kind and civil in asking me to dine and join in many a little social gathering. Now, I had been to one of these on the evening in question, and it was arranged that my host should drop me at the club, where the lad had been ordered to meet me and take me home.

A little before midnight, therefore, on—yes, it was on a Christmas Eve, just nineteen years ago, as I think, this very night, we reached the club. Snow had been falling the whole evening; and when we entered the hall, I congratulated my friend that he had no farther to go with me on such a miserable night; it was well we had made the arrangement. He, too, was glad his escort duty was over, and bade me good-night on the threshold.

'My lad has not come yet, I suppose?' said I to the porter. 'It has not struck twelve, I think?'

'No, sir; it wants ten minutes.'

'Then I will go up-stairs and wait,' said I, taking off my topcoat. 'Let me know when I am fetched.—Who is in the club?'

'Very few, sir; no one, indeed, but Mr Gridlay.'

I paused, as the man put my hand on the balustrade, the only guide I wanted to find my way up-stairs.—'Oh, which room is he in, do you know?'

'Back drawing-room, sir, I think. The waiter has lately taken him up a cup of coffee.'

'Good,' I thought to myself, as I ascended the stairs. 'Then I will go into the front room.'

Now, here, I must just tell you — Fane paused; then, after seeming to make up his mind, resumed: Well, I need not go into details; but this man Gridlay had played me a scurvy trick some year or so before—a trick which changed the whole current of my life. I need not say it was in the matter of a love affair. Briefly, just before I lost my sight I was engaged to be married; but of course when there was every likelihood of my never again being able to put brush to canvas, I was bound to release the young lady; but she would not hear of it, though her father hesitated. She was still prepared to share my lot. We should have enough to live comfortably on, though at a very reduced figure from what it would have been had I been able to pursue my profession. The old gentleman would have given way—was giving way.

The affair hung in the balance, when this Mr Albert Gridlay turned the scale against me. He was intimate with the family, and it appeared had secretly nourished a strong affection for my *fiancée*. So, what does the fellow do when he hears of my misfortune, and, as he declared, of the consequent breaking off of the engagement, but speak to the father on his own behalf, and

without saying a word to the girl herself. He was a rich man compared with me, and it would have been a far better match from that point. His proposal, I say, turned the scale against me. The old gentleman insisted on breaking off our engagement—did break it off; but I am happy to say the young lady never married Gridlay, although for a long time her family moved heaven and earth to induce her to do so.

Gridlay and I had a slight acquaintance with each other, and assuredly neither liked the other. He was a horsey, sporting sort of gentleman—not my style of man at all; but he was a member of my club; and after his conduct, and when I knew he was still prosecuting his suit, I cut him dead, though cutting a fellow is not easy for a blind man. However, about a fortnight before this eventful Christmas Eve we were accidentally thrown together in the club, and I could not avoid him. He made some insolent allusion to the probable reason for my not speaking to him; and being a peppery fellow, I unwisely took it up, and, contrary to my custom, had an open and angry quarrel with him—about the only one I have ever had with anybody in my life. Some high words passed, and at last I said: 'You take advantage of my infirmity, sir. You would not have dared to have said that if we had been on equal terms, because, you know, if you had, I should have knocked you down.'

He replied with renewed insolence; and I don't know what might have happened, had not some one interfered and pacifically led me out of the room; but I was very angry, threatened to bring the matter before the Committee, and in my irritation said many things perhaps I ought not to have said.

Thus you can understand, with this dispute still clouding the atmosphere, why I should avoid the room in which the porter said Mr Gridlay was sitting; and so I went into the front drawing-room. All was silent as I paused and listened for a moment at the door. I could have sworn no one was in the room. Knowing the ropes, as the sailors say, I felt my way to my favourite corner on a long couch at the opposite side to the fireplace. Sitting down gladly, for I was tired after my tramp through the snow, to wait till I should be fetched, I presently began to doze, and in a little while fell fast asleep, it is to be supposed for more than an hour. Awaking at last, and feeling very cold and a little dazed, I stood up, and was feeling my way by the edge of the couch towards the fireplace, when I suddenly kicked against the feet and legs of some one sitting at the farther end of the seat.

'I beg your pardon,' I cried; but there was no response, and the legs were not removed. 'I hope I did not hurt you?' I continued. 'I did not know any one was sitting there.'

Still no response; still no movement of the obstructing feet.

Gently stretching forward, my fingers fell upon a drawn-up and contorted knee, and close to it an ice-cold hand clenched and rigid. Then I gently shook the sitter by the shoulder; still he did not move; his body, too, seemed rigid, and curiously bent backwards. Growing alarmed, I passed my hand swiftly up to his face and forehead; the latter also was like a block of ice.

'Good God!' I cried, 'the man is dead!' In a paroxysm of dismay, I fumbled and stumbled my way to the bell and rang it violently.

Before I had time to return to the couch, the waiter was in the room.

'See, waiter! who is that on the couch? I am afraid he is very ill, if not dead.'

'Dead, sir—never!' exclaimed the man.—'Why, it's Mr Gridlay. I brought him his coffee about an hour before I saw you come into the club, sir; he was then in the back room. Here is his cup, nearly empty, beside him on the table.—What had I better do, sir?'

'Do? Why, rouse the house; send for a doctor, quick.'

But poor Gridlay was beyond the reach of doctors; the united skill of the whole College of Physicians could have availed him nothing.

I cannot pretend to narrate in detail what followed. The commotion, be sure, was terrible. A doctor was soon on the spot. The dead man's friends were communicated with; his elder brother arrived, bringing a second doctor with him, and then the police were informed; I, standing by bewildered, helpless, and incapable, telling my story over and over again, and answering a dozen questions a minute. Finally, the body was removed; and, as my lad had failed me, I was taken home by a waiter, but not before one of the doctors had given it as his opinion that death was caused by poison—strychnine, he suspected, from the dregs in the coffee cup and the contorted position of the corpse. There would have to be an inquest.

And in two days' time an inquest was held, at which, of course, my evidence was essential. The post-mortem confirmed the doctor's suspicion: strychnine was the cause of death, the remains of the coffee proving it had been swallowed in that. But how did deceased come by the drug? There all was doubt and mystery. The inquest was adjourned. At the next inquiry I was recalled, and subjected to a rigid and most unpleasant cross-examination. Said the coroner, or the lawyer who appeared to watch the case on behalf of the deceased's relatives—I am not sure which, for, remember, I was wholly unconscious of the aspect of the court and of the relative positions of the people in it—said somebody, therefore: 'Now, you see, Mr Fane, we are unable to discover how or by what means the unfortunate gentleman came to have poison in his cup. He was not known to have any strychnine in his possession, and there is no evidence to show that he ever purchased any: no bottle or phial has come to light. The question, therefore, naturally arises, how came there to be strychnine in that coffee cup? You are blind, suffering, I believe, from atrophy of the optic nerve, and are, as I am informed, under medical treatment for the malady—you are taking medicine. Now, do you happen to know what the principal ingredient of that medicine is?'

I paused; for I did happen to know—it was strychnine, and I did not like the question. It was repeated.

Then I replied promptly: 'Strychnine, I believe; and I am obliged to have something of the kind injected into my arm periodically.'

'Exactly so,' continued my interrogator. 'It is the ordinary drug used in such cases. But you

also take a certain proportion of it with your food, do you not?’

‘Yes.’

‘And had you not the little bottle containing it in your pocket at the time you were sitting on the couch, alongside the deceased, you two being entirely alone in the room of your club?’

‘Certainly,’ I exclaimed in some agitation, for I now clearly saw to what a dreadful suspicion these questions pointed. ‘But you don’t mean to imply,’ I continued hastily—

‘Be kind enough to answer my question; confine yourself to that, please; and let me further ask: had you not quite recently had a very angry quarrel with the late Mr Albert Gridlay? Was there not great animosity existing between you previously? Were you not deadly rivals, so to speak?’

What could I answer? And as I answered I felt the full force of the situation, and though I was comparatively young in those days, I knew that it might go hard with me, as it had done with many a better man, ere I could clear myself of the frightful imputation—ere I could break down the case that was building up against me. Had any legal adviser been at hand, he would probably have cautioned me at the outset of this string of inquiries, and have told me I was not bound to answer them. As it was, the admission was made and the mischief done.

However, no more questions were put to me then; I was led from the witness box, and the coroner very soon proceeded to comment on the evidence. He touched slightly but significantly on mine—sufficiently to greatly add to my growing uneasiness. He asked the jury if they would like a further adjournment of the case, or whether they thought there was sufficient evidence before them to enable them to arrive at a verdict. They thought there was not; for although no doubt existed as to the cause of death, it was desirable that the matter should be further sifted, and another effort made to discover how strychnine had found its way into the deceased’s coffee—evidently a direct allusion to the fact that I had strychnine in my possession at the time we were sitting alone almost side by side in the club. The consequence, of course, was a further adjournment.

Need I say that during that time I went through an agony of suspense? A dark suspense it might truly be called, which was not a little added to by the information which reached me that Gridlay’s brother intended to subpoena the witnesses of my quarrel with deceased at the club, with a view of getting a verdict of wilful murder against me by the coroner’s jury.

Here the blind story-teller paused, and turning his face from one side to the other, you would have supposed he was looking at us, for his eyes seemed to twinkle knowingly. Then he said: ‘There, gentlemen—that was my fix, and a pretty awkward one, you will admit.—But I was not hanged,’ he went on with a comical smile playing about his lips, ‘as you see, for, happily, by dint of inquiries, good legal advice, and a clever detective, we were enabled to prove that Mr Albert Gridlay had obtained strychnine pills or boluses from a veterinary surgeon in the neighbourhood of Newcastle with the ostensible purpose

of physicking a horse. We were able to bring evidence of this into court on the occasion of the adjourned inquest, the result being a verdict of suicide whilst of unsound mind.’

‘Pretty awkward to be blind—yes, truly!’ said Sir Joseph Winch. ‘One need not be suspected of murder, however, to convince us of that;’ and his opinion was echoed unanimously by his guests as they broke up for the night.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT.

THERE are many people who are neither dramatists nor novelists by profession, but who yet have such a keen eye for ‘effect’ that they may be said to be both. Like farce-writers, such people are quick to see a ‘situation,’ and if necessary, to make one, in order to indulge in a little cheap theatrical display. It would not be difficult to show that almost every man of genius of poetic temperament has indulged more or less in this propensity; in many cases, doubtless, without intending any harm by the simulation or untruthfulness. Some one ventured to remind Alexandre Dumas that an anecdote he had just related was not strictly in accordance with the truth. ‘No,’ he said frankly, ‘it was not, I know; but the story was ever so much better as I told it.’ The same desire has influenced, and will influence, thousands of persons in embellishing a story. Being a novelist, Dumas may perhaps be excused for giving play to his imagination for the sake of heightening ‘effect;’ and the same excuse could be urged in favour of those novelists who, in recording their ‘personal experiences,’ hardly ever allow one to lose sight of the fact that they are story-tellers by profession. So much of their time is spent in contriving situations, that it is not at all surprising that they are often tempted to stray from the paths of absolute truthfulness.

The general public, however, has no such excuse. Yet so keen is the dramatic instinct with many people, that they contrive ‘situations’ with a fertility of resource that would make many novelists wild with envy. But the dramatic instinct is mostly displayed in the telling of stories, in connection with which ‘truth is,’ no doubt, ‘a sad hamperer of genius,’ because it is comparatively rare in real life that experiences fit in with preconceived notions. These—whether owing to innate ideas or from a loving study of fiction is more than need be determined—are frequently romantic in the extreme. Fitz-Boodle confessed that in all the comedies and romances he had read the hero had always a go-between—a valet or humble follower—who performed the intrigue of the piece; and consequently he selected some subordinate to carry his letters to Minna Löwe, notwithstanding that he might easily have given her them himself. There may be a good deal underlying this little bit of satire.

A familiar story is told of a soldier who, bearing a reprieve for a companion, rode at headlong speed until he neared the camp, and then he drew rein and waited until the firing-party began to turn out. Being reproached by a comrade, who asked him why he did not ride on, and so relieve the condemned man’s feelings, he indig-

nantly exclaimed: 'What! would you have me spoil all the dramatic effect?' Doubtless, in all the cases he had ever heard of, the reprieve came just as the execution was about to take place. Few, perhaps, have the dramatic instinct so finely developed as in this apocryphal soldier; but the quality is by no means rare, especially among young men of poetic temperament. 'The English artist,' says Lytton, 'generally commences with rapture and historical composition, to conclude with avaricious calculations and portraits of Alderman Simpkins.' Nearly every young man, it is true, commences with poetry and ends with prose; and as a rule, the dramatic qualities wear off with increase of age.

But there are exceptions. Rogers the banker-poet was always a man of great artistic feeling; and in *The Early Days of Samuel Rogers* a story is told that fully shows that in his regard for dramatic effect he was not hampered by the truth. According to Mr Clayden, Leslie the artist said that when he and his daughters were at Brighton, Rogers took them in his carriage to the Dyke. 'As we sat in his carriage,' Leslie proceeds, 'looking over the vast expanse of country below us, he pointed down to a village that seemed all peace and beauty in the tranquil sunset. "Do you see," he said, "those three large tombstones close to the tower of the church? My father, my mother, and my grandfather are buried there."' Leslie told Mr Philip Gilbert Hamerton the anecdote himself, and imitated Rogers's tone of voice, which he says was most pathetic. On hearing the story, somebody exclaimed: 'What a lying old rascal!'—the truth being that the poet had not a single relative in that churchyard. Rogers afterwards confessed that the only foundation for what he had said was that he would have liked to be buried there himself. A proceeding such as this can only be classed among those lies as to the absolute sinfulness of which theologians cannot agree, since there can be no doubt that Rogers solely aimed at heightening effect. He was, in short, 'theatrical,' a charge which, as every student of elocution knows, awakened what Dickens would call the 'liveliest feelings' in the breast of Pitt.

Whether that heaven-born minister was theatrical may perhaps be open to question; but there can be no doubt that there have been many 'stagey' scenes in the House of Commons, the famous dagger incident doubtless being among the best known. There, however, a certain amount of theatrical effect is calculated and allowed for—a great deal may indeed be conceded to orators under any circumstances; but occasionally the border-line between the embellishments of rhetoric and the tinsel of theatricalism is over-stepped, and the result, effective though it may be for the moment, is not calculated to enhance the reputation of those who indulge in such resources.

Counsel in law cases, as we all know, have, as a rule, the dramatic qualities very strongly developed. A short time ago one of these gentlemen received a nasty rap over the knuckles. Posed in a very fine attitude and bursting with eloquence, a certain Q.C. was addressing the jury, when the judge, interrupting him, said: 'I must request you to change your demeanour.' The counsel stammered out: 'I was not aware, your lordship'— 'Oh, probably it was quite uncon-

scious,' interposed the judge; 'but do be on your guard. It is most troublesome that there should be any dramatic performance going on!'

In private life the love of 'effect' is generally pernicious. Everybody remembers that the immortal Pecksniff always contrived to inform his daughters of the coming of any visitors, in order that they might be found suitably employed; and everybody remembers, moreover, that those charming girls were greatly surprised and blushed furiously when the visitors arrived. Somewhat analogous to this little piece of dissimulation is a story which is going the rounds of the American press. One of the most popular of American authoresses has five sons, of whom she is exceedingly proud. When a visitor is announced, it is her invariable custom, according to the story, to direct her sons in what position to place themselves, so that the visitor when entering the room may get a brief glimpse of a pleasing family group. This may be due to mere harmless vanity, although the profession of the lady is strongly against such a supposition. At anyrate, the harm in cases of this sort is not great, nor can any objection be taken to

That vivacious versatility,

Which many people take for want of heart.

They err—'tis merely what is called mobility,
A thing of temperament, and not of art,

Though seeming so from its supposed facility;
And false, though true; for surely they're sincerest
Who are strongly acted on by what is nearest.

This makes your actors, artists, and romancers,
Heroes sometimes, though seldom—sages never;
But speakers, bards, diplomatists, and dancers,
Little that's great, but much of what is clever.

In private life especially, the love of 'effect' tends to bring about an artificiality of manner and of life that cannot but be injurious.

REAL PRESENCE.

In the heart of the city that's proud and gay,
A child stood begging one summer day.

The world went by; but it took no heed,
For the world has never a heart to bleed

For the woes of others: it passed along,
And the child was alone in the hurrying throng.

It lingered there in the summer day
Till another beggar came by that way,

Whose soul was sick with the whirl and strife
Of the mystic something which men call Life.

He looked at the child: at its side he stopped,
And into its hand his last penny he dropped;

Then he passed along with a half-breathed sigh,
And said, 'He wanted it more than I.'

And in him as he passed my heart adored
The living presence of Christ the Lord!

J. S. FLETCHER.

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HOLIDAYS FOR POOR CHILDREN.

AN age of discoveries ours may well be called, and possibly in consequence of the eager strained life which is always on the lookout for novelty, a very old truth has come to be so fully recognised as to be almost new. Indeed, the saying of our nursery days, 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,' has become such a living reality, that during the summer months one has only to turn into any large railway station to be convinced of the fact that dwellers in cities at least are full believers in the need and blessedness of a real holiday. The eager faces of the children, the comfortable consciousness on the part of Paterfamilias that business is to give way to pleasure, even the hurry and bustle and incessant 'By your leave,' are so suggestive of preparations for happiness, that we quite understood the sympathetic remark of a porter, not too harassed to smile: 'Looks like holidays, don't it!'

But yet another old truth has, happily for our generation, also come to be more fully understood, and there is perhaps no more cheering sign of the times than the growing sense amongst the well-to-do that no pleasure can be complete unless shared with their poorer brethren. In the matter of holidays, very practical expression of this growth of higher feeling is to be found in the formation of country holiday schemes in many large towns, and most noticeably in the huge brick-and-mortar wilderness of London. Amongst its thousands of dreary streets, the holidays may mean a blessed rest to overworked teachers; but to scholars and their parents they have a meaning the reverse of blessed. 'I wish,' said a friend the other day, 'that all the boys in this neighbourhood could be sent away—anywhere—for the holidays;' a wish that would certainly be echoed by the host of young Philistines let loose into the streets with no better employment than to 'loaf,' tease, quarrel, and shout.

To the weakly and ailing, those too listless to join in the rougher games or plays, the holiday-time is even more sad. Sometimes, certainly,

there is enough to do and to spare, and 'mother' rejoices to get rid of 'baby,' whose teething troubles are to be comforted by the little old woman, who herself needs the petting and soothing that in richer homes would be hers by right of her years and weakness. But even in those rare and happy intervals when there does not happen to be a baby, the lot of the delicate child, not wanted in the one-roomed house, and with no refuge but the hot and noisy streets, is one to make an angel weep. Those of us who are familiar with the poorer parts of London know only too well the listless look of the little sufferer from chronic debility (that is, want of air and food), whose heavy head has no softer pillow than a doorstep, and whose pale pinched face is so utterly suggestive of childhood's roses and roundness.

Those whose lives lie apart from sights of sadness can hardly grasp the poverty, in every sense, of the up-bringing of many thousands of little ones; but it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the barren surroundings which envelop a large majority of the six hundred thousand children attending London elementary schools. It is therefore little wonder that the scheme of sending some of the most needy for a fortnight of real holiday-life in the country has proved an unmistakable success. Starting some fourteen years ago in an East End parish, the work has grown so rapidly that after four years of corporate life the Children's Country Holidays Fund was able to send away during last summer no fewer than *fourteen thousand and forty-eight children*. And if the seeing-off a trainful of ordinary travellers is a pleasant sight, what shall be said of those groups which are becoming quite a feature in booking-clerks' work? Here is one of these groups waiting for the lady who will take the tickets, at the reduced rate given by most of the Companies. Pale-faced mothers and children, happy though, and eager; very careful of the luggage, done up in awkward bundles with too little paper and less string. 'Be sure you're good,' and 'Let us know how you gets on,' are the maternal exhortations, to which the children are too excited to listen. 'Ah! we didn't have

such treats when we was children,' says one mother whose hands tell a tale of hard work to find bread, let alone 'treats,' and whose face has relaxed from its habitual grimness at sight of her little girl's absorbed delight.

'And how old are you?' we ask of an anxious elder sister who is mothering a small brother too young to go with her. 'Thirteen' is the grave reply. Thirteen! Poor little soul, with a face that would be too old for thirty. Never mind! A fortnight in the country will send Annie back a child again, with a store of tales to brighten many a dull day. Next to Annie stands a great boy of eleven, 'cramped' through the Sixth Standard, but so much the worse for the process that without a real holiday his overgrown powers would not stand the work of a 'little place' so eagerly welcomed by his widowed mother. The eldest of the party, just under fourteen, would be small for ten, and has spent much of her life between the out-patients' department of a children's hospital and her mother's laundry, the benefit of one being pretty well neutralised by the other. 'How often have you been in the country?' we ask.—'Me! Why, *never*,' is the surprised reply. 'I ain't never had a chance before; the truth of which is borne out by her intense surprise at the 'real green' of trees 'not in the parks.'

The children's ideas of the country are somewhat curious. One young critic remarked, on getting out at a wayside station: 'I don't call this country. Why, there ain't no swings nor roundabouts!' Another little Londoner being asked what she understood by a sunny bank, replied: 'A place to put pennies in on the 'ot side the road!' Many are struck by the 'big sky' and by the astonishing fact that potatoes and fruit are to be got elsewhere than at 'the shop;' whilst the first sight of a pig has been known to produce a difference of opinion, one boy holding the unfamiliar friend to be a 'little sheep,' and being quickly put to rights by the superior remark: 'No, 'taint 'tis a nanny-goat!'

Still more surprising to some are the home arrangements of the cottages in which they are boarded. One boy was quite overcome by the idea of a separate room to sleep in; and two little girls complained of being 'lonesome' with so much 'room' in the bed! Some of the elder children notice, and are deeply impressed by the tone that pervades the country home. 'They never quarrel here,' writes one girl; whilst 'no rows,' even on Saturday night, is quite a novelty in the experience of not a few young lives.

The cottagers, on their side, learn something from their young guests; the unconscious prattle of the children, for instance, shows that London is not by any means paved with gold, and their stories reveal that the struggle for existence is a thing too fierce to be contemplated with pleasure by the slower country mind. The friendships, too, that spring up on both sides are very real, and tend to lessen the breach between town and country, which is productive of harm to our English life all round. The cottagers chosen to act as hosts are those in good work, and the weekly five shillings paid for each child is found ample to pay expenses, whilst it prevents the question of gain coming too much to the fore. Cottages are invariably under the supervision of some responsible visitor, who sees to the arrival

and departure of each party, pays the cottagers—with money received from the Central—and keeps a general outlook over hosts and guests. Of such visitors there are nearly four hundred, and the devotion of many is beyond words. More than one known to us gives some hours each day to the little Londoners, getting to know each one, and carrying on a subsequent correspondence that keeps cottage 'Father' and 'Mother' in touch with their adopted children.

The country visitors are also in close communication with the army of town-workers, whose care it is to select children, to collect parents' payments, and to see parties safely on their way. The town-workers are expected to visit their country friends during the season, getting to know both visitors and cottagers, and enjoying the sight of the happiness they have helped to create. Their work is heavy, especially in neighbourhoods almost entirely populated by the poor; but in banding together as committees, hands are strengthened, and work made lighter by organised effort.

Children are selected on the grounds of their being ailing, having no friends they can visit, and not being in a position to obtain a holiday unaided. There is the further condition that parents shall do their share towards providing a holiday by making some contribution according to their means. We have often had occasion to draw attention to the lavish and indiscriminate abuse of charitable funds, and perhaps hardly any better indication of the truth as to that much-vexed question of free-hospital relief can be found than in the fact that from the very class who help to swell out-patients' departments no less than £2819, 16s. 11d. was collected last year. The gratitude of the parents is very real, and we cannot help thinking is due in no small degree to the fact that the benefit to their children comes in part from their own exertions. It is also impressed upon parents that their contributions help to send other people's children; and it is pleasant to hear a hard-working father or mother say: 'If it's to help some one else's child I'd like to give a little more.' Indeed, the spirit of love and good-will evoked on all sides is by no means the least pleasant feature in the scheme; and the guards, who without 'tips' look after holiday children as their own, are typical of a general feeling of brotherhood and friendliness.

Uniformity of action among the eight hundred voluntary workers is secured by means of a representative Central Council, who decide all questions of general principle, and take upon themselves the weighty duty of the distribution of funds. It is an invariable rule that all contributions shall be paid into one common fund, money being divided out according to the specific needs of each Committee. In order that this shall be accomplished with fairness, it is necessary to ascertain the exact number of children attending schools within the areas of each Committee, together with the fees paid; and week by week, during the summer months, an Executive Committee meets to distribute funds according to the population of each district and the number of children ready to go.

It will easily be seen that to keep such a large machinery working economically and in order calls for much thoughtful care and business capacity on the part of the office staff. As yet

the work of the Society has been managed with remarkable economy. The balance-sheet shows that the funds for the year amounted to £9430, and that the sum paid for official work was only £198, 13s. 8d., or something like two per cent. of the income. There is no doubt a standing complaint on the part of the public with regard to the cost of *distributing* funds collected for charitable and other purposes, and economy in this department is always commendable. At the same time economy should not be pressed too far. We would venture to suggest, for instance, that this particular Society might expend a reasonable sum in making its existence and objects better known. It is undoubtedly a work that needs only to be known to be supported. It appeals to the sympathies of all, and there are few who would not enjoy their own and their children's holidays the better for knowing that they were helping the less favoured to a fortnight of country bliss.

The applications last season were far in excess of any previous year, in spite of bad weather. Literally, thousands of children were kept waiting in the hope that money might come in before the school holidays were over, and the only unpleasant feature in the work is the disappointed faces which greet the London workers when lack of funds compels refusals. All child-lovers may have the joy of knowing that they are brightening young lives by sending a contribution to the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, at the offices of the fund, 10 Buckingham Street, Strand; and we have only to add, that by the careful methods employed, the Society is able to state that even with the full increase of expenses suggested, every ten shillings will pay for a fortnight's holiday, and fill the heart of one little Londoner with joy of the purest and simplest.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XIV.

It had been the unfulfilled dream of Mr Orme's lifetime—a sort of hope too good to be true, too good even to be practically sought for—to find somebody who would do his work for him and allow him to draw his pay. He was not a man of strong passions, but he hated work and loved rum. Rum was only to be had, along with the other palliatives of existence, by labour, and Mr Orme felt that his lot was pitiable. But before Will had been a week in the printing office, the veteran skulker began to think that the dream of his lifetime might find something like a fulfilment in his old age. Will was so quick and eager to learn, took such a pride in every forward step he made, and found such an actual pleasure in work, that Mr Orme looked forward with complacency to a time when he would have nothing to do but to sit upon his box at the side of the stove and give directions. Will, without altogether accepting Mr Orme's declaration that a selfish man would have done the work himself, was yet grateful for the instruction he received. There was a battered little book on the premises called the *Printer's Grammar*, from which he

learned enough to persuade him that Mr Orme's method of management was in some respects faulty. It would have taken half-a-dozen skilled workmen a week to have put the ramshackle little place in good order; but Will, inspired by the *Printer's Grammar* and a sense of personal pride, worked so hard and learned so rapidly that in a month or two he attacked the fringes of the desert of disorder, and conquered here and there a square foot of chaos. In one of his earliest readings in the *Grammar* he learned that the most hateful thing about a printing office, the one ever-greatening dragon to be relentlessly fought with, was called 'pie.'

'What's pie, Mr Orme?' he asked, as he and his preceptor walked homewards together.

Mr Orme explained that pie was made up of type which had been suffered to fall into disorder; and Will saw at once that the dragon had been allowed to assume formidable proportions. At a moderate computation, a fourth of the office plant lay useless; and Master Will, who was one of those people who can do nothing with satisfaction to themselves unless they do it with their whole hearts, determined early to slay that dragon. It was this resolution on his part which dissipated the half-formed visions of Mr Orme. It was about the middle of July, and the weather was prodigiously hot and oppressive. The aged idler felt even less disposed to work than usual, and even his perch upon the box, though padded with a folded press blanket, was so little luxurious that idleness afforded him no comfort.

'William,' he said, 'you're getting on very nicely, and in time you'll make a very good workman; but it's time you began to think about display-work. Now, I've never let you tackle display-work yet; but here's a bit of a circular that the governor's rather particular about. Let me see you have a try at it, and I'll help you with a bit of advice when you want it.' This was spoken with great friendliness, and with an almost deceptive air of conferring a favour upon William.

But to Mr Orme's astonishment and grief the boy declined to accept the kindness. 'I'm going to kill this dragon, Mr Orme,' said Will; 'I'm going to get this pie under. I can never do it if I do your work for you.'

This black ingratitude so struck Mr Orme that he was silent for a quarter of an hour, and rising with moans of resignation, he shuffled listlessly about the place, carrying his box with him, and seating himself at intervals whilst he picked languidly amongst the fancy types.

This was his second disappointment; for, a month or two before it, Will, whose supply of money had been exhausted in the purchase of a cheap suit of working clothes, had been unable to find the necessary ninepence for his medicine, and the poor sufferer had been compelled to rally by his own unaided natural forces. He had felt that first failure to be bitter at the moment, but

he knew now that it was not to be compared to the later affliction. William stuck resolutely to his pie, and was only to be drawn from it by legitimate claims. Mr Orme's dream was shattered, and he went back to the dull realities of life with something like a resigned heartbreak. Before six months were over, the boy was his master, and ordered him to his work relentlessly. The melancholy Varley never knew how it was that the work of the office came to be turned out so much more expeditiously than of old.

As he worked, Master Will sang and whistled with a shrill disregard of melancholy, and felt his heart as light as a bird's. His experiment was succeeding in a wonderful way, and John was changing for the better daily. It was curious, and not a little touching, to see the two lads together. Will had the gravest fatherly air, the queerest little tender bulldog ways of watchfulness and devotion. The two took long rambles together on Saturday afternoons in the beautiful Warwickshire country, and John always carried a scrap of paper or two and a pencil with him, and made strange wooden-legged sketches of the cattle in the fields, and funny lopsided drawings of old farmhouses. These M. Achille Jousserau was in the habit of correcting for him, and he did his corrections with so much skill and spirit, that after a dozen strokes from the master's hand, the drawings looked altogether beautiful and perfect to the pupil's eyes.

M. Jousserau and his friend and compatriot M. Vigne were both of the town of Arles, and each said of the other, 'Il est mon pays.' They nourished for each other that curiously strong friendship which exists between exiled Frenchmen of the same province, and makes them hoard together even in their common capital. The good phrase does not say, 'He is of my country,' 'He belongs to my country;' it is ever so much stronger and more tender: 'He is my country.' He brings its flavour with him; he means home, childhood, everything that knits a man to the memories of his native place.

M. Vigne was a solid, plodding, trustworthy draughtsman in an artistic glass manufactory, and Achille was an artist in the same employment. He was a trustworthy workman also; but there was a difference between them. The younger man had inventiveness, a passion for his work, and an ambition outside it and beyond it. The elder drew with a laborious painstaking and accuracy, but invented nothing, and had no ambitions, and the younger earned already five times his salary. But when they had met three or four years before, the heart of each had warmed to the old home accent. 'Tiens, tu es un pays, toi!' they sang out together; and in ten minutes, with flashing gestures and exuberant enthusiasm of speech, had recounted half their family histories. So Achille went to live with M. Vigne, and helped out the meagre resources of his establishment more than a little.

Achille took John in hand quite seriously, and gave him lessons in drawing, by which he profited so much that in a while the wood got out of the legs of his cattle and into his pictured tree trunks, which was perhaps the best place for it. This kindness of the young artist was very naturally and easily rewarded, for he began to pick up English as fast as a pigeon picks up peas, and even acquired a little of John's Barfield accent, at which Madame, whose ear was sufficiently habituated to detect it, would clap her hands and laugh with great merriment.

The good-hearted French folk lost nothing by befriending the two young wayfarers, for the boys earned enough to pay for their simple and unluxurious keep. John's pricking out of patterns saved M. Vigne many a weary and unprofitable hour, and enabled him to put his spare time to more paying uses, so that the family benefited rather more by the efforts of the weaker than of the stronger youngster.

'You don't have any of your headaches now, do you, Jack?' Will asked him one day. It was a Saturday half-holiday, and they were in the fields together, midway towards Stratford. It was a lovely afternoon, and made the brighter for both of them by John's unusual contentment. Achille had laid out a shilling for him in the purchase of a real sketch-book, and the two had tramped thus far in search of something worthy to be transferred to its first page. If he had had but his ordinary scraps of paper, John would have been firing his trial shots left and right; but he felt bound to find something unusual and charming for the beginning of the book. He looked round brightly at his companion's query, and answered with a shake of the head.

'I'll tell you what, though, Will,' he said, sliding an arm through one of his friend's, with a certain nestling way of seeking protection into which he had fallen, 'if anything bothers me to remember, I get that nasty swimming back again, just as if I had a wheel in my head—an enormous wheel. You wouldn't believe how big it is, Will. It's as big as a cart-wheel; and it begins quite slowly, and gets faster and gets bigger, till at last I don't know anything and can't think of anything. But when I get like that, Madame always makes me lie down, and I go to sleep almost directly. I should have headaches, though, and jolly bad ones too, Will, if old Macfarlane was here.'

'I guess you would,' his companion answered; 'but old Macfarlane ain't here.'

They walked on in silence for a little time.

'I say, Will,' said John, 'I should have been bad if it hadn't been for you. I used to be afraid that I was going silly; and if I'd stopped at old Macfarlane's, I believe I should have gone.'

'It wouldn't have been his fault if you hadn't,' Will answered, 'nor old Snelling's either. When I'm grown up, I mean to go back and take it out of old Macfarlane.'

This idea held firmly in Master Will's heathen mind, and indeed he never actually overgrew it until, in after-years, he discovered how very big he himself had grown, and how very small and gray Macfarlane was. But the story of that interview deserves to be told in its proper place.

'It's my belief,' Will added, 'that old Snelling

didn't want you to get better. I think he wanted to make you worse.

'What nonsense!' answered John. 'Why should he?'

'Ah!' said the young bulldog jeeringly, 'why should he? Why, father used to say—many a time I've heard him say it—how rich Bob Snelling would be if you never got any better and couldn't use your own money.—Do you think my father's as rich as yours was, Jack?'

'I don't know,' John answered. 'But if Uncle Robert really felt like that, he must be an awful horrid beast. I don't believe it, Will; I don't believe it.'

'I do,' said Will doggedly.

It was perhaps only the brutal, unquestioning frankness of a boy's mind that could very well have lighted anybody to this suspicion. A more elderly critic would have felt the terrible responsibility of the judgment; the cold and cruel enormity of the crime would have staggered the adult inquirer, and he would have sought and found a reason for Snelling's conduct in the crowded pages of the chapter of human stupidity. Yet the boy's horrible guess was true, and the elder observer's gentler judgment would have been mistaken.

'You must think your uncle Bob jolly thick-headed,' said Master Will, 'if you fancy he didn't know what he was doing. Any fool could see he was driving you silly. Of course he was, and old Macfarlane was helping him. I knew you'd get better when you got away from 'em, and how should I know, if they didn't?'

This conversation cast a gloom over John's spirits for a half-hour or so; but it rolled away of itself, and he settled down to his field-work with ardour, and took home a feebly pretty little sketch, which Achilles touched into strength for him in places, and guided him into strengthening with his own hand in others.

'You will make an artiste, you,' said M. Jousserau, flashing his white teeth at his pupil, and beaming at him with his black southern eyes as he laid both hands upon his shoulders and gave him a shake expressive of friendliness and approval. 'You have not the hand. That is absurd—who could ask it? Not yet. That comes with work, work, work. Peep, peep, peep at everything, always, always, and is never done with. I am beginner. I shall be student when I am old, old man, gray, stooped all over'—He could not find the word he wanted, but ran his rapid fingers about his face to indicate wrinkles, and dropped into so comic an imitation of decrepitude that John answered his mimicry with a peal of laughter.

Though that was the first occasion on which Will insisted on Snelling's villainy in his companion's hearing, it was by no means the last, and every member of the little household was aware of his convictions and in a lesser or stronger degree shared them. It is quite likely that they might not have accepted his sole testimony, but they had Isaiah's to back it. When once Will had found himself fairly settled down under Mr Orme's tutelage, he had written to Isaiah, who had answered the letter in person on the following Sunday. Isaiah had a natural and excusable belief that French people—who represented all the foreign races of the world to him—were savage and heathen; and he was vastly surprised to

discover that on the whole they were really very much like English men and women in their ways of living and feeling. He and the stately M. Vigne were a great spectacle together. Monsieur handed him a chair with a bow on his first arrival; and not to be outdone in politeness, Isaiah bowed back again; and this exchange of civilities, which was the only one possible between them, since Monsieur knew no more of English than Isaiah did of French, was repeated with a comic frequency. Madame began to talk of it when the visitor had gone; and Will and John went through a grave mimicry of the scene, bowing to each other like a solemn pair of toy mandarins, until the good woman fell into one of her helpless fits of laughter.

After this, a month rarely went by without a Sunday visit from Isaiah, who learned to drink their southern wine without overmuch creasing his features, and to smoke the cigarettes rolled for him by one or other of his hosts. It got to be quite a common bit of comedy pantomime, when they were alone with Madame, for one of the boys silently to roll an imaginary cigarette, and then rising, proffer it with a profound bow to the other, who would rise and bow in turn. It was a simple form of amusement, but it never failed to elicit a laugh from that jolly, fat-sided Madame Vigne, who was, as we have seen already, of a nature readily moved to mirth.

Isaiah gave such an account of John's possessions that the good people became half-terrified at the responsibilities they had assumed; but John's improvement was so evident, so smooth and constant, they put their fears on one side, though they all had some dim dread of English law, and were hardly certain that they were not laying themselves open to some terrible, vague punishment.

Mr Orme was, of course, pretty frequently present at the time of Isaiah's visits; but since the latter had given it as his opinion that Snelling would give a hundred pounds to have John back again, and would certainly repeat his old methods with him, it was felt wise to keep the aged idler from details which might lead him into temptation. Madame could have no creature about her for whom she would not grow to have some kind of affection; but Mr Orme was looked upon with a sad indulgence, and was not particularly trusted. Perhaps it was natural in Mr Orme to resent this a little. Perhaps the dull mill-round of his own life was not sufficiently interesting to occupy his thoughts. Anyway, observing that conversations were broken off upon his entrance, and that there was an air of mystery preserved with respect to Isaiah's abiding-place, he began to be curious and to prow about suspiciously in his own sloth-like way with intent to smell out the secret. He was good enough, on one occasion, to accompany Isaiah to the railway station; but that worthy had had Madame's advice beforehand, and paused so often on the way to shake hands with him in friendly adieu, that the old boy was compelled to take leave at last without even learning the direction taken by Isaiah's train.

He knew very well that the boys had run away from their homes, and their speech and manners were a sufficient guarantee that they had been decently bred. Will had unguardedly said something to the effect that John would be rich some

day; and though it is probable enough that Mr Orme would have attached no importance to this if the boy had persisted in the story, he did attach considerable importance to it when Will went suddenly silent, and steadfastly refused to be lured into a revival of the conversation. In fact, the whole household was on its guard against Mr Orme; and he, casting about in his own mind for a reason for this caution in respect to himself, arrived at a natural conclusion. The idea evidently was that if he were let into whatever secret happened to be going, he would betray it. Now, that in its turn implied that it was worth betraying, and this in its turn meant that somebody, somewhere, would pay him for betrayal. As he followed this line of thought, it became abundantly clear to Mr Orme's intelligence that he was being shamefully defrauded of the chance to turn an honest penny. He thought of his own hard and thankless lot, the scarcity of rum, or rather of its plenitude and his own inability to get at it—which is likely to have been the more harrowing form—the dearness of tobacco, and the miserable and degrading exigencies of labour. With such spurs as these to gall his curiosity, he became very curious indeed, and began to develop quite a new phase of character, mitching hither and thither in sloth-like dexterity to surprise conversations not intended for his ears, and industriously sleeping for hours together on the occasion of Isaiah's visits, in the hope of lulling suspicion as profound as that which he himself feigned. Unhappily for his purpose, he was a poor pretender, and not having had the advantage of self-examination in this particular, he could not be supposed to know that in his really somnolent hours he had a snore which seemed to communicate a faint vibration to the very door-knocker. His ruses, in short, were altogether too obvious and artificial, and did nothing but deepen the suspicion with which he had been regarded from the first.

But, as often happens, apparent chance did for him what no ruse on his own part could effect, and one day, rambling past the town police station and pausing to strike a lucifer match, he cast an idle and careless eye upon the proclamations posted at the door, and in the very act of moving forward again, stood, arrested at the names of 'John Vale and William Gregg aforesaid,' followed by a statement that the above reward would be paid on the discovery of the boys on application to Robert Snelling, Corn-Factor, of Castle-Barfield, or William Gregg of Hargate Hollow, Beacon-Hargate. Beacon-Hargate was a mere hamlet, and Mr Orme knew nothing of it; but Castle-Barfield was a considerable town, and was but a little over an hour's journey by rail. It was Saturday and a half-holiday, and he had money in his pocket, his week's wages, newly drawn, and as yet diluted only by a single four-pennyworth. He tried to make out the amount of 'the above reward;' but the handbill was evidently old, and had been pasted over and over by other announcements. It would in all probability long since have been hidden altogether but for the fact that it had been fixed to a lower corner of the board.

Mr Orme fairly trembled with excitement at this fulfilment of his suspicions. What might the reward amount to? Ten pounds? Twenty

pounds? Fifty? A hundred? He flushed and shook to think that he could make a bargain of it, and bestirring himself to an unusual activity, he made straight for the railway station.

(To be continued.)

IN KENSINGTON.

IN 1820 appeared Faulkner's *History of Kensington*; and now, nearly seventy years later, we have a new history of the same interesting district of the great metropolis, from the pen of Mr W. J. Loftie, entitled, *Kensington, Picturesque and Historical* (London: Field & Tuer). Mr Loftie is already well known as the historian of London, his two volumes thereon embracing a record of the great city's growth from pre-Roman times to the present day. In the volume immediately before us, Mr Loftie works out a more limited subject, but the limitation is compensated for by the greater room for details. And the book, besides being extremely interesting in itself, is so beautifully printed and illustrated as to make its possession a delight to every lover of books.

Although Kensington now forms an integral part of London, it is not so very long since it was really a detached suburban village, the road between which and the city was infested by foot-pads and robbers, rendering it dangerous to wayfarers after dark. Kensington is closely associated with many great names, and contains many buildings of historic interest. The Palace is, of course, the most conspicuous of these edifices. It was here in 1819 that the Queen was born, and here, after her accession to the crown, that she held her first Council. The Palace was not originally a royal residence, it having been built by the first Earl of Nottingham, from whose son it was bought by William III. Since its acquisition by royalty it has been largely added to. It is a massive building in red and brown brick, with few architectural pretensions, and almost devoid of ornament. It was here that Mary, the queen and consort of William III., died of smallpox in 1694, and here also that William himself died eight years later. George II., the last king who made Kensington his residence, died in the Palace in 1760.

As already mentioned, it was in Kensington Palace that Queen Victoria was born, and on the north wall of the room in which she first saw the light is a brass plate bearing an inscription to that effect. 'Adjoining this chamber,' says Mr Loftie, 'is a handsome drawing-room, and behind it the room is situated in which the Queen held her first Council. It is a gloomy chamber, looking into a narrow courtyard, the roof supported by pillars. . . . The cheerful drawing-room beyond must have been the place where Lord Melbourne and the Archbishop announced her accession to the young Queen, in the early morning of 20th June 1837. It was, so far as I can make out, in this same chamber that the future Queen was christened on the 24th of June 1819. The golden font was brought from the Tower, and crimson-velvet coverings were brought from the Chapel Royal at St James's. The sponsors were the Prince Regent, who in the

following year became George IV. ; the Emperor Alexander of Russia, represented by the Duke of York ; the Queen Dowager of Würtemberg, represented by the Princess Augusta ; and the Duchess-Dowager of Coburg, represented by the Duchess of Gloucester. The Prince Regent named the infant Alexandrina only, it is said ; but her mother's name of Victoria was fortunately added in time.' The Duchess of Kent and her royal daughter continued to reside in the Palace after the death of the Duke ; and the young Princess was often seen in Kensington Gardens, sometimes taking her airings in a little phaeton drawn by two minute ponies.

Another interesting building is Old Campden House, built apparently about the beginning of the seventeenth century. After passing through various hands, it was tenanted for a time by the Princess, afterwards Queen Anne, and her little son the Duke of Gloucester, the only survivor of her numerous children. He was delicate from birth, and Kensington was selected for him as being a healthy place of residence and near town. When about four or five years of age he became very inquisitive, especially as regards anything relating to soldiers ; and he got a corps of twenty-two boys of Kensington to come to Campden House accoutred with paper caps and wooden swords. 'Their appearance,' wrote his old servant, 'transported the little Duke, so that he made them come up from the court to his presence-room, and appointed one of them, a pretty boy, to be lieutenant, who proved to be Sir Thomas Lawrence's son.' By-and-by the boys formed two companies, amounting to ninety, armed with wooden swords and muskets, and wearing red grenadiers' caps. One day they were ordered to the garden by beat of drum, in order that the King and Queen (William and Mary) might see them exercise. 'The King ordered twenty guineas for the boys ; and took particular notice of one, six years old, by name William Gardner, remarkable for beating the drum, almost equal to the ablest drummer. To him the King gave two pieces of gold.' The little boy-Duke said to His Majesty : 'My dear King, you shall have both my companies with you to Flanders.' The gallant little Duke died at Windsor, at the early age of eleven.

To visitors with literary and artistic tastes, perhaps the chief centre of attraction in Kensington will be Holland House. This, not so very long ago, was the great gathering-place of men and women distinguished in arts and letters, and readers of the political and literary biographies of the first half of the present century find constantly recurring references to Holland House, its occupants and visitors, its banquets and assemblies. Perhaps, however, says Mr Loftie, 'the brief connection of Addison with Holland House is more memorable than all the long succession of Hollands and Warwicks.' In 1716 Addison married Charlotte, widow of the sixth Earl of Holland ; but he did not live quite three years thereafter. The marriage, by some accounts, was not a happy one. 'He died in what is now the dining-room, on the first floor, looking northwards over the gardens and the park. Perhaps he had chosen this room for its nearness to the principal library, where his writing-table is preserved.'

During the last century, the most illustrious name in connection with Holland House is that of Charles James Fox, who spent his early years in it. But it was while the house was in possession of the third Lord Holland that it rose to its distinguished position as the gathering-place of the best intellects of the day. Faulkner, in his history, very fully described the house as it was in 1820, 'the time when the greatest number of wits and celebrities of all kinds were entertained by Lady Holland.' Among these were Lord Macaulay, Sydney Smith, Sheridan, Lord Byron, Moore, Thurlow, Brougham, Curran, Washington Irving, Humboldt, Talleyrand, Madame de Staël, Sir Walter Scott, and many other persons of distinction. Lady Holland was famed for her hospitality, so much so, that Sydney Smith, when laid up in Holland House, said it was a place fitted with every convenience for sickness and death. The architecture of the house, Mr Loftie observes, is of a very mixed character. 'There are gates by Inigo Jones, and the later decorations are very classical in style ; but the trace of old Gothic feeling is apparent everywhere. The gardens are very fine ; with alcoves, statues, and busts, memorials of various kinds, and shady walks and avenues.'

Next to Holland House, perhaps, is the humbler residence in Young Street (then No. 13, now No. 16) where Thackeray dwelt so long and wrote some of the best of his works. The novelist himself had a humorous reverence for it. Mr Field says : 'I once made a pilgrimage with Thackeray (at my request, of course, the visits were planned) to the various houses where his books had been written, and I remember when we came to Young Street, Kensington, he said with mock-gravity : "Down on your knees, you rogue, for here *Vanity Fair* was penned ; and I will go down with you, for I have a high opinion of that little production myself."

We have only slightly touched upon a few of the outstanding reminiscences embodied in this handsome volume—a volume which is creditable in every way both to the author and the publishers.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VI.—REPARATION.

THE Overton Park carriage was at the gate of Cedar Cottage, and the footman was at the door respectfully awaiting the commands of Mrs Silverton. The carriage had been sent from the Park by Mrs Dacon to bring her mother and cousin to the grand juvenile fête which was to celebrate the fifth birthday of Mr and Mrs Dacon's only child, little Hetty. The widow liked to have the Overton carriage with its two fine bays standing in front of her house, and to have the footman in his quiet yet conspicuous livery standing at her door ; and whenever she was sent for, contrived to keep the equipage waiting some time. On this occasion there was an extra delay, which was not Mrs Silverton's fault, but Daisy's.

When ready to start, the postman had delivered a letter from Gilbert. It informed her that he had arrived in Liverpool, and was just starting

for London, of course travelling under the name by which he was now known. He intended to make his way at once to the Cottage, and begged her, if she should be going out, to leave a message appointing an early hour for a meeting. Certain information had reached him which explained Dacon's strange illness, and he was most anxious to talk to her about it.

Daisy had not concealed from Aunt Silverton the correspondence with Gilbert; but as any communication between Cedar Cottage and 'that young man' was entirely disapproved of, she did not tell her much. Consequently, she was at a loss how to act in the present juncture, being excited by the unexpected intimation of Gilbert's speedy arrival. His sudden return plainly indicated that some calamity was about to befall the master of Overton Park. She determined to say nothing to her aunt until she had seen Gilbert, and simply left a note with the housemaid for 'Mr Harrison' telling him where a message would find her.

'I never knew you take so long to dress before, Daisy,' exclaimed Mrs Silverton as she lay back in the carriage with a delightful sense of her own grandeur and importance; 'and yet it is only a children's party.'

The fête was to be a very grand one. Dacon had attended to every detail himself, determined to produce for his child a scene of fairy wonders which should transcend all the pictures in the *Arabian Nights*. The autumn tints of the foliage on the Park trees were to lend their aid to the effects produced by the thousands of Chinese lanterns which were cunningly hung throughout the grounds; and a grand display of fireworks was to close the amusements of the young people after they were tired of dancing and feasting, and the home-bearing carriages were arriving.

Five-year-old Hetty was at the top of the lawn, receiving her numerous tiny guests and their grown-up guardians with as much composure as if she had been a queen accustomed to levees. Her father had made so much a companion of her that she was old-fashioned and self-possessed without being rude or obtrusive—a rare combination in a child. The only impatience she displayed was when she turned to her mother with the repeated question: 'But where is papa? He promised to be here early, and he always comes at the time he says he will.'

'He is late,' said Mrs Dacon, standing behind her daughter and looking anxiously down the avenue. 'But, my dear, he cannot always leave the office at a fixed hour, and he is very busy just now.'

Then the fun commenced; and the bands of merry youngsters were conducted through the shrubbery to the tennis-ground, which had been transformed into a miniature fair. There were swings and merry-go-rounds, a Punch and Judy show, a marionnette show, a conjurer's and a fortune-teller's tents, and a fancy fair of toys of every description, to be distributed according to the number taken from a wheel-of-fortune at the entrance for every passer to dip into and draw out a ticket. Besides all this, there was a brass band playing with brassy loudness all sorts of merry tunes to make hearts glad and feet patter chirpily on the smooth grass.

And so, when the fun was at its height, papa

came home looking very weary and haggard. He did not go out into the midst of the merry throng, but went straight up to his bedroom and sent for his wife. 'Don't make any fuss, dear,' he said when she came; 'but I am too ill for anything except going to bed. I want to get a sleep. Maybe I will waken up refreshed enough to join the party. Go on with our arrangements as if there was nothing the matter. Promise me that.'

'Of course, Henry; but you look so ill that I must send for the doctor.'

'Nonsense, my dear; I shall be all right after a nap.'

'Papa, papa!' cried little Hetty, who had somehow discovered his arrival and rushed into the room, her bright amber hair touched by the rays of the setting sun and looking like gold. 'I am so glad you are here. Do come and see how the beautiful dollies are moving about just like real people.'

He took her up in his arms and kissed her—he seemed to gasp as he held her to his breast. 'Yes, darling, I will see the dollies by-and-by.'

The child kissed him, wondering that he should refuse to join her immediately in the play as she had requested. He had never done so before.

'You won't be long, papa,' she said, moving hesitatingly away; 'the dollies are so beautiful and look so real!'

'No, not long, pet. But you must go now—I am so tired.' He kissed her again and again, seeming to gasp for breath as he did so. The child, with a pretty toss of the head and a merry laugh, skipped away to mingle with her blithe companions in the pleasures so lavishly provided for them.

'I want to have a sleep, Hetty,' he said very tenderly to his wife; 'you know I have not had any for many nights; but I feel drowsy now. So, as the doctors say I must sleep if there is to be any chance of recovery, you will not on any account try to waken me if you should find me in a doze.—There now, go, and do what you can to make the little folk happy, and let me rest.'

The wife very reluctantly left him to return to her duties as hostess; but she found it difficult to smile, although the merry shouts of laughter filled the atmosphere with a sense of unclouded joy.

The twilight was fading into darkness when the fireworks were started, and three huge rockets ending in variegated sprays of blue and red inaugurated the programme. Before the first stick fell, a footman found Daisy, and informed her that Mr Harrison desired to see her.

She immediately followed the man in the direction of the house, but had only gone about a score of paces when she saw a gentleman advancing towards her. She felt her hand grasped with a fervour which sent a thrill of pleasure through her veins and brought the hot blood into her cheeks. That was Gilbert's grasp; but the sensation it produced was somehow different from what it used to be. In bygone times she trembled with the delight of touching his hand, because she believed it could never be her own. Now it seemed as if by some occult influence he had conveyed to her mind the impression that the hand was her own and brought with it a true and undivided affection.

'You are not sorry to see me here again?' he said.

'I am very glad. It is what I have always wished; but your last letter frightened me.'

'Let us cross the lawn to the beeches. We can talk there without interruption.—Will you take my arm?'

The acquiescing action was his answer; and they passed quietly into the shadow of the trees, where the glaring lights of the fireworks, now in full progress, could not discover them to the guests, even if the guests had not been too much preoccupied by the brilliant display to think of peering into shady nooks.

'I do not know how to prepare you for what I have to say,' Gilbert began, while he tried to see her face in the shadow. 'I had a letter from Dacon, which, read beside your last, telling me of his strange illness and of'—there was the briefest hesitation before he pronounced the name—'and of Mrs Dacon's anxiety, determined me to get back to London as quickly as steamers and trains could carry me.'

Daisy observed with satisfaction that he spoke of 'Mrs Dacon,' not Hetty, as it used to be; and of course it was right that he should do so. But she pretended not to observe the change.

'What did he tell you that could alter your resolution so suddenly? Hetty is only unhappy on his account, and is in no need of your help.'

'It was as much my thought of you that brought me back as my concern for Dacon'—

'For him!' she interrupted. 'Then it was not for Hetty?'

'Oh yes, for her too, and I fear what may happen to her. Dacon's letter told me that he was absolutely ruined.'

'He ruined!' she exclaimed, utterly unable to grasp the possibility of such a thing.

'Yes; the bankruptcy of the great house of Ellicott & Co. will be announced in a few days.'

'I do not understand. How can he have lost such an enormous fortune?'

'That is easily done by a man who confesses himself to have been a mad gambler from the moment when he first had the power to juggle with stocks and shares, and with such desperate ventures as no one in his senses who had anything to lose would touch. He says he was insane, and now realises it when too late to retrieve himself. I have his permission to tell you everything, or I would not tell even you, Daisy, that it was this mad passion that led him to perpetrate the frauds, from the consequences of which he was first screened by my flight, and then saved by the sudden death of his uncle, which gave him the means to take up all the forged bills. But even that terrible lesson did not cure him. As soon as his hands were free, with the whole capital of the firm under his control, he lost every glimmer of reason and business knowledge he ever possessed, and now he says nothing can save him.'

'And Hetty—poor Hetty—what is to become of her?'

'She will not be poor so far as money is concerned. He tells me that the one consolation he finds in the midst of the wreck he has made is the assurance that, no matter what happens to him, his wife and daughter are provided for. The marriage settlements were made when he was

perfectly solvent, and they give to her Overton Park with a sufficient income for its maintenance. The creditors cannot touch the settlements.'

'But you, Gilbert—how will this affect you?' was her next eager inquiry. 'Will you be safe? Will you be cleared of all blame?'

'I do not know. However, it seems that he has told everything to Mr Ardwick, who has promised to protect me from any charge in connection with the forgeries, and I will see him to-morrow. Dacon's chief object in telling me this was to persuade me to yield to his prayer that the knowledge of his crime might be kept from his wife and daughter, if possible. I mean to try to keep them in ignorance of it, and I want you to help me.'

'I will do whatever you think should be done.'

'Ah, then— Daisy!—you will come back with me to Rio.'

She had no desire to resist the pressure of his hand as he drew her close to him and kissed her. She had no time to wonder then how it came to be that she was not more surprised at finding herself lifted in a moment from the ranks of the 'unattached' to the blissful heights of the Betrothed; she had no time then to wonder how it all came to be settled in such a simple way and everything understood between them with so few words—no time, for they were startled by the furious clatter of a horse's hoofs passing at full gallop down the avenue, from which they were screened by the beeches and shrubbery.

The band was playing one of Strauss's gayest melodies, and the children were shouting in wild glee at every new marvel of the firework display, and yet Daisy and Gilbert heard that horse's hoofs as distinctly as if there had been perfect stillness around them, and every stamp was like a loud bugle-note of alarm in their ears.

'There is something wrong at the house!' cried Daisy with instinctive dread. 'That man is going for the doctor. Come, Gilbert; we must help her.'

He knew that she meant her cousin, and they were speedily convinced that she stood in sore need of help.

The anxious wife had at intervals stolen away from her guests to see how her husband fared. He seemed to be sleeping so soundly that she feared every fresh outburst of merriment, lest it should awaken him. By-and-by she was rendered uneasy by his stillness, for he did not seem to breathe. She touched him, and he did not stir. 'Henry!' she whispered tenderly in his ear; but he made no response. Then, becoming alarmed, she raised his arm, released it, and it fell lifeless by his side. She uttered a shriek of horror and anguish as she fell upon the bed beside the man she loved and believed to be so noble. The cry attracted a servant, who at once brought Mrs Silverton. That lady's dismay did not prevent her from promptly taking the practical measures necessary under the circumstances. She sent for the doctor, and had her insensible daughter removed to another room, where Daisy presently came to assist in waiting upon her.

On the arrival of the doctor, he said he could be of no service to Mr Dacon, who had been dead for two hours at least: the cause of death was prussic acid. So Henry Dacon was con-

sistent to the last, and sought escape from the consequences of his follies at any cost save that of manfully enduring them.

In Dacon's private desk was found a packet addressed to Gilbert Astbury, containing two documents. The first was a plain acknowledgment of his guilt, and a full explanation of how the frauds for which Gilbert had been blamed were perpetrated. As a partner in the firm, Dacon had the right of endorsing bills, and he had forged the names of the correspondents who were supposed to have drawn them. In the ordinary course of business, Gilbert had got the bills discounted and received the money, which he handed to Dacon. Then it stated why Gilbert had agreed to screen him at the sacrifice of his own good name. 'But his sacrifice has been a torture to me,' the confession of the miserable man went on. 'I did hope to retrieve everything by my daring speculations and to restore Astbury to his right position. I failed. Great as was the fortune left to me, I have lost it all.'

The second paper was a letter to Gilbert, in which the writer stated that he had now made the only reparation in his power, and left him free to make any use of it that might best satisfy him. He only expressed the wish of a dying man that some way might be found to keep his wife and child in ignorance of the past.

Gilbert showed the papers to Daisy; and before he told her what he intended to do, she said in her calm, wise way: 'We will put these things out of sight, and say nothing about them, Gilbert. You are safe, and that is enough for me. Hetty is well off, thanks to the marriage settlements, and that should satisfy'—she was going to say 'you,' but arrested herself and said—'us all.—But do you think you can forgive me for being wicked and spiteful about something?'

'I don't know,' he answered, smiling as he looked into those clear blue eyes.—'What are you spiteful about?'

'I cannot help wishing Hetty to know that all the time whilst she was abusing you for blaming Dacon, you were tearing up and burning the proofs of his guilt and your innocence.'

'Yes, Daisy, that was a hard time for me. But whilst doing it and suffering her scorn, I was preparing the way for winning you—my own better self.'

There could not have been a more satisfactory answer than that. They were not, however, compelled to return to Rio—although they did so for a time—or to retain the pseudonym of Harrison. Dacon's attempt at reparation had been as complete as could be; and the information he had given to Mr Ardwick enabled that gentleman in the course of the winding up of Ellicott & Co.'s affairs to satisfy every one that Astbury had not perpetrated the frauds which had been placed to his account. Mrs Dacon and her child still remain in the blissful faith that Henry Dacon was a paragon of manhood; and Hetty is sure that Gilbert is innocent because 'Henry had always said so.' Mrs Silvertown carefully concealed the indignation she felt in regard to her deceased son-in-law for so recklessly squander-

ing her daughter's great fortune, as she considered it. She always took a lenient view of the sins of the rich; and success so completely restored Gilbert to her good graces, that even without the public announcement of his innocence, she would have been pleased to distinguish him as 'her dear friend and relative.'

A FEW WORDS REGARDING SOMNAMBULISM.

THE variety of states into which the human mind can throw itself, or can be thrown, is truly wonderful. In memory, imagination, and thought, there are conditions and workings which we are unable scientifically to explain. When, therefore, an endeavour is made to reach such a knowledge, facts are all-important, and the conclusions drawn from such facts must be in strict harmony with truth. A science at any time is a very difficult thing to bring to perfection; but, of all the sciences, the one treating of the human mind is the most difficult. In the other sciences, the subjects about which they treat can be seen, felt, and handled; but there is no handling of the fleshy brain, and the convolutions can only be studied when the person is silent in death. Every part of the study, with rare exceptions, has to be carried on in a second-rate way by means of memory and reflection. Strange irony of words; for is it not 'reflection' and 'memory' themselves we seek to know? and yet we can only know them by themselves.

Many things have been written and said regarding the waking operations of man's mind, but the silent workings of the same are and have been very often omitted. The silent workings are such as apply only to the mind when asleep. Thus, dreaming, raving, and the like, come under this class. The phenomenon we shall try to explain and illustrate in this paper is that called somnambulism. What is somnambulism? It really means an acted dream. While the mind is dreaming, the body is in general quiescent. All voluntary action is suspended, except now and then there may be a movement of the head, legs, or arms; but this is all done unconsciously, so that we are almost correct in saying all voluntary action is suspended. But in somnambulism the case is different; there is movement, and often a movement, too, of such a kind that the man if awake would never attempt.

Indeed, the judgment seems to be entirely gone in the case of the somnambulist. Dangers are encountered and feats of strength accomplished that would appear miraculous to the person who did them if awake. Take, for instance, the case of the gentleman and his nightcap. Every morning this gentleman's nightcap went amissing. No clue could be got as to its whereabouts or how it had been disposed of. At length he was suspected of being a somnambulist. He was watched. During the middle of the night he rose from bed, proceeded to the top flat of the house, opened a window in the roof, climbed from there to the rigging of the house, along which he proceeded with the greatest agility, pulled off his nightcap, and carefully placed it in the chimney-pot! This he had been doing for nights in succession, for in the chimney dozens of the caps

were found. Yet, when that man thought of his perilous walk, he shuddered at the very idea of walking along such a narrow foothold.

Cases, also, are on record in which the mind while in a state of somnambulism has shown itself more acute and active than when awake. The Edinburgh lawyer's case may be cited. This lawyer had for days tried to find out a method he could adopt for clearing a client's reputation. The case presented peculiar difficulties, which, indeed, were so difficult that the night preceding the trial found the lawyer still fighting for a solution to the problem. At length he gave up in despair, and went to bed. During the night, his wife saw him rise from bed and proceed to the table. He searched for pen, ink, and paper, and when he found these, he sat down and wrote hurriedly. At length he stopped writing, placed the paper carefully away, and returned to bed. Next morning he was up betimes to get 'a solution,' as he told his wife. But she had good news for him. She bade him search his desk. There he found a paper written out evidently a short time ago by his own hand; but when he did it was quite a mystery to him. He read the paper, and found that it gave him the very key he had been trying to get for his case. He expressed astonishment at the affair, and was sitting down to attempt by aid of memory to know what it all meant. His wonder can be better imagined than described when he was informed by his wife that he had written it but a few hours before, while in a state of somnambulism.

In somnambulism it is often asserted that there is an entire cessation of *will*-power. Facts, however, are forthcoming which tend to show that this is not always true. A German writer narrates the following: 'In Halle there lived a postman, whose duty it was to deliver letters at a small village three or four miles from the town of Halle. The road to the village led across a moor. Whenever the carrier had emerged from the town into the country, he fell fast asleep on his feet. While asleep, he continued his walking until he arrived at a small stream which ran close beside the village. Here the man stopped almost involuntarily and awoke. This method of crossing the moor he continued for twelve years; yet there was never an occasion when he in his sleep mistook the road, or even stepped into the water, which he always crossed by means of a small foot-bridge!' There was more than habit needed to keep to the right path and to awake when he arrived at the stream. But the peculiar point is that the man was able to get into the state, while he was quite conscious of what was about to follow.

From so many divergent cases it is very difficult to draw any inference on which we can depend for strict accuracy. But be this as it may, it cannot be doubted at least that the somnambulist can accomplish things he could never do if awake. There is a putting on of a new nature. The timid become fearless; the weak become strong; and the mediocre become ingenious. The only conclusion we can come to is, that the mind works under conditions, and displays phenomena, which as yet science has but imperfectly observed, and still less carefully concluded what their meaning implies. There is in the domain of mental

phenomena a field without boundaries, waiting only for the eye and the understanding keen enough to discover what nature has concealed for so long a time. But the study of the mind has been only reached through a gradual process of evolution. Man in his research began with matter; from that he passed to organism; and from thence to living organism; and now he is standing before the door seeking admittance into the temple where he hopes to find the mysteries surrounding his own mind revealed to him.

All the five senses of the somnambulist are not awake when he is in the state of active dreaming. There may be the activity of the eye along with the torpor of the ear; the activity of the mind along with the sleep of one or more of the senses. But, as a rule, the muscular sense seems always active; and many of the most remarkable performances both of natural and induced somnambulism seem referable to the extraordinary intensity with which impressions on that sense are perceived, in consequence of the exclusive fixation of the attention on its guidance. The dominant idea in the mind generally finds great help from the muscular sensations; the prevailing idea, indeed, is expressed by the various motions of the body. A mathematician will work out a difficult problem; an orator will make a most effective speech; a musician will draw forth most enchanting harmonies from his accustomed instrument; a mimic will keep the spectators in roars of laughter at the drollness of his imitations. These and a thousand other examples can be given of the various phases of somnambulism. It was said that there may be the torpor of one of the senses attended with the activity of the other. The following story illustrates this. Calvin and another friend were once travelling through Germany. One evening they arrived at a country inn tired and jaded. After refreshments, they resolved to employ their time in reading and listening to a book on theology. Calvin's friend was elected to read. This he did for about half an hour. Now and then Calvin put in a word of criticism; but he was surprised that his friend made no reply, but always continued reading. At length Calvin came to the conclusion that his friend was asleep and yet reading. The inference was correct, for when Calvin awoke him, the man, although he had been reading aloud most carefully, did not know one single fact the book contained!

The somnambulist's mind in sleep is only open to one prevailing train of thought. Sounds relating to that are noticed, but any other sounds occurring are as if they had not been. Thus, a young lady, when at school, frequently began to talk after having been asleep an hour or two; her ideas almost always running upon the events of the previous day. If encouraged by leading questions being addressed to her, she would give a very distinct and coherent account of them, frequently disclosing her own peccadillos and those of her school-fellows, and expressing great penitence for the former, while she seemed to hesitate about making known the latter. To all ordinary sounds, however, she seemed insensible.

The curious fact regarding somnambulism is, that the person subject to it cannot remember anything he did while in that state. This differentiates it from dreaming. And again, it

often occurs that the mind of the somnambulist can be gradually diverted, by careful scheming, into any channel the experimenter desires. The case of the officer who served in the expedition to Louisburg may be taken as an example of this kind of somnambulism. The narrator of the story says: 'At one time they [his companions] conducted him through the whole progress of a quarrel, which ended in a duel; and when the parties were supposed to be met, a pistol was put in his hand, which he fired, and was awakened by the report. On another occasion they found him asleep on the top of a locker or bunker in the cabin, when they made him believe he had fallen overboard, and exhorted him to save himself by swimming. He immediately imitated all the motions of swimming. They then told him that a shark was pursuing him, and entreated him to dive for his life. He instantly did so with such force as to throw himself entirely from the locker upon the cabin floor, by which he was much bruised, and awakened of course.'

There is also a peculiar case of somnambulism called 'induced somnambulism.' The method was first discovered by Mr Braid. It consists in the maintenance of a fixed gaze, for several minutes consecutively, on a bright object placed somewhat above and in front of the eyes, at so short a distance that the convergence of their axes upon it is accompanied with a sense of effort even amounting to pain. When the state of somnambulism is thus obtained, just as in the *natural*, there is no remembrance of what the mind or body was engaged with. There is, however, less agility shown by the person in this state. In natural somnambulism, every part of the muscular system seems to be active and capable of doing almost miracles; but when in the induced somnambulist state, the person's movements are slow, and the mind's activity is very heavy and difficult to rouse.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

It is proposed to bring under the consideration of parliament a Bill to provide for the erection and maintenance of a Monumental Chapel in connection with Westminster Abbey. There is a natural dislike on the part of most thoughtful persons to interfere in any way with historical monuments except in the way of necessary repair, a dislike which has been bred of the sad destruction and mutilations which have happened in the past to some of our finest buildings. The Abbey at Westminster is unique in representing by its graves and monuments centuries of the history of our country. But the time has at last arrived when no more space is left in this British Valhalla, and the continuous chain of events must be broken unless a remedy be found. That remedy is indicated in the title of the Bill which we have referred to. It is hardly necessary to point out that the particular form which the addition to the old Abbey will take must be the subject of diligent consideration, and that the architects employed must be instructed to make the new work strictly subservient to the old.

It is curious to note how sometimes in this age

of mechanical perfection we hark back to simple methods in use long ago. A case in point is afforded by the resuscitation of the old-fashioned Howitzer or mortar, which most of us regarded as about the most obsolete form of gun to which one could point. But from such guns much is looked for in the matter of coast-defence, for recent experiments have proved its extraordinary value in this service. The path and range of a shell from such a mortar with a given charge of powder have been calculated to such a nicety, that a projectile can be thrown with wonderful accuracy of aim. In some recent experiments the target was a floating platform of the size of the deck of a first-class ship moored three miles out at sea. The howitzer was in a pit on shore, from which the firers could not see the object aimed at; but they were in electrical communication with others at a distance, who by means of range-finders could give them accurate directions as to elevation of the gun. Under these seemingly hopeless conditions, the comparatively small target was struck seven times out of twenty shots, and was barely missed by several others. A shell charged with one of the new explosives, striking the deck of a ship in such a manner, would infallibly sink her, so that in the once despised howitzer we may look for the most efficient means for coast-defence.

Under the name of Gaedicke's Monochromatic Lamp, Messrs Marion of London have introduced an entirely new form of luminant for the use of photographers, which, while affording a light brilliant enough to work by, will not affect the most sensitive chemicals, for it emits no actinic rays. It consists of an ordinary Bunsen burner (or a spirit-lamp if gas be not available), having in its flame a small ring of asbestos, which is previously charged with a salt of sodium. The sodium salt gives the flame a brilliant yellow colour, which is further modified by a tinted glass chimney. We believe that this is the first application of a flame coloured by chemical means to such a useful purpose.

Mr T. Bonner of the Free Public Library, Ealing, has forwarded us an interesting description of the method which he has invented for the easy distribution and record of books borrowed from the collection under his care, which seems calculated not only to save much time to all concerned, but to dispense with a large amount of clerical work. The system cannot be fully described here; but it will be sufficient to indicate that each book in the library is represented by a small pentagonal block of wood, each side of which bears the number and title of the work in white letters upon a differently coloured ground. These blocks are kept in suitable spaces on shelves, and the particular side exposed to public view will show not only whether it is out, but whether the borrower has held it for one, two, or more weeks. Accompanying the block is a ticket giving the name of the holder of the book. These blocks, therefore, not only afford the information detailed, but also in a measure constitute a library catalogue. Free libraries are now, happily, on the increase, and any systematic method which reduces friction in their machinery is a matter of public importance.

Twenty million artificial teeth were made in America last year by three of the largest firms engaged in that business, a number which is said

to be about half that of the production of this country. It is a peculiar feature of this curious industry that teeth have to be tinted according to the country for which they are intended. In North America and Canada, white teeth are considered—as in this country—to be the beautiful. But in South America, such molars would not be purchased at any price, for there yellow teeth are considered beautiful. At the same time, the yellow man, in China, with whom a large trade is done in teeth, must have them black as ebony.

Mr W. Linton-Wilson has recently published a method of effectually dealing with seed which is infected with the larvæ of the bean-beetle, a plan which could no doubt be successfully employed in the treatment with seeds of other kinds which may need similar purification. He soaks the seed so contaminated for an hour in a ten per cent. solution of paraffin and water, or, to be more correct, in a mixture of one part of paraffin to ten of water. He says that after this treatment he could not find one larva alive. The method has the merits of cheapness and simplicity, and farmers would do well to make a note of it and give it a trial.

Patent horseshoes have been invented time after time, which their inventors fondly hoped would supersede the old method of shoeing; but still the blacksmith exists. By the last method brought forward, the forge is altogether dispensed with, and what is called 'cold'-shoeing takes its place. In this system, which has been introduced by the Nailless Horseshoe Company, the shoe is attached by a single steel band which embraces the hoof, and is kept in position by a steel pillar in front which connects the band with the toe of the shoe. Three small studs, which to a certain extent indent the hoof, help to prevent the shoe from shifting its position. The advantages claimed for the system are many, the chief being the time saved in the operation of shoeing. Instead of the fifteen minutes at present necessary for the work, under the new method a shoe can be fixed in three minutes; a hammer, or even a stone, being the only tool required. The new shoe is durable, not heavier than an ordinary shoe, and is withal a cheaper article. It is believed that this method of shoeing horses will be found of great service in the army, where the accidental casting of a shoe might often lead to serious delay.

Our contemporary *Iron* points out that it is a common error that pianos should be kept very dry, and explains why such extreme care to avoid damp is really most harmful to the instrument. The wood of a piano, however well seasoned, must contain, like all other absorbent bodies exposed to the action of a moisture-laden atmosphere, a certain amount of residual dampness. When, therefore, the piano is continually subjected to very dry and heated air, it parts with this moisture, and its woodwork is apt to shrink and crack. The leather and cloth used in the action of the instrument also shrivel up under such treatment, and the tone of the piano suffers in consequence. The remedy advocated is to keep a growing plant, well watered, in the same room with the piano. In America, where closed stoves cause rooms to be far drier than they are on this side of the Atlantic, it is cus-

tomary to keep a vase containing a well-soaked sponge under the household musical instrument.

The Sanitary Condition of London formed the subject recently of an interesting address at the Parkes Museum, by Dr G. F. Poore, who pointed out that the mere age of a large city tended to make it unwholesome. In its ancient days, London was well supplied with water, for, in addition to the Thames, there were many tributary streams, such as, for instance, the Fleet, Westbourne, Tybourne, Walbrook, &c., which names are still preserved in other ways, while the rivers themselves are represented by underground sewers. The presence of marshy land on nearly every side, which became foul with every description of refuse, made medieval London a perfect fever-den, a condition of things to which unpaved streets and insanitary houses greatly contributed. Modern London, with its low death-rate, contrasts very favourably with the ancient city, particularly when we remember its vast increase in size. But the lecturer argued that this death-rate must not, in fairness, be compared with that of a city packed with operatives, and where few wealthy persons can be found, for the presence of the well-to-do must have the effect of lowering the death-rate. The plan of treatment of sewage by precipitation was referred to as not tending to a wholesome result, and the pouring of one hundred and fifty million gallons of sewage daily into the river was described as a gigantic blunder.

Now that the attention of Government is seriously directed to the condition of the navy and to the necessity of building new ships, it is to be hoped that some means will be found of preserving in a state of efficiency those which we already possess. A rather startling report as to the corrosion of steel ships has lately been published as emanating from Portsmouth. It seems that H.M.S. *Nile*, which was launched exactly one year ago, has recently been placed in dock. Upon examination of her hull, it was found that the protective coating of red-lead had peeled off, and that the metal beneath showed serious corrosion all along the water-line. In some cases, it is stated that the rivets which hold the plates together are completely eaten away.

The coaling of our ships is another question to which experts will have to direct their earnest attention; indeed, this subject was recently stated to be 'the most important factor in the whole science of naval warfare.' This is at least the opinion of Lieutenant Greet, whose paper dealing with the subject recently was read at the Royal United Service Institution. It would seem from this exhaustive paper that our method of coaling is much the same as it was when steam was first introduced into the navy, and that some of our larger ships cannot receive their complement of coal without remaining idle for nearly twenty-four hours. Surely, a mere mechanical question as this is can be solved if competent engineers turn their attention to it. Possibly, however, the time is not far distant when coal will be superseded by liquid fuel.

A new machine for sweeping and cleansing the streets has been tried with some success in the metropolitan thoroughfares by permission of the Commissioners of Sewers, who provided men, horses, and carts for the experiment. The appa-

ratus employed can be fixed to an ordinary mud-cart, and consists of a series of brushes on spindles working by means of an endless chain. These brushes sweep the liquid mud up a short incline towards a receiver, into which dip buckets, after the manner of a dredging-machine, to raise the refuse into the cart proper. Motion is conveyed to the apparatus by travelling wheels, and all is self-contained. In connection with this matter of street-cleansing it may be mentioned that a proposal has lately been made to adapt Mr Strawson's Agricultural Machine for distributing Powdered Granular or Liquid Matter over Land to street use, one suggested employment for it being the scattering of salt over snow-covered roads. This would certainly be effectual so far as melting the snow is concerned; but the fact that by such means a terribly low temperature would be created under foot, which would lead to inconvenience and danger to health seems to have been strangely overlooked.

A new industry is foreshadowed in a paper recently read before the French Agricultural Society by M. Guerin. This gentleman has been carrying out a number of experiments, the results from which tend to show that milk in a frozen state will preserve all its characteristics, and will be in every way as good as fresh milk when, after some days, or even weeks, it is thawed for use. In the frozen state it can, moreover, be transported from place to place with the greatest ease. The freezing process can be accomplished with ordinary ice-machines, and those having access to such appliances will be interested in repeating M. Guerin's experiments. Both cheese and butter made from frozen cream are said in no way to differ from that made in the usual manner.

So many reports for and against M. Pasteur's treatment for hydrophobia or rabies have of late years appeared, that we are glad to have at last an authoritative statement as to the number of British subjects who have availed themselves of the treatment to be obtained at the Pasteur Institute. This statement is in the form of a recently published parliamentary paper, and refers to the two past years. It tells us that, in 1887, sixty-four British subjects were under treatment at the hospital, of whom five died. Among these unfortunate sufferers three were not cauterised, one of them being Lord Doneraile, who was sixty-seven years of age and was bitten in ten places. It is worthy of note that in all these five cases the bites were given by dogs recognised to be rabid by veterinary surgeons. In the following year, M. Pasteur treated twenty-one of our fellow-countrymen without any death record; but it is right to add that one woman, bitten last December by a dog recognised as rabid, was still under treatment when this return was published.

A paper was read some short time since before the Medical Society of Virginia by Dr C. E. Busey, from which parents and teachers might take a valuable hint. The lecturer urged on his hearers the importance of including vocal music in the studies of children as a matter affecting their physical well-being; and he asserted that if an hour daily were given to this pleasant and healthy exercise of the lungs, we should not see so many drooping, withered, hollow-chested, round-shouldered children, and that vocal music is a distinct preventive of phthisis. In singing,

the lungs have to be filled at every breath to almost their utmost capacity, and are thus subjected to energetic gymnastic exercise. The doctor further urged upon his hearers that the musical instructor should possess himself of a knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the respiratory organs. These sensible remarks are of great value in the present day, when there is an unfortunate tendency to cram the minds of children, with little thought of their physical requirements.

A French scientific journal urges the desirability of sugar-manufacturers, who are mostly complaining of hard times owing to over-production, increasing their incomes by making paper from the cane as a supplementary industry. It is asserted that the fibres of the sugar-cane make an excellent paper, and that the mechanical and chemical treatment necessary in the work present no unusual difficulties. One gentleman at New Orleans has lately exhibited there a number of samples of white paper so made, which were of very fine quality. Whether it is practicable thus to combine two industries which seem at first sight to be so very different from one another, and which both require such large plant, remains to be decided by experience.

From experiments recently carried out at Chadwell Heath, Essex, it would seem that we have at last in the substance called Bellite an explosive which, while being actually more destructive in its effects than dynamite, is singularly safe to handle. A cartridge of bellite placed on a coal-fire was simply roasted away without exploding. A mass of iron weighing more than one hundred-weight dropped from a height of eighteen feet upon some naked cartridges merely flattened them; and the same cartridges were presently used for cutting a piece out of an iron rail, when they were exploded with a percussion fuse. In a hole in the earth a number of bellite cartridges were mixed with blasting-gunpowder, and when the latter was fired, the said cartridges were scattered in every direction, but not exploded. Other experiments of a like surprising nature were successfully carried out. Their importance can be gauged when we remember that many tons of explosives are annually used in this country alone in industrial operations, and that it is highly necessary that they should be of such a nature that they can be employed with a minimum of danger by those who are too often ignorant and careless.

Londoners have lately been startled at the sight of a vehicle without horses or other visible motive-power which has been seen threading its way through the crowded traffic of the City streets. This vehicle, which has the appearance of a commodious omnibus, with seats for twelve passengers, is driven by electricity, and its coachman controls its movements from a platform in front. The inventor of this Electric Omnibus, which may possibly be the pioneer of a new system of street-traction, is Mr Radcliffe Ward, and he has constructed this experimental vehicle in order to prove that its movements can be well controlled in the most crowded thoroughfares. Horses show no fright at its appearance, and behave as if they recognised in it a deliverer from their hard lives. Mr Ward calculates that the substitution of his system by an Omnibus Company for horse-

haulage would mean a saving of from thirty to fifty per cent. There is little doubt, too, that the general adoption of vehicles propelled by electricity would lead to a great saving in road-repair, for it is well known that the horses' hoofs damage the roads far more than do the wheels of the various vehicles which traverse them.

About twenty years ago, one of the spandrels beneath the great dome of St Paul's was decorated with a mosaic picture, this beautiful style of decoration having at that time been revived in this country by Dr Salviati. A second spandrel is now to be filled in the same manner, the design being from the poetical pencil of Mr Watts, R.A., Dr Salviati being again entrusted with the work. This profuse decoration of the interior of our metropolitan cathedral was the cherished idea of its great architect. He was not allowed to have his own way with regard to many points during the construction of this noble edifice, but his descendants are now ready enough to redeem the past.

The various uses, scientific and otherwise, to which the magic lantern is now put, both in the halls of learning and in more popular gatherings, render that instrument a very valuable adjunct to our educational agencies. The improved systems of lighting the lanterns, which the science of the last twenty years has developed, have also added greatly to their utility. For those who would wish to have an accurate knowledge of the powers and possibilities of these lanterns—now no longer regarded as toys—a book recently published will be found most helpful. It is entitled *The Book of the Lantern*, by Mr T. C. Hepworth (London: Wyman and Sons). The book is really what it professes to be—a practical guide to the working of the optical (or magic) lantern, with full and precise directions for making and colouring lantern pictures.

'STREET-SELLERS.'

IN these days, when want of employment is with many a chronic disease, it is interesting to observe the manifold ways and means adopted by a certain class of men to enable them to earn a more or less honest living. While one man sits and wails because he has not sufficient money to provide himself with the good things, or even the necessities of life, another, possessed of the true trading instinct, together with a profound knowledge of that pleasing feature of an Englishman's character termed 'gullibility,' sinks his whole capital, amounting perhaps to upwards of a shilling, in obtaining a stock-in-trade, and hies him, after the shades of evening fall, to the corner of a street in the City, or to the marketplace of a country-town, plants his establishment firmly on its support of three sticks, and proceeds, first, to attract a crowd, and then to attract into his own pockets some of the superfluous metal which reposes in those of his hearers. If my reader will accompany me in spirit to one of these market squares, we will observe some of these street-sellers at work, and see how easily some

men, with no other qualification than the possession of a large amount of assurance, can dispose of worthless goods, and in a few hours provide themselves with sufficient money to pay their tavern score, which constitutes the heaviest item of the day's expenditure.

Observe, first, this loquacious individual, respectably attired, and wearing a confidence-inspiring and glossy tall hat. For the last twenty years he has been doctoring the British public with 'flagroot'—that is, the root of the iris. He stains the root to a brownish tint, gives it a delicate perfume by means of a few drops of bergamot, and offers it to the public as an Indian herb, with a name that takes away the breath of his audience, and which only long practice enables him to pronounce. Grated and taken as snuff, it relieves headache; rubbed on the gums, toothache becomes a thing of the past; used internally, dyspepsia takes wings, and the patient's landlady gives him notice to quit after one week's experience of his renewed appetite. The vendor of this root assumes the air of a philanthropist and public benefactor, and does a flourishing business.

Farther on, we come across a more pretentious aspirant to relieve suffering mortals of their ills and superfluous cash. He addresses the crowd from an elevated position on a richly gilded and decorated open carriage. On the seats on each side of him are piled bottles of pink-coloured fluid, and he holds one of them in his hand as he eloquently discourses on its nature and properties. He commands the services of a seedy-looking assistant; but the doctor himself is resplendent with jewelry, and looks like some foreign nobleman in his fur-tipped overcoat. Certain little peculiarities in his speech, however, proclaim him to be a countryman of our own who has graduated in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel.

There is one feature in this great man's mode of doing business calculated to inspire confidence: he freely offers to allow the remedy, which he calls 'Pain-killer,' to be tried 'free, gratis, for nothink,' before purchasing. At the top of his voice he calls on any one suffering from a pain of any description to approach the carriage and be operated upon in full sight of the audience. Many accept the invitation; and people with headaches, faceaches, pains in the chest and other parts of their anatomy, mount the carriage, are dosed or rubbed, and declare themselves highly gratified. Half a bottle is expended on the limbs of an old man suffering from rheumatism, and he expresses himself in glowing terms of the relief afforded him by the application. The assistant's energies are wholly absorbed in handing out the bottles at sixpence apiece; and the result of the doctor's efforts must afford that high-minded philanthropist intense satisfaction when in the privacy of his chamber he casts up his accounts.

Whether the effect produced upon the patients by the application of the 'Pain-killer' is the result of faith or some real virtue in the remedy, I cannot say; but any one may test its efficacy for himself. It consists of rum and water mixed with cayenne pepper. If applied outwardly, the hand should be passed over the skin in one direction only, as if rubbed up and down, the result will surprise but not gratify.

There is a man hacking and chopping a small log of wood with a razor, and appealing to his

audience to observe that there is no deception. Then rubbing a small quantity of his incomparable paste upon a piece of leather, he straps the razor thereon, and to prove its efficacy in restoring the edge, severs with the blade hairs pulled from some boy's head for this purpose, or shaves the back of a man's hand. He repeats the operation of spoiling the razor's edge and restoring it by a few passes over the strop as often as necessary, or borrows knives from persons in the audience and sharpens them in the same manner. This paste he sells in cakes, and it is composed of hog's-lard and fuller's-earth.

Articles of this class never vary in the materials from which they are made, no matter in what part of the country we find them offered for sale. Here is the vendor of 'grease and stain remover.' He has captured a very small boy, whom he holds fast with one hand, while he operates upon his coat collar with the other, discoursing meanwhile upon the utility of the compound. It is exactly the same preparation as that with which the hawker offered to remove the stains from the garments of Bill Sikes, and consists of pipeclay worked together with red-lead and blue-stone, to give it a streaky appearance.

And the silver-plating man must not be passed unnoticed. He is busily engaged before a small knot of onlookers in silver-plating a brass door-knob by means of a pink-coloured powder. He explains the process, which is very simple, it being only necessary to rub the powder over the surface of the article which it is desired to plate. Articles of cheap jewelry borrowed from the audience are plated free of charge, and the powder itself is sold in penny packets, though even at this low rate the vendor makes a large profit, sixpennyworth of mercury mixed with a pound of whiting and red ochre being sufficient to make into thirty or forty packets.

This class of sellers may be said to give some return for your money. But there is another class to whom the term 'sellers' applies in more senses than one. Here is a seedy individual offering wedding rings at a penny each to the eager circle which surrounds him. The rings are of the brassiest description, and so is the vendor. He commences operations by relating the story of Captain Barclay who once made a wager that a man standing on London Bridge could not sell a number of good sovereigns at a penny each in a specified time. The agent appointed to offer the coins disposed of only one. He then goes on to say that a similar wager has just been made by two local celebrities, and that a large sum of money depends on whether within a limited period he can dispose of the fifty solid gold rings which he holds in his hand. With solemn aspect he assures his hearers that the rings are genuine gold, and professes the utmost indifference as to whether he sells any or not. He speedily disposes of the precious articles among the younger members of the crowd; and by the time the purchasers have discovered their folly, he is far away, repeating the old story to a new audience.

The sporting prophet, who disposes of his scraps of paper which he calls 'tips;' the vendor of cement, who mends pieces of crockery-ware with his composition of shellac and resin, and then makes frantic efforts to break them again without success; the 'corn-curing hero,' with his salve of

fused tallow and resin, and his bottle containing small pieces of turnip carefully cut and trimmed to present the appearance of extracted corns, supposed to have been preserved by those who have used the remedy, and presented to him as a slight testimonial and mark of gratitude—these and others dot the market-place and adjoining streets, pursuing their calling with commendable energy, and a sublime faith in the public, born of experience, and affording to the philosopher who gives to both vendor and his customers a more than passing thought, much food for reflection.

BEYOND WORDS.

LITTLE maid in homespun gown,
Simple as the daisies,
Loving lips and eyes of brown—
Let me sing your praises.

Shall I call my love a flower
Gathered to my bosom?
No; they fade from hour to hour,
And I want my blossom.

Shall I call her precious pearl?
Set not jewels nigh her!
Only just a country girl,
Yet not a king could buy her.

Shall I call her angel blest,
Whitest soul of woman?
Stay!—I think I like her best
Laughing, weeping, human.

Is she, then, a sparkling star
Sent to guide and cheer me?
Ah! the skies are cold and far,
And I like her near me.

Not a name is there on earth
Of a poet's giving,
Fit to tell one half her worth,
Real, true, and living.

Rhymes and words of mystery
Only would amaze her;
For her own sweet self is she,
And all my deeds shall praise her.

H. A.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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SCHOOL-GIRLS.

WHEN our grandmothers were young, school-life was very different. It was the reign of the backboard and the needle. The little maidens with curls, low-necked gowns and short sleeves, learned to play in a primitive manner, to sing and to dance; but above all things they used the needle, and they walked about at stated times pinioned by the arms to the backboard. The modern reclining board is only a degenerate descendant of the instruments of polite torture which straightened and stiffened our grandmothers, and made of them those fashionable figures that in due time lured our grandfathers to write cocked-hat notes, fight duels, and fall in love with them. This consummation reached, our grandmothers in the days of their youth mostly forgot their 'accomplishments,' and managed the house, never opening the piano except, after years, to rattle a dance for the new race of juveniles. They were clever housewives, and had plenty of nature's wisdom and woman's sympathy. Men in those days seem to have needed nothing more. Except in rare cases, they did not expect wives to be intellectual companions. The wife was content to say with the woman's voice from *In Memoriam*:

I know but matters of the house,
And he—he knows a thousand things.

The schools of the old days of course boasted that they would make the girls know a thousand things too, only the branches taught never happened to be learned by any human head all at the same time. As far as talk went, they were as ambitious in our grandmothers' days as in our own. Only let readers of Thackeray turn to Miss Pinkerton's letter recommending a choice of young dragons fresh from her school: 'Either of these young ladies is *perfectly qualified* to instruct in Greek, Latin, and the rudiments of Hebrew, in mathematics and history, in Spanish, French, Italian, and geography, in music, vocal and instrumental; in dancing without the aid of a master; and in the elements of the natural sciences.' It

would have been impossible not to respect a young lady who could instruct her partner in the rudiments of Hebrew during the twirling of the dance. But unfortunately, what they learned at Miss Pinkerton's was forgotten or laughed at when flirtation began. 'Who'd think the moon was two hundred and thirty-six thousand eight hundred and forty-seven miles off?' Becky Sharp said to George Osborne on the balcony at Brighton; then she turned her gaze from the orb to the officer, with a fascinating smile: 'Isn't it clever of me to remember that? Pooh!—we learned it all at Miss Pinkerton's!' The opposite character, the foil of the famous Becky, the soft and sweet Amelia Sedley, was chiefly praised for her needlework when she left school, and her parents were advised to finish her education with 'a careful and undeviating use of the backboard for four hours daily during the next three years.'

Lawn-tennis has begun to do the work of the dreaded board; and the sewing-machine, which may be said to have lengthened life by saving time, is driving the domestic needle out of the field, by leaving it only a small province to work in. But in the main, school-girls are still the same, and so is the ambition of the prospectus as directed by the Lady Principal; the greatest difference is that Becky Sharp would now have to be drilled by examiners, and would, in her light-fingered manner, snap up 'certificates' for having the possession of information that she would forget soon after.

There are really two views of girls' education abroad in the modern world. One view looks mainly to the girl, and the other looks mainly to the knowledge. The second view is the most in vogue, and its mistake is that, like all new systems, it is likely to be carried to exaggerated lengths. There was hardly ever a good thing started in the world that was not at first exaggerated by its promoters in trying to fight the battle to get standing-ground for it at all. When the examination and certificate system is carried too far, we must set it down to the error of earnestness in the struggle of this new view to

find place in the world. Other people hold to the opinion that the girl herself is the best thing to be thought of, and not the amount of knowledge she can acquire. Our greatest art-critic, who has a bright and fanciful ideal of girlhood, has somewhere said that the three things they ought to learn are to dress, to sing, and to dance! And he gives the necessary explanation of these words by saying that dress includes good taste in appearance, and the ability to make clothing of the most becoming style; that to sing and dance signify to rejoice and to give joy, which she ought to do to all around her by her looks, her voice, and her presence.

Leaving this great question of education for the wisest heads to solve according to their better knowledge, we turn to the more charming subject of the school-girls themselves. They are often enough like the Japanese trio, made of laughter, and thinking life a joke that is just begun; but this is only one type. The unconscious school-girl beauty is another, and that is a veritable vision of delight. There are schools where coquetry is learned side by side with grammar, and where the passions of grown-up people begin to spoil the happy air of childhood. It is a sad mistake. The little beauty we admire has not the slightest idea of her gift—for the chatter of the class on this point is generally misdirected, and the pretty ones singled out are not those that would be chosen by experienced eyes. This little maiden is just at the meeting of the brook and the river. Her fingers are ink, but her face would pass for one of Reynolds's angels, or else for the very youngest Virgin of delicate pure features that Perugino ever painted. Three or four summers more and the pair of blue eyes will find out their power. At present she will thank you for an apple; and when she smiles, it would be profanation to tell her of her loveliness. In a little while she will have to be sought on bended knee, and won in the zenith of her glory amid the heart-burnings of women and the struggle of strong men.

Another type of school-girl is the little mother. Something of a motherly instinct is irrepressible in this girl's heart. She makes favourites of the smallest among her companions, and the distant home is still encumbered with the old dolls on which she lavished her love in nursery days. With the thought of this type, a garden comes to mind, with summer trees and level grass, and with a group of orphan children allowed by kindness a country holiday in the garden of their richer sisters. When the memory-picture begins to move, one nobly-born girl, as handsome as a young gypsy, is proud to carry the youngest of the poor little visitors enthroned against her shoulder. She leans strongly backward, and the fine arm encircles her little burden naturally, as if she had been used to carrying small orphan children all her life. One has great faith in the good and happy future of this simple tender type of school-girl.

The studious girl is generally highly nervous and sensitive, and works from an instinctive earnestness of character. It is well to persuade her that 'the bright Yum-yum' is also to be admired; for the studious little maiden wants and deserves twice as much recreation as her lazy companions. The lazy member of the class is the

very opposite to the earnest little creature who is born with the instinct of trying to do well. With a recollection of a vanished Eden of bright windows and polished floors, sunny garden, and merry faces, there comes back the picture of a Saxon Edith, who was always laughing except when she was crying. She was a fair and round-faced little maid, who could make a rosebud out of her cheek by encircling a pinch of it with a dainty thumb and finger. She would violently dispute some vain trifle, perhaps whether her mother was related to the Duchess of Portadown; and after vowing never to speak to her best friend again, the fair eyebrows would redden, the handkerchief would be made into a comfortable ball, and the rosy round face would pillow itself and enjoy a luxurious cry—until the laughter and the sunshine burst out more vigorously than ever. This soft and careless girl developed rapidly into a staid and serious matron; while the quietest and most studious of her friends grew up into a bright and radiant character, brimful of humour and of irrepressible gaiety. The secret of the change lay in this: that the one child's nature, though bubbling over with mirth, was shallow; the other did with her whole heart whatever she turned to, and as childhood changed to womanhood she evidently discovered that it is worth while to laugh with one's whole heart as well as to work, and the strong nervous character had the energy to act upon the discovery.

Taken as a whole, a cluster of school-girls—say, as in the famous 'School Revisited,' under the trees of their own garden—are a most pathetic sight and a wonderful mystery. Their sorrows are all before them, and their romance too. Soon they are to scatter out of their happy world to go through the real novel that is not measured by three volumes. There are two things that surely we should never forget in thinking of these weak and thoughtless little women: first, that it is unfair to the girl ever to expect education to give her the mind of a boy, for the nature of her mind is as different as a young willow wand from a sapling oak; and secondly, that she is the woman of the future, and her worth to the world will not be measured by the amount of her learning, which, because of few years and delicacy of frame, has its limits, but that her worth will be measured by her beauty of character, which is capable of development to a breadth and depth and height beyond our mortal reckoning.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER XV.

MR ORME was a stranger in Castle-Barfield, but he had no difficulty in finding the High Street, and went shuffling up and down it with an eye of inquiry for the shop sign of Robert Snelling, corn factor. Somewhere in the dim middle of his mind a sense that he was acting shabbily was strong enough to keep him from asking questions even of strangers who could not possibly know anything of his business. He blustered at himself, as that kind of shabby sinner will. The boys ought to be at home again, the young rascals.

What business had they to be running unprotected about the country, earning their own living, whilst their relatives were obviously well-to-do, and were willing to pay hard money for the privilege of having them at home again. He salved his conscience by the reflection that he was not in any way betraying confidence, because no confidence had ever been reposed in him.

'They should have let me into the secret,' said Mr Orme, 'and then perhaps I mightn't have sold them.'

He had never been fond of pedestrian exercise, and if he had known it, the Hindu proverb would have suited him to a hair: It is better to stand than to walk, better to sit than to stand, and better to lie than to sit. Barfield High Street is a mile and a half in length, and Mr Orme choosing to look in the busier part of it, went lazily strolling up and down there until he grew hot and tired. He was always thirsty, but heat and fatigue made him thirstier; and exhausted nature, after a quarter of an hour's uneasy rambling, so cried out for rum-and-water, that he let it have its way. The dram-shop into which he turned was empty of customers, and Mr Orme, with secret sidelong glances, beckoned the man behind the bar into a corner, and there furtively rubbing the back of his hand on his bristly lips, inquired secretly for the address of the man he wanted.

'Snelling?' said the barman, 'Robert Snelling? Why, he's left the parish months and months ago.'

At this Mr Orme's countenance fell dolefully; and the barman, throwing open a door in the rear of the shop, shouted to some invisible person in the interior of the house to ask where Snelling the corn factor had moved to.

'Sh-h!' said Mr Orme, with a rum-and-watery fear lest the query should be overheard in Warwick, thirty miles away.

The man took no heed of him, and a voice shrieked back that Snelling had gone to live at Beacon-Hargate. Learning that Beacon-Hargate was rather better than four miles away, which meant to his intelligence rather worse, and discovering that no train or public vehicle ran in that direction, Mr Orme turned pale, and felt that he must either abandon his enterprise or fortify himself with more rum-and-water. Whilst he drank his second glass, the prospect of an eight miles' walk so chilled him, and the thought that ten pounds lay at the middle of it so warmed him that he was like one submitted to alternating douches of hot and cold water. At last he screwed his courage to the sticking-point, and having received full instructions as to the route he was to take, he lit his black clay-pipe and set out. Once clear of the town, the road offered pleasant going even for so lazy a personage as Mr Orme. The trees and the tall flowering hedges cast an agreeable shadow, and the grassy banks now and again invited him to sit and think. He thought about the ten pounds reward, and its magic always plucked him on to his reluctant legs again and set him going, though he always renewed the way with groanings. He was beginning to believe that the people of that district were so rootedly facetious in their habits as to set their milestones purposely apart for the deception of strangers, when he came to a decent cottage, where a woman sat upon the doorstep knitting at a half-yard of gray worsted stocking.

'Mr Snelling?' said she in answer to his inquiry. 'It's five or six score yards farther on, master, on the right-hand side. You'd see it easy now if it wasn't for the trees.'

The reward looked so delightfully near at hand that he went on quite jauntily; but, as fortune would have it, just as he left the woman with a nod of acknowledgment, Isaiah dropped into the road from a stile at a little distance, and recognising him, stood with a broad astonished stare to watch him until his balloon-like figure hobbled round the corner and disappeared. Anybody who has watched the workings of the rustic intelligence has noticed in what a curiously disproportioned way it is liable to astonishment. There was nothing so profoundly out of the common in Mr Orme's appearance in that quiet district, after all, but it hit Isaiah like a hammer.

'What's that chap want?' he asked, advancing to the woman. 'He's a stranger hereabouts.'

'He was asking for your master, Mr Winter,' the woman answered; and Isaiah stood nearly transfixed. His first idea was to run away; for, in spite of his impertinences to his employer and the immunity which attended them, he was afraid of him. It was evident at the first glimpse of things that Mr Orme could have no business with Snelling which was not associated with the boys, and Isaiah's mind shot at once to the half-forgotten reward which had been offered for their discovery.

'The fat's in the fire now and no mistake,' said Isaiah to himself; but being at bottom a man of courage, he pulled himself together in a while and marched resolutely towards the house, doing his best to look unconscious, and succeeding better than he knew. His facial expressions were less various than he supposed, and he had a kind of ox-like immobility which had been of frequent service to him in his skirmishes with his employer.

Short as was the interval between Mr Orme's arrival at the gate and his own, Isaiah found the way clear. The messenger of exposure had already entered the house. Snelling's big voice boomed through an open window as Isaiah closed the gate. 'Well,' said Snelling, 'and what might be your business?'

Isaiah, under the pressure of anxiety and fear did what he would never have dreamed of doing in less pressing circumstances; he hopped from the tell-tale brick pathway into the middle of a flower-bed, and ran with the stooping shoulders of stealth and secrecy to the corner of the house. There he couched by the open window, scarcely daring to breathe.

'I am resident in the town of Warwick,' Mr Orme was saying—'a temporary resident.'

'Well,' said Snelling, in his slow, surly, magisterial way, 'what has that got to do with me?'

'My name is Orme,' pursued the visitor, in a tone which sounded frightened and propitiatory to the listener's ears, 'Tobias Orme.' He paused, and rubbed his hands with an ingratiatory pale smile. He was not at ease before the big, sulky, domineering man. His emotions tamed the heyday of colour in his cheeks, but his nose shone like a beacon. 'Orme, sir,' he repeated, seeing that Snelling made no reply—'Tobias Orme.'

'Well,' hummed Snelling, 'what's *that* to do with me?'

Mr Orme smiled fatuously and rubbed his hands. Isaiah, conscious of his own guilt, listened with a beating heart outside.

'I believe, sir,' said Mr Orme tremulously, with a roving eye in search of unprocurable stimulant, 'that some considerable time ago you issued a handbill, offering a reward for the discovery of two boys.'

Isaiah had been as certain as he knew how to be of anything that this was the object of Mr Orme's visit, and yet the proclamation of it seemed as dreadful as if it had been an altogether unexpected thing.

'Oh, that's it, is it?' said Snelling. 'What about it?'

He, at least, with that sullen, vulgarly Napoleonic mark of his, clean shaven, healthy coloured, and respectable, looked altogether unmoved. It is true enough that the wish is father to the thought with most men at one time or another; but there are men in whom desire, uncontradicted for a little while, will breed a faith which looks to themselves unshakable. Snelling was a man of this type, and his circumstances were peculiar. He had had undisputed control of his nephew's property since the death of John Vale the elder; and since John Vale the younger had run away, the land and the money he held in trust had grown into him, and become such a part of him as no honest belongings of his own could ever have been. There was nothing in the world a thousandth part so desirable to his mind as the ownership of land. Mere money wealth, the next thing in sweetness to it, was far and far behind it in its capacity for yielding pleasure. He had been gathering landed property in a small way all his life, and a half-ownership was a great sweet mixed with an incredible bitter. A mortgage was a loathing to him until he had cleared it away. A peppercorn quit-rent would have galled him. The only poetic fancy that had ever stirred his depths of commonplace came with the reflection that his ownership ran in an absolute solid wedge to the earth's centre. He bought lands with the mines and minerals thereunder, or would not buy at all, and the hidden uncomeatable parts of his purchase fed his heart better than the productive paying surface. There was something so prodigiously solid in the fancy of the dark, unmeasured, unmeasurable distances, unsunned, unseen, but covered every inch by his ownership, and sealed as it were for his, whenever his foot touched the surface, if it were but of a bare bald cottage-building plot twenty yards by twelve!

As week after week had gone by after the issue of the offer of reward, and the world at large thereby appealed to had remained obstinately silent, his nephew's freehold acres had grown more and more absolutely his own. Young John had gone off to sea and had been drowned; or he had fallen sick by the way somewhere and had died. Anyhow, in one way or another there was an end of him. That had grown to be quite certain in Snelling's mind; and the appearance of the fat, disreputable, little red-nosed man, with evident news of the wanderer, was a tremendous shock to him.

Neither his face nor his voice betrayed him, but he sat in sullen dignity, chilling the soul of Mr Orme, who, without having dramatised the

situation for himself, felt vaguely that he had expected a greater show of warmth and interest.

'Go on,' said Snelling. 'If you've got anything to say, say it. You can't expect a man to sit here all the hevenin' while you stare at him.'

Thus encouraged, Mr Orme proceeded: 'The boys have been resident in Warwick, sir, for quite a considerable period. Master Gregg—he was moved to a respectful tone by Snelling's aspect, and partly by the size of the house and the character of the furniture—Master Gregg has found employment in the establishment in which I am myself engaged. Master Vale works at home under the direction of a French gentleman, who is not unassociated with the fine arts.'

'Supposin' that to be the case,' said Snelling, 'how comes it that this is the first time you make any move in the matter? A reward of ten pounds has been offered for a many months. How is it as you never saw fit to earn that money till to-day?'

Mr Orme rubbed his hands and explained glibly. 'He had all along been sure that the boys were above the station they had taken, but he had never seen the handbill until that afternoon.'

Snelling put up one hand to his double chin, and nursing an elbow with the other, fell deep into thought. Mr Orme sat and waited, wondering a little in his bemused mind, but not daring to jog the big man's memory, except by an occasional movement of the feet or a faint-hearted cough.

'It's the idiot boy,' said Snelling, waking of his own accord at length—'it's the idiot boy, you say, as stops at home, and does something with the Frenchman?'

'The—the—eh?' Mr Orme interjected feebly. 'The——'

'The idiot boy,' said Snelling, with a sort of dogged fierceness and resolve.

'Master Vale, sir?' queried Mr Orme.

'Yes,' said Snelling—'John Vale.—D'ye mean to tell me he isn't an idiot? If he isn't, he's not the boy I advertised for. He was an idiot when he ran away from home.'

'I should indeed be disposed to think so, sir,' said Mr Orme, looking round the roomy apartment and taking note of all its signs of comfort. 'A very foolish boy indeed. But youth, sir, is sometimes inconsiderate and careless of its own best interests—even reprehensibly so,' Mr Orme made haste to add with a jerk, suddenly pierced by Snelling's cold eye and made mightily uncomfortable.

'Do you mean to say,' said Snelling, bullying him with head and shoulders, 'that the lad is not accepted for an idiot wherever he may be? Openly took for an idiot? Openly known as such, and for such derided?'

'Dear me, sir,' returned Mr Orme, 'quite the contrary, I assure you.'

'Then it's not the lad I'm in search of, and you may go about your business.'

At this the visitor fell back in his seat and stared quite vacuously until the thought of the reward brought him to himself again. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' he said then, 'but the boys advertised for are William Gregg and John Vale. The names tally, the personal descriptions tally,

the ages tally. There is no doubt about these boys being *the* boys.' He was almost tearful in his energy. He thought miserably of the long four miles he had walked—a desert bare of stimulant—and despairingly of the return journey.

'What's the lad doing?' Snelling asked.

Mr Orme considered, with a half-frightened eye on his interlocutor. To give too close and intimate a clue might be to set this big man on the scent. The big man looked capable of dismissing him contemptuously as soon as he had learned enough, and might then hunt up the missing boys at his ease and defraud the informer of his rightful wages. A certain aspect of reasonableness in this, providing the cases had been reversed, strengthened his fears.

'If the information,' said Snelling, appearing to divine his thoughts, 'turns out to be worth anything, you'll get your money.'

He was not in the least hurt when he supposed that his visitor suspected him of an intention to play false. When schoolboys make a bargain, it is not unusual for each to demand a partial hand-fast of the objects bartered for, and Mr Snelling's methods of business were so far barbaric that he had always clung to that practice in his intercourse with the world. It was fitting and natural to suspect everybody.

'Tell me all about the lads,' he said, 'and have no fear about your money. If it's earned, it will be paid, and paid on the nail.'

Even yet, Mr Orme had some misgiving; but he saw no help for it, and so told all he knew. Isaiah, crouching outside, drank in every word, and jumped so at the mention of his own name that he set a branch near him rustling violently, and trembled with apprehension lest the sound should bring Snelling to the window.

'There's a person,' said Mr Orme, 'who visits the young gentleman occasionally—invariably upon a Sunday, sir—a country person, an Isaiah Winter.'

'Oh!' said Snelling, with a world of meaning in his tone, 'that's where he goes to, is it? Them's his relatives as lives just the other side of Hampton.'

'You know the person, sir?' asked Mr Orme.

'I know the person,' Snelling answered heavily; 'and the person'll know me afore the night's out.—Go on.'

'I have observed, sir,' Mr Orme continued, 'that there has been what I might describe as a conspiracy in the house. You may have seen the phrase in the newspapers, sir—a conspiracy of silence. It has gone the round of the newspapers, Mr Snelling. That is what I have observed in the house—a conspiracy of silence, directed against myself, sir. I believe that everybody else has been in the secret all along, but I have never been admitted to it.'

Snelling knitted his brows anew at this and dropped into his former posture. If these people had learned that young John would be wealthy one of these days, they might very well have resolved to maintain him in the hope of being paid hereafter. He had so persuaded himself of the feebleness of John's intellect that he was quite sure it must be patent to everybody. This timid fat man with the red nose was obviously a fool, and Snelling was contemptuously wrathful of his

stupidity in not seeing that John was a hopeless imbecile, and utterly unfit to control his own belongings, not merely now, but fifty years hence, if he should live so long. These other people, the foreigners the man spoke of, saw it well enough, and saw their interest in it. About that he was as well assured as if he had held the key to their souls and had the secrets of their hearts unlocked before him.

'Now,' he said deliberately, coming out of his reverie, 'I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'm not going to pay you now for finding out what may be no more than a mare's nest; but there's five shillings for you, and you can get a comfortable bed at the *Farrier's Arms*, within half a mile from here on the Barfield Road. I'll take you up there in my trap to-morrow morning and drive you to the railway station. We'll take the train to Warwick, and you shall point out the house to me. When I've got hold of the lads, you shall have your money.'

'You'll excuse me, sir,' said Mr Orme, 'but that is a programme which does not represent itself to me at all, sir, if I may use the term. It does not represent itself to me at all, sir. For three years past I have enjoyed a comfortable home in the house of Madame Vigne; I have found, Mr Snelling, that my little comforts have been very well attended to; and to split with them would be worth more than ten pounds to me—a great deal more, sir.—I'll tell you what, sir,' Mr Orme continued with an air of persuasion, 'you cheque to-day, sir. It could be stopped at the bank on Monday morning, if my statement should not be verified by the facts, sir. I think, Mr Snelling, that arrangement would be superior to the other—highly superior. I could then return to-night, sir, and there would be nothing to associate me in their minds with your appearance.'

'If you attempt to cash that cheque,' said Snelling, 'with anybody that knows and respects my name, you know the consequences.'

He had no doubt in his own mind of the veracity of the story Mr Orme had told him, and he made out the cheque and handed it over then and there. He wrote down in his pocket-book at his visitor's dictation Madame Vigne's address, and then nodding coldly, told him that he could go. Mr Orme, not unwillingly availing himself of the permission, took up the disreputable old silk hat he wore, and dangling it by its flaccid brim, retired crab-like with repeated salutations, and edged himself obsequiously from the room.

Isaiah from his hiding-place saw him pass through the gate, and followed him with an eye to the immediate settlement of the difference which had so swiftly and unexpectedly declared itself. Snelling, unsuspecting of having been overheard, rose and tramped heavily about the room. The essence of the land he had taken for his own was in his blood and fired it like an ardent spirit. Every hour's seeming ownership had made his grip close tighter. The fallen, in his pious self-tortures, will grasp an object so long that at last he has no power to let it go, and Snelling's moral muscles had grown to a like condition. A sudden tide of desperation surged through all his pulses, and he struck the wall heavily with his clenched hand. He did not

speak a word, but he made his compact with the evil one at that moment. He would have the land by hook or by crook, his own for good and all, and was resolved to stick at nothing.

A GREEK THEATRE.

If we endeavour to form an idea of the ancient Greek theatre we must to a great extent divest our minds of modern notions respecting the stage; for at the period we propose to sketch it (450 B.C.) the Attic theatre preserved in its dramatic performances many characteristics of its religious origin in the worship of Dionysos, or Bacchus. It was national as well as religious, since the personages of the dramas were the half-mythic heroes, demi-gods, and kings belonging to the earlier ages of the Greek people, and whose history was familiar to all. The performances were rare, as they were chiefly limited to three days in the spring of the year, took place in the daytime in the open air, and were attended as a religious duty by all classes of citizens, native and alien; the state paying the two obols charged for admission when the citizen was too poor to afford them.

The principal theatre in Greece was that of Dionysos at Athens; it was for the dramatic festivals held therein that the plays of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were written, and where, in some instances, the authors themselves acted in their own pieces. The structure was of colossal size, and stood on the rocky slope of the southern side of the Acropolis, on an enclosure of land sacred to the god. It held thirty thousand people in the tiers of seats, rising in semicircular form, hewn out of the solid limestone rock, and sloping gradually to within about twelve feet of the sanded floor of the orchestra or dancing-place. The lowest tiers were apportioned to the magistrates and generals and any visitors of distinction; and the upper ones to the general body of the people; particular places being assigned to the women and the younger men.

The spectators faced the south, and those who could see over the columned wall which bounded the back of the stage must have enjoyed a noble prospect. On the left rose the flowery steps of the bee-haunted Hymettus; on the right, far in the distance, the rocky heights of Salamis; while in the centre, three or four miles off, they could see the harbour of Athens—the Piræus, with its fleets of merchantmen and warships riding at anchor in the blue Ægean, all clear and well defined in the glowing skies and pellucid air of that unrivalled clime. Considerably more than half of the orchestra was covered with a raised boarding, which was approached from the arena by a flight of steps, and having in the centre the *Thymele*, or altar of Dionysos, round which the chorus moved in the rhythmic measures of the dance and chanted their choral songs. They sang to the accompaniment of a flute, and are believed to have kept time with timbrels or cymbals, at anyrate in the more martial odes. They were under the leadership of the Choragus, generally a man of wealth and position in the city, who was charged by the state with the expense of the men and boys employed, as he furnished them with instructors

in both music and dancing; in addition to which he acted as spokesman when required to take part in the drama. The exact position of the chorus in relation to the play is a disputed one, there being no equivalent in modern plays, if we except the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton, which was professedly modelled on the Greek pattern, and indeed is the best modern example of what a Greek drama really was. The chorus moralised on the action of the play, or expressed horror, hope, or pleasure at the deeds enacted on the stage. As succeeding poets improved on the structure of the earlier dramas, the chorus was more and more relegated to a subordinate position, as we may see by contrasting the plays of Euripides with those of Æschylus.

From the orchestra, two central flights of stairs led to the stage, which corresponded in height to the lowest tier of seats opposite. It was, in comparison with our modern stage, a mere ledge, so great was its length in proportion to its depth. Along the front, where our footlights are, was placed a row of statuettes and pilasters; a portion of the back receded in quadrangular form, and was bounded by a wall, architecturally adorned, and rising to about the same height as the columned gallery which ran round the topmost tiers of the opposite seats. In this quadrangular space there seem to have been five doors—one in the centre, and one on each side of it, facing the audience; the other two being at the corners. Through the central one, the principal actor, called the Protagonist, made his entry, and his two subordinates by the doors on either side. The scenic arrangement of the stage differed from ours very materially, as the object supposed to be nearest the spectators immediately faced them, occupying the centre of the stage or *proscenium*, while the distance was shown by painted curtains, &c., at the two sides. On the left stood the edifice—temple, palace, or house—in which the story took place; and on the right lay the open country—lake, mountain, sea, or plain.

The construction of the scenery is very much a matter of surmise; but we must believe it to have been both elaborate and ingenious, in order to fulfil the requirements of many plays that have reached us—the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, for example, and all the plays of Aristophanes. There were, it is certain, spacious rooms for the construction or housing of scenery on either side of the *proscenium*, and contrivances under the *logeum*, or front stage, for producing an imitation of thunder and lightning—the one being caused, we are told, by rolling leathern bags of pebbles down sheets of brass; and the other by the flashing of prisms. The whole of the stage and the elevated portion of the orchestra were of wood, and removable, as the theatre, being required for dramatic purposes only at rare intervals during the year, was also used for popular assemblies, and on other occasions when a large concourse of the people was expected.

As the dimensions of the building were so vast, it was customary to increase the stature of the actors by the use of the *cothurnus* or buskin—a kind of high boot, ornamented in front, and having a layer of soles, some three inches thick. The *cothurnus* was painted the same colour as the robe worn. In addition to

this, masks covering the whole head and face were used. On the top, over the forehead, was a lofty frontlet of conical form, which must have added considerably to the stature and dignity of the actor: inside the mask, there seems to have been some contrivance for strengthening the power of the voice to enable it to fill the immense space of the *auditorium*. Bell-shaped vessels of bronze are said to have been placed in various parts of the theatre to reflect the sound; and the actors were subjected to a severe course of training both as to power and modulation of voice. Many of the actors were men of position and influence in Attic society, and more than one had been entrusted with diplomatic and other missions. Sometimes the poet himself played in his own compositions, as Æschylus is said to have done. It may interest some of the craft of the present day to learn that as much as a talent (nearly two hundred and fifty pounds) has been paid to an actor of note for two performances. There were only three performers in speaking parts, the others were silent; indeed, they could not have spoken had they tried, for their masks had the orifice of the mouth closed; while those worn by the principal actor and his two subordinates were constructed with the mouth open in the shape of an O. No women were allowed to act, the female parts being taken, as in Shakespearian times with us, by boys or young men, not only on the stage itself, but in the chorus. Sophocles, when a youth, was selected for his grace and beauty to lead the choral dance at the festival given in honour of the victors at Salamis.

The dresses worn on the stage bore no resemblance to the ordinary Athenian costume, but were probably a modification of the festal robes worn in the old Dionysiac procession, and consisted of flowing robes of purple and yellow and other brilliant hues, crowns or chaplets, and broad embroidered girdles. These robes were so lengthy as to cover the feet, and were common to all characters, male as well as female.

When a poet desired to produce his drama, it was formally submitted to a court of judges convened for the purpose; and if it passed the ordeal, a chorus was assigned to him, and the play (usually a trilogy, or a connected set of three) put into rehearsal; the drilling of actors and chorus usually lasting a month. On the day of performance the trilogy was followed by a satirical drama, of which only one example has survived—that of the *Cyclops* of Euripides, so admirably translated by Shelley. It is conjectured that between sunrise and sunset, roughly speaking, some three or four sets of plays were performed on the three days devoted to the dramatic festival.

No play seems to have been performed twice, at least at the Athenian, which was the principal dramatic contest. If successful, the drama was probably produced at the theatres of other Greek towns in Attica and elsewhere. As it would have been beneath the dignity of a Greek playwright to receive money for his compositions, the victor in the contest was crowned with a wreath of ivy, which was held to be the highest honour attainable. The competitors, it must be remembered, were usually men of wealth and consideration in the state, and occupied other posts than

that of dramatic authorship. Æschylus was a soldier, and fought at both Marathon and Salamis. Sophocles attained the rank of general, and had Pericles and Thucydides for his colleagues, becoming a priest in his old age.

A Greek audience seems to have expressed approval or disapprobation in a very similar manner to that of a modern one; applauding when pleased, and hooting and groaning when anything in the play or performance offended their keen and critical taste; at times, pelting an unlucky actor with fruits, or even stones. Sometimes the author himself has come forward to deprecate their wrath or implore their patience. We also learn that the people regaled themselves during the performance with sweetmeats and wine.

Such, in brief, was a Greek theatre in the age of Pericles, when Athenian art and culture had reached their maximum of splendour. Of the plays, but few remain to us; and of the theatre of Dionysos itself, only a few broken stone steps now mark the site.

AN ALTERED PURPOSE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

A CUTTING March wind, driving before it a small rain, which a little extra sharpness would have converted into hail or sleet, swept Byerley Street pretty clear of passengers, and furnished a good excuse, if one were sought, for two men, who walked on the more sheltered side of the road, seeking refuge in the *Byerley Arms*, a tavern which stood at an angle just where the wind and rain were coldest. This was not a 'swell' hotel, or, indeed, a high-class place at all. Byerley Street was a low street, and 'the *Arms*,' as it was usually called, was a low house; but a good fire was burning in its public room, and, save for one man, who sat moodily in a corner, with folded arms and half asleep, the friends had the place to themselves. They were friends, or had been so until lately, and partners in business; but divers matters had arisen, which need not here be detailed, causing much irritation, with many unpleasant arguments between Messrs Sparle and Otterson, the two persons of whom we have been speaking, and some of this unpleasantness was still fermenting in their minds.

The hot gin and water, which should have been cheering and soothing, failed in its effect; and, indeed, after a second tumbler, their conversation, which had been carried on in guarded tones, grew a little louder, and some personal remarks, which were also deficient in cheering and soothing qualities, were exchanged. It was evident that business transactions, and especially those of finance, were at the base of all this dispute, which increased in acerbity, until Otterson exclaimed: 'I won't have it, Jack!—and that is all about it. Pay me out, and I'll go. I will go cheap. As for all the stock, horse, van, and everything, I don't want them. Give

me a fifty-pound note and you shall keep the lot. Only let us have a settlement soon.'

'It is very well to talk like that, Steeve,' returned the other; 'and I don't say I will not settle with you on your own terms; but what would you have said if I had chucked the affair up as suddenly as this, and left you to find a partner where you could?'

'I leave you with all the best of it, don't I?' retorted Otterson. 'What is fifty pounds to the value of the things I am giving up? You will find a partner soon enough; perhaps you have got one ready. I don't know a likelier man than Jack Sparle for such a dodge.'

'You know a good deal better than that, Steeve,' said Sparle, who was the elder of the pair. 'You want to quarrel; but we can part without that. I do not know where to find a man; I wish I did. Men who will stick to the business, and can put in some money—although it is not much—are not to be met with every day. I would give something to hear of one.'

'Would you?' exclaimed the third person present. The interruption startled both the others, who each uttered an angry ejaculation; Otterson following this with an oath.

'You had better mind your own business, sir,' said Sparle; 'and leave ours alone.'

'I am attending to my own business, and I mean what I say,' continued the stranger. 'I have not listened purposely; but it was impossible to avoid hearing your arguments. I want something to do. Your trade, with its going about the country, will suit me.'

'We should want some money first,' interrupted Sparle, eyeing the shabby slovenly figure of the speaker, a young man of somewhat dissolute appearance, with no great favour.

'I understand that well enough,' returned the other. 'I can find some. I can pay a deposit at this moment, and find the rest easily, if your terms are moderate. Do not be set against me on account of my looks. You may have known before to-day others who were under a cloud and glad to be out of the way; that is my case.'

Each of his hearers gave a sardonic laugh, and Otterson said: 'Most of our pals have been like that at some time or another—it is a little in my way at present. But if you really mean business, we don't care about the 'cloud,' and now is your chance.'

An animated conversation followed; the first two men appearing in much better temper, and preliminaries were tolerably well adjusted at once.

The business in which the partners had been engaged was merely the travelling in the western provinces with a large van, fitted up for the sale of goods; attending fairs and races, and doing a little betting at some of the latter meetings, where they were known.

'Always on the square, you understand,' explained Mr Sparle; Mr Otterson emphasising this with an oath or two, as seemed his custom.

If the young man was in earnest—thus proceeded Mr Sparle—and liked to do business sharp, he could go and see the horse and van at once, and see people, too, who would satisfy him that all was correct. He could then pay his fifty pounds if he liked; but he was not a-coming in

for any such money, although Steeve Otterson, who has a nasty temper—I don't mind saying so afore him—may pretend he is willing to go out for that. Only that a second party was necessary, nobody should come in at all. As it was, the party would have to put down a second fifty, or perhaps a little more, according to valuation, for his share; and even that would not include the betting, for which separate funds must be provided. This is a brief summary of the lengthy explanation given by Mr Sparle, with divers interpolations by his late partner.

The stranger gave some proof of his business-like intentions by exhibiting a couple of five-pound notes. 'These are all I have,' he said; 'and I know too well that no more can be got where they came from.' His tone changed as he said this, perhaps involuntarily; but his hearers, who were among the most cunning of their class, each glanced sharply at him, and each felt added confidence, from that moment, that he did 'mean business.'

The stranger went on: 'I have a friend who will help me at once, as far as your price goes; and if I join, I will do my best for you in the work.'

'What is your name?' demanded Sparle. 'I mean, what are we to call you? I can tell well enough that whatever you give us will not be right; but we shall not argue about that. Names don't count for much with us, and all our agreements are by word of mouth.'

A curious smile, apparently in spite of himself, had moved the lips of the young man while Mr Sparle was speaking. 'I rather like your free and easy style,' resumed the stranger, after a brief pause. 'Your name, I learn, is Sparle; mine will be Frank Rodbury. Here are the ten pounds. Late as it is, I am ready to go on with the business to-night. I will see what you have to offer; and I am quite sure my friend will not mind a call from me at any hour. Will you go on?'

'You had better do it, Jack,' said Otterson, interposing. 'I can see this young fellow means what he says. I did not like his look at first; but I do now. You can take him round to the place, and I will go on to my new people. We shall part good friends, Jack, after all.'

'Perhaps we shall,' retorted Sparle; 'but I do not care much how it is. I am glad we are going to part, as you have turned out so nasty.—Now, Mr Rodbury, if you are ready, I will take you round to our place.'

The stranger rose. He was a tall, well enough built young fellow, and not bad-looking, while he wore his shabby coat with a different air from that of either of the burly fellows in his company; yet, for all that, there was a something, a slovenly dissolute something in his very look, his every movement, which told of a wasted if not a bad career.

This his new partner had early noted; but his own experience had made him far from fastidious in such matters, and so, without further delay, he set off with Mr Rodbury in the direction of his stable and depot; Otterson parting company, having, as he declared with sufficient emphasis, something on hand which suited his book a great deal better.

It was now dark, or so nearly dark that the

street lamps were lighted, and most of the shop windows were lighted up also. In a yard at the back of a shabby terrace near the water-side, Frank Rodbury was shown a big strong horse, a large wagon or caravan, and a collection of goods.

'The things are worth more than you are going to pay,' said Sparle; 'and as a matter of fact, I am giving you the lot. It is only the good-will and the training you are paying for.—Now, come on; you shall hear something about me, and I will show you my receipts.' He took his new friend to a gay bustling public-house close by, where he seemed to be well known. Here the landlord testified to his respectability and to his solvency, avowing that Jack Sparle's simple note of hand was good to him, the landlord, for fifty or a hundred pounds any day.

'Now, I have dealt straight with you,' summed up Mr Sparle; 'and I shall expect you to be as straight in return. Where is this friend of yours, and when can you have your money?'

Rodbury intimated that he was ready to set about his arrangements at once, and said that he could make an appointment with Sparle for the next day, to settle, if that would do.—Yes, that would do very well.—'You will not object to a cheque, I suppose?' continued Rodbury. 'You can get it cashed, I daresay?'

'Cashing a cheque would not trouble me,' returned the other; 'and I shall not give you anything for it, not even a sixpennorth of coppers in change, till I know it is all right. So, if it did not turn out all right, it would be a good deal worse for you than for me.'

'I might have guessed what your answer would be,' said Rodbury with a smile. 'I will take my chance as to there being anything wrong with what I shall pay you.'

'Am I to go with you to your friend?' asked Sparle. 'I ought to know'—

'Well, you will not know!' interrupted Rodbury. 'My money will be all the reference I shall give. I have trusted you with ten pounds readily enough; so, good-night.'

With this abrupt farewell he left his companion, and went quickly off, glancing round once or twice, to make sure he was not followed. There was no danger of this, however; for, as he disappeared, Mr Sparle muttered: 'This is a different beginning in a cheap-jack business from any as I ever saw before. I wonder what my new pal has been up to? But Jack Sparle never was a spy, and never will be.'

Rodbury hurried on his errand, which led him a long way and to a very different part of London, until finally he stopped at a house in a large and respectable street in the West End, a house at which few persons of his aspect were likely to call.

The servant who opened the door to Rodbury demurred, naturally enough, at admitting such a person to his master's presence; but when the latter heard that a rough-looking man wished to deliver a message to Mr Ashwell from a gentleman, the domestic was ordered to show him in.

'You say you have a message for me,' began the master of the house; but checking himself, he told the footman not to wait; and the latter, who had hesitated at leaving such a character alone with his master, disappeared.

'Why, Cyrus! What, in the name of all that

is horrible, have you been doing with yourself?—and why do you come here now in such a guise?' exclaimed Mr Ashwell, with a total change of tone. 'Sit down, and tell me all about it.'

'No, Herbert; I must not stay long to-night; nor will I now tell you much of what I am doing,' returned Rodbury. 'What I have done, you know; and in what danger I am, you know too. I always calculated on your friendship'—

'You may, to the last!' interrupted Ashwell.

'Yes; I know it. Even as if you had been as great a rogue and fool as I am, a combination in your case happily impossible,' continued his visitor, 'and I had been—what you are, you might, I believe, have relied on me. I need two hundred pounds, in two cheques. With this I see my way to hiding myself, and leading a coarse vulgar sort of life, but one without any particular harm in it. I can have it, I hope?'

'Instantly; and I only wish I could find the means of helping you to something better than you describe,' replied his friend. 'I should like to attach one condition to this help, to which you are heartily welcome. I should wish you to let me know, sometimes, where you are, or, at any rate, how you are faring. I shall not press you further; I will leave all to yourself.'

'Thank you, Herbert,' returned the other. 'Perhaps I will do so. You will smile if I tell you I am going into business with this money; and you would smile or shudder—I don't know which—if you could see my partner. That reminds me that I should like you to make the cheque payable to a number, and sign it with initials. The London and Westminster will cash it, if you advise them.'

Without another word, Mr Ashwell drew a cheque-book from a drawer near to his hand, and in a couple of minutes the required slips were handed to Rodbury; then, with a brief clasp of the hand, the strangely assorted pair parted.

This was the commencement of the partnership between Jack Sparle, so well known, and, it must in fairness be added, so generally liked on the western road, and Frank Rodbury. The latter soon proved to be of great use in many ways, especially in betting, at which he was quicker, cooler, and 'broader' in his work than Jack Sparle, shrewd as the latter undoubtedly was. But the new partner never became so popular as the old one; he never possessed, and could never assume, a spice of the geniality of Sparle.

So Mr Jack always maintained, of necessity, the lead in the business, and Rodbury had sense enough to see that this should be so; yet, in spite of this, there was something about the junior in the firm which influenced and almost controlled his partner. Sparle felt that his colleague had not much in common with their usual associates, and he could not fail to notice that the craftiest of these 'fought shy' of Rodbury; nor did the most swaggering venture on any of the practical jokes with him which were much in favour with the class.

In consequence, perhaps, of this, Sparle unconsciously treated Rodbury somewhat differently from the manner in which he had dealt with Otterson, and with others before the latter. He could hardly be said to like his new partner better than he had liked his old ones: in fact, it was

with him a frequently recurring question, studied over his pipe and his glass, as to whether he really liked this queer chap at all. Nevertheless, as said, he could not help treating him in a different style from his predecessors, and amongst other things, he took him to his house, not to his place of business, but to his own home, where were found such family ties as he owned. These were two sisters—a girl of nineteen, and one of two or three years younger.

'I am five-and-thirty,' said Sparle, in his introduction; 'so they look up to me as a old man,' he said, 'as a old man;' but it is hardly necessary to reproduce all his oddities of speech, of which this is one of the most striking examples. 'There was ten of us,' he went on; 'but all the rest died off in two or three years; so did the mother. My governor died long before.'

Jack Sparle had been a fellow good enough to be the main support of his mother and sisters during the declining health of the former, and he was a fellow good enough still to say nothing about this to his new friend.

Rose and Matty, the two young women, were unusually good-looking, in which particular they resembled their brother Jack. Their attraction was rather of the showy 'barmaid' style, it was true; but they were attractive, beyond doubt. At first, Rodbury treated them with but slight attention, much of the trifling civility he did show being bestowed upon the younger. He was never rude or churlish; in fact, to each of these girls he seemed a cavalier of high breeding, and perhaps his conduct piqued Rose. In any case, on his recurring visits he gradually grew more conversational with her, while she undoubtedly looked forward to his coming, and, as Matty noted, and in consequence indulged in a great deal of sisterly satire, was always at her smartest when he came, and never failed to exert herself to please and entertain him.

During one of their visits to London, Sparle broke into a denunciation of the unreasonableness of women, their absurd ways, and utter want of business-like judgment. Rose furnished the occasion for this tirade, as it appeared that she had refused an offer of marriage from Bill Stakerly. 'Bill Stakerly, you know!' he repeated, with emphasis; 'a man as owns nine caravans, and could take a public for his wife, if she was so disposed any day of the week, and any week in the year, without putting his hand in any man's pocket but his own. To say "no" to Bill Stakerly!'

Sparle was unfeignedly exasperated, and held forth at great length on the enormity of his sister's conduct. The explosion probably did him good, for he seemed able to treat the matter more philosophically afterwards, and even to laugh at his own anger. But the incident made an impression on Rodbury. He was more reserved than usual, and appeared to be meditating upon some problem of difficulty.

Sparle had by this time grown accustomed to the occasional exhibition of these moods in his partner, 'who had as much learning and conversation as a lawyer or a parson, but was sometimes so cranky and silent that you could never quite tell where to have him. But a sharper fellow in the business you would never wish to see'—thus ran Mr Sparle's opinion.

He was a little surprised, on returning home one evening, after a day spent in the purchase of goods and so forth, to find Rodbury at his house before him. This was only remarkable from the latter having said nothing of such an intention. Mr Sparle was still further surprised by his partner rising, coming towards him as he entered the room, and then shaking him heartily by the hand. He opened his lips to ask the meaning of this; but a rush of mingled feelings and recollections—vague the moment before, but grown suddenly to conviction—stayed him.

Then, ere he could recover himself, Rodbury exclaimed: 'Let us have no secrecy in such a matter, Sparle! Your sister has promised to marry me, and I give the notice at the registrar's to-morrow.'

'Yes, it is true, Jack,' said his sister, in answer to his inquiring look. 'I know I offended you about Stakerly; I hope I please you now?'

'Well, I wish you luck,' said Sparle at last. 'I know you will take care to please yourself at any rate, whatever you choose to do. Well, I shall not attempt to interfere. I hope you will be happy—that is all.—I should like a little talk with you, however, Mr Rodbury, and'—

'I expected you would say as much,' interposed the other, who had smiled cynically at the doubtful, lukewarm benediction pronounced by his future brother-in-law.—'So, Rose,' he continued, 'I must go and talk business with your brother, as I told you I should have to do.'

'I cannot see that it has anything to do with you, Jack,' said the girl, whose heightened colour gave evidence of a temper easily aroused. 'I am my own mistress.'

'You are,' returned her brother; 'and try to be so over every one who comes near you. I shall not interfere very much, you may lay long odds. Let us go round to the *Fox and Goose*; we shall be quiet there, and can say all we have to say in a few minutes.'

His partner complied so far as to leave with him, but preferred to enter on such business as was in hand without going to the hostel indicated.

Sparle asked him several questions, of a character so searching as to do his shrewdness great credit, and was answered with more or less candour.

'Now, look here,' continued Mr Sparle at the close of his questioning, 'your name is not Rodbury, is it? Be straightforward and say "yes" or "no."'

'It is not,' answered the other decisively; 'but it is the only name by which I intend to call myself in future, and the only name by which you will know me.'

'Why—but—confound it!' exclaimed his companion, 'you are not going to marry Rose under a false name, are you?'

'You know, I am quite sure,' returned Rodbury coolly, 'that such a marriage is perfectly legal if the wife did not know her husband had assumed a name. I do not fancy you will enlighten Rose; so your sister will call herself and really be Mrs Rodbury.'

'Well,' said Sparle after a long pause, 'I suppose you are right. I shall not split on you. I should get no thanks if I did. However, I will just give you a hint. Rose is a trump, and will

go through fire and water, danger or death, for a man she likes ; and she likes you. But if you do not mean to act fair and square by her, my advice to you is to draw back while there is time ; for if you thoroughly offend her, you had better face all the enemies you have in the world, than run your chance with her. She would never mind killing herself, or you, or half-a-dozen like you, if she once fairly made up her mind ; so do as you please.'

Rodbury's answer to this was a laugh, a broad open laugh ; he said nothing, and there the conversation dropped, save that Mr Sparle once muttered in an undertone : 'A pretty pair they will make.'

No opposition, therefore, being forthcoming, the lovers were duly married, in a district at the east of London ; in the parish of West Ham, indeed. Neither of the contracting parties lived there, so a little further misdescription was necessary, but, as Mrs Rodbury said, 'Lor ! what does it signify !'

Indeed, to have hesitated then would have been, on the gentleman's part, in truth, straining at a gnat after swallowing a full-grown camel.

ROSEMARY LORE.

HERBS played a much more prominent part in the customs, the medicine, and the daily life of our forefathers than they do in the more sophisticated existence of the present day. No herb was in more universal use than rosemary. It was used at festivities of all kinds, at public entertainments, at weddings, and at funerals. It was strowed on the floor, was carried in the hand, and was stuck in the hat. In old collections of popular medical recipes, rosemary continually appears as an ingredient in wonderfully compounded 'waters,' oils, and salves. The works of the older dramatists contain frequent allusions to its various medicinal and symbolical uses. Ophelia's well-known saying, 'There's rosemary, that's for remembrance,' is but one among many such passages. In the *Winter's Tale*, Perdita, distributing her flowers, says :

For you there's rosemary and rue : these keep
Seeming and savour all the winter long :
Grace and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing !

Rosemary was long considered a good medicine for disorders of the head ; it was also supposed to clear the head and to strengthen the memory, and so naturally became the symbol of remembrance and fidelity. It is very possible that the enduring nature of the odour of the plant has contributed to its long-standing association with these qualities. In consequence of its symbolic character it was largely used in connection both with funerals and with weddings. Horace and Ovid tell us how the ancients used to strow sprigs and boughs of cypress upon the graves of departed friends ; and with the substitution of rosemary, and sometimes sage, for cypress, the custom has been maintained until a very recent date. When the body of Juliet, supposed dead, is

about to be removed to the vault of the Capulets, Friar Laurence says to the distracted friends :

Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse.

Bishop Corbet, in his poem on John Dawson, the Christ Church butler, addresses the undertaker's sable band as 'Ye Men of Rosemary.' Mrs Beecher Stowe, in her *Poganuc People*, tells us how the rugged New-England descendants of the Puritans in the early part of this century used no flowers about their dead, only the tansy and rosemary—bitter herbs of affliction.

It was formerly customary for the mourners as they walked in funeral procession to carry sprigs of the plant in their hands, which they afterwards threw into the grave. Gay, in his *Shepherd's Week*, describing a rural funeral, says :

To show their love, the neighbours far and near
Followed with wistful look the damsel's bier.
Sprigged rosemary the lads and lasses bore,
While dimly the parson walked before :
Upon her grave the rosemary they threw,
The daisy, butter-flower, and endive blue.

This ancient custom was, until lately, still kept up in Shropshire. The sprigs were distributed to the mourners just before leaving the house, and at the same time each member of the party was helped to a 'funeral cake.' These cakes generally took the form of oblong sponge-biscuits, one of which, wrapped in black-edged note-paper and sealed with black wax, was sent to every near relative or friend not present. But they are now going out of use, and will soon be, like so many other country customs, things of the past. In Germany, not many years ago, rosemary was always used for a death-wreath for any young girl dying shortly before her wedding.

In courtship and bridal, as in death, the plant has for centuries been a popular symbol of fidelity and remembrance. Stow tells us that in the reign of Elizabeth rosemary was strown before brides on their way back from church. The gift of the herb to a man by his sweetheart was considered most significant. An old instance is found in Robert Greene's *Never too Late* (1590) : 'Shee hath given thee a Nosegay of flowers, wherein, as a top gallant for all the rest, is set in Rosemary for remembrance—thou hast wonne her : els had shee not given thee this nosegay.' At weddings, it used to be the custom to dip a sprig in the cup before drinking to the health of the newly married couple. The famous old beverage of warm ale, sugared and spiced, with a roasted crab or apple floating thereon, known as lamb's-wool, was commonly stirred with a sprig of rosemary, to give it an additional flavour. Derbyshire folk have a belief that rosemary worn about the person will strengthen memory and will give success in love. In Spain they have a proverb :

Quien pasa por romero, y no lo quiere coger,
Ni tiene amores ni los quiere tener !

which has been thus Englished :

Who passeth by the rosemarie,
And careth not to take a spraye,
For woman's love no care hath he,
Nor shall he, though he live for aye !

Spaniards have great reverence for rosemary. It is related in one of their legends that the Virgin

Mary, when washing one day, hung the clothes of the infant Jesus upon it to dry. It had formerly been a very insignificant plant; but after receiving this honour, it became an evergreen and fragrant. According to Mr J. W. Crombie, an authority on Spanish folklore, it is believed that all the instruments of the Passion can be seen in its flower, and that it puts forth fresh blossoms every Friday, 'as if to embalm His holy body.' If a house be fumigated with it on the night of the Nativity, it is thought that no harm will come to that house the whole year through. Spanish peasants often wear it in their hats as a protection against witches and dangers in travelling. The practice of wearing rosemary in the hat is doubtless connected with the widespread and long-standing belief in the efficacy of the plant as a medicine for the head and brain and for the nerves generally. Edgar, in *King Lear*, describes how the 'Bedlam beggars

Strike in their numbed and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary.

The following curious prescription for a headache is given in an old *Collection of Receipts in Cookery, Physick, and Surgery* (1759): 'Dry rosemary before the fire till 'twill crumble to a very fine powder; one pugil (handful) of saffron; and with the powder of rosemary and saffron make the yolk of an egg into a stiff poultis, and lay it as hot as you can endure it to the temples.' The oil of rosemary made from the leaves of the plant is the principal ingredient in the perfume called Hungary Water, which was formerly taken very generally to quiet the nerves. The oil is still extensively used in various preparations for the hair and head. The leaves on their under part are covered with a short whitish gray down, as if dashed with sea-spray, and it is from this fanciful resemblance that the plant is supposed to derive its name, which simply means seaweed (*rosmarinus*).

Rosemary is often given internally in cases of chronic diarrhoea, and is also a common country remedy for coughs and colds. Lyte, in his *Dodoens* (1578), recommends rosemary for fastening loose teeth; while another writer of the same period, Andrew Borde, in his *Dietary of Healthe*, gives it as a remedy for 'palsies and for the fallynge sykenes, and for the cowghe, and good against colde.' The Plague raged in London in 1603, and so greatly was the demand for flowers and herbs affected thereby, that, as Dekker tells us, rosemary which had usually been sold for twelve-pence an armful, was then not to be bought under six shillings a handful. In Yorkshire and Lancashire, and probably in other country districts, there is a saying that rosemary only grows in the gardens of houses where the goodwife 'wears the breeches.' The same is said in Shropshire of parsley. Yorkshire folk also say that mint, on the other hand, will not grow in the gardens of the henpecked.

In the old-time Christmas function of bringing in the boar's head, rosemary always formed part of the coronal of the stately dish that was ceremoniously borne to the table with musical accompaniment quaint and solemn. Scott describes the custom, with many other old Christmas observances, in the introduction to the sixth canto of *Marmion*. The ancient ceremony is still carefully

performed every Christmas Day in the hall of Queen's College, Oxford, to the accompaniment of the old carol:

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
Quot estis in convivio.

A NIGHT IN PARIS.

ONE autumn, some years ago—how many it does not matter—Ezra L. Doleman came over from Boston to Paris to study painting. He came to sit at the feet of one of the many French painters whose public studios are thrown open to Americans and English. He was a stranger in Paris—it was his first visit to Europe—but he carried a letter of introduction to an American family, who had permanently settled there.

Ezra's knowledge of the French language was, like most of his capacities, limited, and it was with some doubt and considerable timidity that he drove across Paris, one October evening, from the Gare du Nord to an hotel in the Rue de Rivoli. It was a rainy gusty night, and the streets were nearly bare of passengers. The quarter of the city through which he passed seemed mean and squalid. The cafés were empty, their shabby chairs and tables piled against the walls, and their dripping windows mirrored in the wet. Only the *brasseries* had occasional groups of unshaven working-men, seen dimly through the clouded glass drinking absinthe at the zinc counters under a flaring jet of gas. A few stragglers, mean, half-clad, and hurrying, made passing silhouettes against the lighted shops, or battled at the corners with the fierce gusts which took them unawares from the side-streets. The whole population, Ezra thought, was of the lowest class—unlovely and sordid—not the gay, light-hearted, art-loving Parisians of literature whom he numbered among his friends. The Paris of his imagination faded before this first impression. As he bobbed his head from side to side of the cab, looking out of each window in turn, such artistic ambitions as he possessed were swallowed up in one intense longing to be back again by his beloved Hudson. He felt as if he had taken the wrong turning at a theatre, and got behind the scenes instead of into his seat in the stalls.

Ezra Doleman was a youth of quite blameless habits, whose record hitherto had only been blotted in a juvenile way; but he recognised at once that this was the reverse side of Paris life, which his favourite authors had mostly omitted, not caring to soil their dainty pages with its dirt and gloom and close contact with crime. Soon the cab rattled into brighter streets, and his forebodings vanished in the glitter of the Palais Royal and Rue de Rivoli. But this first glimpse was truly the keynote of it all. Parisian gaiety—he knew it better afterwards—is only an iridescent film of brightness, floating on the surface of a deep and troubled sea of misery and discontent. From its depths, now and then, men and women whom you will see nowhere but in Paris come to the surface with faces of terrible significance. In the narrow streets and on the wharfs they walk with the mark of evil upon them; and sometimes in the listening night there rises a sudden hoarse cry

for mercy, and next morning at the Morgue they are laying out another victim.

Within a week Mr Doleman, being an impressionable youth, had begun to reflect his surroundings. His figure was short and dapper; his head, small and square; his eyes, deep and brown; his cheeks, thin and burdened with a heavy black moustache. It only needed a French hat, low collars, and an abounding cravat, to half transform him into a Frenchman. Already he could swagger on the boulevards and smoke his cigarette and drink his *petit verre* with the best of his fellow-students. But these accomplishments were not achieved without disappointment. The pursuit of art in Paris was not the ideal thing that his imagination had seen in the pictures of Bouguereau or Millet. The *atelier* was a hot dirty shed, reeking of foul tobacco; and the models were not gods and goddesses. The students were a mixture of enthusiasts and fools, who worked and played alternately with feverish energy, or who had no brains for either work or play. It was scarcely what Ezra had looked for, and already he was not quite punctual in his attendance. But he had secured lodgings, and was prepared to settle down quietly for the winter.

This hiring of rooms had filled him with trouble. His purse was small and not heavy, and an *étage* in Paris is not for beggars. At length, weary of bargaining, and boot-sore with tramping about the hard pavements, he had managed to secure—with the use of the inflections of the verb—a little suite of rooms on the fourth story, in the neighbourhood of the Cluny Museum. The place was central, within the borders of the Latin Quarter, where as a bohemian he must of necessity dwell. The price was not exorbitant, and it was with a mixed sense of importance and relief that he saw his belongings conveyed up the long polished wooden staircase and finally deposited in the outer passage.

The first days passed without event. The rooms were lonely, and the evenings long and irksome. Ezra saw no one but the *conciérge* on the basement floor; and after dusk, no sound broke the stillness of the tall buildings but the rare fall of a foot as the lodger above him went upwards at midnight. In the bosom of his family Ezra had been regarded as a youth endowed with musical talent, and on particular occasions had been known to accompany his thin tenor voice with the spasmodic patterings of a guitar. But he dared not awake the stillness of that lonely house. Once or twice when he had courageously touched the strings the sound had frightened him, and he had turned his head fearfully towards the echo in the empty stair and put away the instrument in guilty haste. His one unfailing resource after dark was to wrap his greatcoat about him and to sit on the balcony, which ran the whole length of the street, and there to listen to the murmurs of the lighted city beneath him. The voice of Paris is not as the voice of other cities, but has a distinctive character of its own. The rattle of the cabs is quicker and harsher; there are no street cries, but the human babel is higher and sharper; and, near and far, sounding every minute like trumpet notes, are the dull metal blasts of the tramway horns, a warning of danger in the ever-flowing tide of traffic. And then, chilled by the autumn air and dazed with

the flickering lights, Ezra would shut his window, light his pipe and lamp, and sit over his book or drawing, or his less distinct visions of future fame, until the roar of the streets had faded to a broken murmur, like the mutterings of fevered lips, and the occasional roll of a heavy wheel told him that dawn was coming with the market carts.

One night—the weather had been strangely warm for the season—Ezra went to bed rather earlier than usual. He had spent a fatiguing day in the stifling atmosphere of the studio, and was soon asleep. Like a careful youth, warned of the noxious vapours of a Paris night, it had been his habit to secure his window firmly before retiring, but to-night sleep came to him unawares, like a blessing, and the window was left unfastened. Soon after midnight he awoke uneasily, and in the moment of awakening—that odd moment of blended dream and actuality—he heard a sound outside his room. In his dreams it had seemed a footstep on the stair, and now, to his waking sense, it was a cat-like tread at his window. During these early hours it had fallen to rain, and though the wind lay silent, the wings of the casement had burst ajar. But the long catch still held them in position, and through the opening Ezra could see the dark fields of cloud across the sky, and the wet moon that shot a sickly arrow on the wall.

Over the lower part of the opening a heavy shadow fell—the shadow of a crouching figure. Ezra lay quite still, watching and listening, but cold to the marrow, with a trembling that shook the bed. At last, when he could pierce the darkness, when he could follow out the lines of window and balcony, he saw with terror that the fastening had been released, that the shadow was gone. Yet the window stirred not, though both sides were free. If no human hand was there, the draught should have swung them wide. Then suddenly, with a cautious creaking noise, there was a larger opening, and the watcher could see more space of drifting sky. Whatever its purpose, the figure was in the room—still and dark as a dead thing—lying closely in the shadow of the wall. The perspiration stood on Ezra's face; he knew not what to do. To challenge were but to court a quick attack. The Paris rough, dexterous with the knife, goes nowhere without his weapon. The poor student was unarmed and undressed, alone at the top of an empty house. A moment's struggle and he would be pinned like a beetle in an entomologist's case. He had taken off his courage with his clothes. In his trousers, Ezra would have felt himself a lion; without them he had the timidity of the hare, with the hare's inveterate tendency to flight. Nay, had it not been for very shame, he would have given up both watch and purse and begged his enemy to begone. But even this required courage, and he had none. What little had remained to him after undressing had since oozed into the sheets; so he lay still and watched and waited.

His visitor was a deliberate man, and for some minutes he heard no sound but the noise of the close rain upon the balcony, and he might almost have fancied that his senses had tricked him. But slowly to his nostrils there grew a familiar odour—a sickening blend of tobacco and garlic—the characteristic flavour of a French workman.

Down on his face on the floor the man was creeping like a reptile, shunning a gray space of moonlight that just missed his head. Ezra's nerves jerked painfully; his mouth was parched; his body, chill and damp as a frog; but he lay without movement and tried to counterfeit the heavy breathing of a sleeper.

I do not know that those moments, like the last moments of a drowning man, were filled with the recollection of all the frivolities and guilt of his flowerless youth; but he certainly had much time for such meditation, for there was soon another long interval of silence. Even the rain had ceased, and the wings of the night were closed in slumber. Then faintly came the sound of material things dragged upon the floor. The man was hunting through the garments on the chair beyond the bed. It shocked Ezra to think that the search there was to go unrewarded, for his pockets were innocent of anything but sours. His watch was on the mantel-piece, stopped for days, and unable to betray itself; his purse he had deposited with his usual precision beneath his pillow. Clearly the chase was coming closer to his person; and even at the risk of death, he must make an effort to save his money. So, slowly and with exaggerated caution, whilst the other was still busy with his trousers' pockets, he reached his purse, and then, inch by inch, pushed it down among the bed-clothes till it landed at his feet. Personal danger was new to him—it had taken him unawares; but he had always been of parsimonious instincts, and the rescue of his money called up only the exercise of a familiar habit.

It was an odd situation. An empty wet street, glimmering with feeble gas-light, and noisy at intervals with the splashing rain; and a narrow room high above it, dark and silent, but full of a drama with the end yet unwritten. And Ezra's moments of sorest trial were now at hand. Lying on his left side he faced the window, and between it and the bed there was a space of blackness on the floor—a dark unknown land in the shadows of the room. Peer closely as he might, he could not see; but somewhere in its depths—the watcher knew by instinct—a dark figure was creeping nearer. The awful stillness was ominous of something more. Suddenly, without sound of warning, before Ezra could shut his eyes, the man was close upon him. With a gliding action, like a snake about to strike, he reared his body from the ground, and his face was within a foot of Ezra's nose. He could feel the hot fetid breath with sickening force. The impulse of the moment—it was a purely feminine and hysterical impulse—was to scream wildly and strike out madly at the horrid thing. Perhaps, had he done so, in the fear of sudden attack the intruder might have fled. Had Mr Doleman been a man of any force of character he would have made one supreme effort to seize his foe; but he was only a youth of a somewhat disordered imagination—a mere bundle of shattered nerves—in mortal fear for his life, so to his assailant he left the development of the episode, and lay quite still, with the sheets clinging about his moist limbs like plasters.

In the passing moment he had seen a face, terror-stricken like his own; a gaunt, wolfish head, thin and eager—an expression trembling on the brink of reason—and framed in a mass of dark tangled hair. The vision of this black crouching thing

bore on him like a weight of lead, so that he could not move; only his hair seemed to creep upon his skull, and his heart bounded like a ball. If his visitor had set a light beneath his very chin, the wretched youth could not have stirred hand or foot. He kept his eyes fast closed, and even in this supreme moment of danger his presence of mind came back to him like a memory, and he succeeded again, with something approaching to genius, in breathing regularly as a sleeper does. So the two remained face to face for a few never-ending moments of stillness; the one scrutinising the other closely, for Ezra still felt the offensive breath upon his cheek. And then a great hand, but bare to the bone as a claw is, was stretched out warily and gently sought below the pillow. Stealthily it searched, backwards and forwards, here and there, a cold stab, almost of pain, touching Doleman's heart each time he felt the dragging hand below his head. Already he repented that the purse was at his toes. Better far that it should have been there to satisfy the robber's greed, and that he might have gone filled with plunder rather than with the revenge begot of failure. At last the hand was withdrawn regretfully, and something like a sigh escaped the figure as it slipped once more to the floor. Ezra on his side drew also one furtive little sigh of relief. Then silence again—a silence longer than any before—broken only by a ghost-like fall of plaster in the wainscot, and the footstep of a late guest on the pavement far below.

Where was his hateful visitor? Gone, or going, or planning further villainy? Surely he would not go empty-handed. Ezra opened one eye with caution, as though it were an action that might be heard, and watched the window as before. Black clouds had come upon the rising wind and veiled the moon, and the room was darker. He could only see the opening vaguely as a grayer shadow; but the keen draught that now blew shrilly was still laden with the odours of his visitor. He began to realise that his powers of endurance were about exhausted. This last hideous silence, after what had gone before, was in truth unbearable. He must cry aloud, even at the hazard of his precious life. But a time came at last, after more waiting, when the crouching shadow was at the window once more; and then silently as ever, like a spirit, the thief had passed, and was gone into the blackness of the night.

A great weight dropped from the soul of Ezra Doleman—his albatross had fallen from him—but he felt faint and weary and sore, as though he had been soundly flogged. He dared not yet rise and shut the window. When it occurred to him to ring for aid, the thought possessed him that he was in a den of thieves and his bell might only summon another enemy. So for hours he lay, his head buried far in the blankets, the victim of a thousand morbid fancies. It was nearly dawn when he arose, with the murmurs of the awakening city in his ear; and, shivering and stumbling like a drunken man, his scanty night-dress blowing in the raw morning air, he at last closed and locked the fatal window. So the night ended, and the morning looked in upon a careworn, fevered youth, who had safe-guarded his belongings at the cost of his self-respect.

Ezra is still in Paris, studying art, but he has

taken apartments at a respectable hotel, much affected by Cook's excursionists, and on the days when he does not attend the studio—and they are frequent—he devotes his mind to the study of the English aristocracy on its travels.

ABOUT ELEPHANTS.

THE elephant may well be considered the head of the menagerie. Young and old are never tired of watching these wonderful creatures; they are so knowing, so loving, yet so terrible in their anger. An elephant can tear off huge branches of trees with his trunk, or stamp the life out of a tiger with his great feet; yet the same trunk can be trained to pick up a pin, and the mighty feet to tread gingerly over the recumbent forms of sleeping or intoxicated keepers. Strange as it may appear, an elephant's skin is very sensitive; mosquitoes annoy him greatly, and a beating is a terrible punishment for him. Courageous as he is, an elephant is very nervous. He will fight any other huge beast, yet a mouse is said to make him shake with apprehension and trumpet with terror.

Elephants are very mischievous and inquisitive: they raise latches, open doors, and enjoy immensely their own practical jokes, though so ready to resent indignities to themselves. Sensitive as regards insult, their affection is warm and lasting, and dogs, horses, and other animals are often the objects of their attachments. Elephants are pleased with gay colours, delight in sweet perfumes, are dainty in their tastes, and revel in the water like an Englishman in his bath. They practise theft with the ingenuity of the 'Artful Dodger' himself, are as meddlesome as monkeys, have the caution and cunning of a diplomatist, and the memory of Magliabechi.

When born, a baby-elephant stands about three feet high, and is not considered grown up until thirty years old. Accidents excepted, he is likely to live about one hundred and fifty years, if not longer. Though delicate in his tastes, an elephant likes quantity as well as quality, and at his meals makes nothing of bales of hay and gallons of water. His ingenuity in trying to cater for himself is astonishing, and often amusing. An American showman saw an elephant pull up a stake to which he was chained, 'go to a feed-bin containing oats, wrench off the lock, raise the lid, eat all he wanted, put down the lid again, return to his place, poke the stake back into the same hole, and stamp it down with his foot, and when his keeper came, look as innocent as a lamb.' A twinkle in his cunning eyes showed his enjoyment of the situation when the man stormed and raged on discovering the robbery.

An incident of an elephant's memory is said to have occurred some years since when Wombwell's menagerie was exhibiting at Bolton. Four years before, the same collection was in the town, and on that occasion, on being released from its van, a large elephant walked across the town-hall square to a public-house and protruded its trunk into the lobby. The barmaid supplied the animal with refreshments; and the keeper, who had been in search of his charge, then conducted him back to his den. On being released at the breaking-up of the show on the second visit, the same elephant

broke away at a brisk trot in the direction of the hostelry, and the unwonted charge upon the premises greatly alarmed the inmates. The former barmaid, now the landlady, arrived on the scene, and recognising her old friend, once more regaled him to his heart's content. The elephant then submitted to be led away by his keeper.

Their sagacity is indeed marvellous. In an Indian town, an elephant, during his keeper's absence, was one day amusing himself with his chain in an open space, when a thief, who was pursued by a crowd of people, ran for protection under the huge animal. Seemingly pleased with the poor wretch's confidence, the creature instantly faced about, erected his trunk, threw his chain in the air, and became so furious in defence of the criminal, that neither the surrounding multitude, nor even the mahout, to whom he was greatly attached, could prevail with him to give up the hunted man. This strange scene had continued for several hours when at length the governor arrived, and was so pleased at the elephant's generous perseverance, that he pardoned the criminal. The poor man expressed his gratitude by kissing and embracing the proboscis of his kind benefactor, who appeared so sensible of what had happened, that he became tame and gentle in an instant, and suffered his keeper to lead him away without the least resistance.

In America, no circus, however small, could hope to exist without an elephant. Whole herds form parts of some shows there; and the eagerness of Mr Barnum some years ago to obtain a white elephant is easily understood, seeing that one is considered worth all the other attractions in the country put together.

Although elephants will not submit to abuse, they are not difficult to teach, and at first are fond of going through their tricks on their own account. Performing-elephants in Rome were taught to dance by the association of music and a hot floor. A block and pulley is now sometimes used in training an elephant to assume various positions, and the word of command given as if it was doing the trick of its own accord. Good treatment with firmness is necessary in teaching them, and any rebelliousness must be checked by the whip. They cry out when subdued, and the trouble is then over for the time. Even wild elephants are said to be easily taught when once subdued. Most of us have admired the wonderful agility of such clumsy-looking animals in balancing themselves on inverted tubs and so forth. At Astley's, elephants used to delight thousands with their performances. These huge creatures were made to stand on their hind-legs with their forefeet poodle-wise dangling in the air. Another stood on its head with its hind-legs raised perpendicularly. Placed on pedestals, they wheeled round rapidly, or balanced themselves on two side-legs only, and gave various other evidences of wonderful training. Well-trained baby-elephants are great favourites. One was taught to sit at table, fan herself, and do numerous tricks to delight children and their elders too. The two clever baby-elephants 'Jock and Jenny' were marvellously trained. They made their bow to the audience, and then one of them walked on the tops of a double row of bottles. On a plank placed over a trestle they see-sawed like a couple of children, guessing the required equilibrium with almost human exacti-

tude. Playing on an organ and drum, and dancing in time to the jingles of bells, were amongst their other accomplishments.

The habitual caution of these intelligent creatures is illustrated when they are travelling from show to show. Should several be in a car together, one of their number will remain awake on guard while the others are sleeping. Some years ago, experiments were made in the transport of elephants by railway. One of the ordinary cattle-wagons of the East India Railway was fitted up for the purpose, and the animal was placed in the centre space of the wagon, between six shafts, a breast and back bar, and secured in addition by anklets on the fore and hind feet, united by couplings transversely and longitudinally, and further by four diagonal mooring chains passing through holes, and lashed round the corner pillars of the wagon. The first elephant loaded, having his head free, took the opportunity to remove with his trunk a portion of the roof of the truck; it was therefore found necessary to put a collar round the neck of the elephant, with a vertical chain leading through, and secured to the floor. In this way a successful experiment was made to Pundooah and back, the animal showing no signs of fear, or making any attempt to free himself.

Many interesting and famous elephants have been favourites of the American circus-going public long before the late Jumbo's successful debut. One of these, known as 'Canada,' was a desperate character. When in one of his tantrums, 'he did as much mischief as a tornado,' to use an American showman's words—tossing hacks into the air and tearing down signs and lamp-posts. He was sent with the rest of a menagerie to a farm, and when there, had one of his mad fits. Rushing into the stable-yard, 'in a few minutes he killed two buffaloes, a sacred cow, a couple of elks, several horses, and a camel. He would seize an animal, toss it in the air, catch it on his tusks, and then either jam or trample the life out of it.' He then sallied out for the town, and the popular excitement can be imagined. 'A trap was set with a long ponderous chain with an enormous corner-stone at its end to entangle the animal's legs and hold him.' A man then ran out in sight of Canada, and the elephant instantly rushed after him. 'The trap was successful so far as making the chain and stone fast to him, but he kept right on, and would have caught the man, who was a fast runner, had the latter not jumped down into an unfinished cellar of a new house, and ran up a narrow flight of steps on the opposite side. The elephant jumped down after him as easily as a dog would, with the big stone clattering behind him.' Fortunately, the stone was large enough to stick wedged against the walls on each side of the stairway, and Canada was fast; but it was a close shave for the man. They managed to secure the savage animal with more chains, and then went to work to conquer him. As the account graphically describes it, 'they wore out big clubs on him, fired loads of buckshot into his trunk and ears, and beat and tortured him for hours until he howled in token of surrender.' The moment he was loose, however, he gave a yell of rage, dashed out of the cellar, and started to kill. Every one flew for his life; but he was tired, and took up his position under cover of three haystacks, hunting all who ventured near

him. 'Buckshot fired into his head only checked his wild rushes, and whenever he thought people were on the other side of a stack from him, he tried his best to topple the hay over on them. The fight went on for three days and nights, during which time he had not a bite to eat—for he was too angry even to take any of the hay around him—and not a drop of water.' At length, despairing of saving him, the shot-guns were exchanged for heavy rifles, and several big bullets at close range finally put an end to him.

The interest in Jumbo, the Zoo favourite, was subsequently transferred to Mr Barnum's so-called white elephant, which, in spite of generally expressed disappointment at its appearance, and doubts as to its 'sacredness,' attracted thousands of people in London, and was also viewed by still greater numbers in America.

The first live elephant seen in London was in the reign of Henry III., and the citizens closed their shops and donned their holiday attire in its honour. King James I. had a private menagerie in St James's Park in which was kept the elephant presented to him by the king of Spain. It cost some hundreds a year to keep this animal, besides 'the wyne he must drink from April to September, a gallon the daye.' Another celebrity was the huge elephant 'Chunee,' whose tragic end during a strange attack of mental aberration kept all London in a ferment for several days. If we recollect aright, a show-elephant in London was the mother of the first elephant born in captivity. A large elephant weighing heavier than Jumbo, though not so tall, was recently on view in Liverpool, where there was quite a run on his photographs.

Elephants being so powerful and intelligent, are worse than any wild animal when in one of their sudden fits of ungovernable rage. The amount of killing they take is incredible. Heavy rifles that kick tremendously often have little effect in stopping their wild charges, and in one instance, in India, even a fieldpiece fired repeatedly failed for a considerable time to put an end to the career of a mad elephant.

NEVER FORGET.

NEVER forget. May the clouds never come
'Twixt the gazer's eye and the dream above.
Oh, ne'er may your heart to my pleadings be dumb,
Or fail to respond to my message of love.
And ne'er be that forehead enveloped with care,
That over thy life shall its sorrows beget;
May the fragrance of memory ever be there.
Oh, never forget, love, never forget.

Birds build their nests where they built them last year;
The young love the places long hallowed by old;
And longing is deeper and love is more dear,
Where Memory's river does never run cold.
Oh, look to the sun at the dawn or the setting;
Bask in the beams that its courses beget;
Then, though all life may be doomed to regretting,
Oh, never forget, love, never forget.

ROBERT HOUSTON.

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NEGLECTED FRUITS OF THE SEA.

THE poorer classes excepted, English people generally seem strongly prejudiced against many articles of food which are consumed by continental nations even at the very best tables. A random glance at the *menus* of first-class restaurants abroad would afford ample proof of this fact, if any were needed. And, curiously enough, no sooner do our countrymen set foot on foreign soil, than they willingly and freely partake of what at home they would turn away from with disdain, if not disgust. The method of cooking these so-called objectionable viands adopted in the *haute cuisine* may have something to do with this circumstance; but considering that nowadays our cookery, except amongst the lower ranks of life, will compare favourably with almost any country in the world, it can scarcely account for it entirely. No; blind prejudice alone, it is to be feared, mainly deters us from turning to good account many an excellent article of diet.

Take, for example, one phase of the question, that of shellfish. Beyond oysters, lobsters, crabs, prawns, and shrimps, we seldom find any crustacea presented in ordinary every-day fare for our delectation. Yet there are many other species which, if properly treated, yield most nourishing and attractive dishes. Some of the cheapest sorts of shellfish which abound on the coasts of these islands offer opportunities for the exercise of refined cookery, and find their way abroad to the tables of the most fastidious.

To begin with the simplest and commonest, the humble shrimp. Here, it is chiefly associated in our minds with bread and butter at breakfast or tea, when we are at the seaside—or in the sauce served with boiled sole or turbot. But as travellers in France, Belgium, and Italy can testify, the shrimp is often, amongst other methods, stewed with cream and lemon peel, enclosed in a casket of flaky pastry, and lightly baked. An enthusiast has lately written that 'to have eaten of one of these shrimp pies thus prepared is to have known a gastronomical bliss not readily to be forgotten.'

The same writer adds: 'The mussel, too, which we rudely boil, as though it were a mere carrot, and serve up swimming in its diluted juice, is sympathetically treated by French *chefs*, who dress it in many ways, tempting to the eye and exciting to the palate. We find *moules au vin blanc*, steeped in a pale delicate sauce, faintly flavoured with Graves or Chablis; *moules à poulette*, a cream *fricassée*, fragrant of thyme and marjoram; *moules à la marinère*, the thick sauce of which is redolent of sweet herbs, and resembles the quality of mercy in that it is not strained; mussels cooked *à la mode de Bordeaux*, their gravy being dark, rich, and slightly flavoured with tarragon and garlic; and many other preparations of the beautiful blue bivalve, which have conferred well-merited renown upon certain specialistic Parisian restaurateurs.

In Italian seaport towns, notably in Venice and Leghorn, the cockle, the winkle, the whelk, as well as many another plebeian marine creature included in the generic term *frutti di mare*, or sea-fruit, are often exquisitely cooked by perambulating artists, and eaten at the second breakfast of many highly respectable Italians. It is customary in some of the open-air restaurants of the cities alluded to for a purveyor of 'sea-fruit' to occupy a corner of the garden in which the clients take their meal, and to dispense cheap portions of his stew from an ever-simmering caldron, fixed in an iron frame over a charcoal fire.

The attractions of cheap molluscs have yet to be developed, and few of those who consume them in abundance have the least notion how appetising they may be rendered by intelligent preparation for the table, or how many inexpensive ways of dressing them are familiar to the ordinary domestic cook of Southern Europe. Down to the present time, however, English cooks in their professional relations with bivalves have not risen above stewed and scalloped oysters, and are curiously conservative even in their manipulation of fish generally. In all probability, there is not a restaurant or club dining-room in England's vast metropolis at which it would be possible to procure a dish of *bouillabaisse* or a plate of *borsch*

soup, although these delicacies—of which fish forms the chief ingredient—have been household words in France and Russia respectively throughout this century. It is much to be regretted that, surrounded as we are by the sea, we do not turn to better account the good things of which our teeming liquid girdle is so lavishly profuse to us.

Nearly every one of the inferior crustacea and molluscs—what the fastidious among us would term unwholesome, coarse, if not highly objectionable food, only fit for the roughest tastes and strongest digestions—are rich in phosphates, and contain an enormous amount of nitrogenous elements—very essential nutrition both to body and brain. Doubtless, a vague notion of this fact is prevalent, and there certainly is a natural inclination on the part of our population, especially in inland towns, to partake freely of everything which smacks of the sea. The saltish ozone-like odour which rises from the oyster-stall or the costermonger's barrow seems to have a peculiar attraction for the multitude; whilst shrimps, when offered for sale by any fortunate accident in a rural district, go off with amazing rapidity.

Yet, as a rule, how difficult it is, except for the residents on sandy coasts, to get anything like an adequate supply of this common yet toothsome 'fruit of the sea.' In a perfectly fresh state it is almost as great a rarity as pine-apples, sometimes a greater. Even on the outskirts of London, in which metropolis it is supposed everything can be bought for money, we cannot ensure a dish of fresh shrimps under twenty-four hours' notice. This of course arises in the first instance from the contemptuous way in which, from its cheapness, the shrimp is regarded by the fishmonger as well as his customers; and in the second, from the delay with which it is transferred from Billingsgate to the remoter districts where it is retailed. Of course we know the little comestible deteriorates rapidly when it is once boiled. There is not much difficulty, however, in detecting the freshness of the shrimp; and as a guide to discovering this, the expert above quoted aptly says: 'When quite fresh, its flesh is firm, pink, and delicately scented with a subtle marine perfume, whilst its brittle brown armour is easily removed by a dexterous twist and pull, revealing a delicious morsel to the complacent eye of the operator. A few hours' sojourn in bag or basket, ere it reaches the marble slab of the retailer, changes the shrimp very much to its own disadvantage as well as to that of its consumer. Its body becomes limp and flaccid, its scent acquires an oppressive and indomitable force.'

Nevertheless, it will be eagerly secured so long as it is in anywise eatable. The same thing may be said of the periwinkle, if it be permissible to mention such a plebeian mollusc. Also we refrain from saying anything respecting the whelk or the cockle; but in justification it can be repeated that these neglected 'fruits of the sea' are not only tolerated abroad, but are made to do efficient and wholesome duty as food for man, to the edification and advantage of high as well as low, the cultivated and refined, no less than the untutored. In reality, our taste as a sea-loving people inclines towards shellfish, though we do not know how to cook them invitingly; but if we could introduce more varied methods of treating

them, the tables of the rich, to say nothing of those of the poor, would frequently present grateful surprises in this direction.

These suggestions are offered in the hope that they may attract the attention of those who have the superintendence of such matters, especially in the numerous schools of cookery ostensibly established for the benefit of the masses. We do not profess to supply any practical details as to the precise methods of cooking and serving these minor tributes from the ocean; but doubtless there is no lack of the requisite knowledge now to be found in England amongst at least the higher class of *chefs* who regulate our fate dietetic.

Probably a host of excellent foreign recipes would be immediately forthcoming, if our demand were made evident, and if we could only overcome our prejudice against the common and the cheap.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR ORME, with a joyful tremor in his mind, fumbled with thumb and finger at the cheque in his waistcoat pocket. It was drawn, as he had already observed, upon a Birmingham bank, and he promised himself a sweet Saint Monday, the morning of which should be devoted to a journey for the purpose of cashing that valuable strip of paper, and the afternoon and evening thereof should be given over to manifold pleasures, among which rum-and-water and the theatre shone conspicuous. He was just entering the gilded emporium of Messrs Moses & Co, in the free realm of fancy, bent on refurbishing himself from head to foot as a preparative for the pleasures of the town, when Isaiah walked up beside him. Mr Orme looked round a little startled, and fastened the single button which remained on his shiny old coat as a protection to the cheque.

Isaiah's aspect was enigmatical and perplexing. By way of salute he gave a nod which might have meant anything, and to Mr Orme's imagination suggested mischief. The two knew each other perfectly well, and had been accustomed to exchange salutations when they met. Mr Orme's guilty mind alone made him uneasy, for he did not so much as guess that Isaiah had overheard his treason. Even if he had, the treason was at its most a very small one, for Tobias was in no way bound to fealty, and could not reasonably be supposed to break a bond into which he had never entered. But Isaiah walking at his side, with that unchanging countenance of enigmatical meaning turned constantly towards him, filled him with distinctly uncomfortable sensations. He began to wish that at Isaiah's first coming he had found presence of mind to salute him. It was eminently awkward not to do it now, but he felt that it was too late, and that any greeting he might offer would sound forced and unreal. He shambled on, therefore, feeling guiltier and more openly detected every second; and Isaiah twisted the sidelong enigmatical accusation into him relentlessly, as if it had been a gimlet.

By the time a hundred yards had been covered in this comfortless fashion, Mr Orme had begun to feel that the position was downright intolerable,

but he saw no way to mend it. To rid himself merely for a moment of Isaiah's intrusive eye, he made an elaborate search for his pipe, and having found and lit it, went on with as good an air as he could assume of being unaware of his companion's neighbourhood. But Isaiah stretching out a deliberate hand, possessed himself of the pipe and threw it over the hedge. Mr Orme's soul quaked within him at this open declaration of hostilities, but he was too fond of peace to resent it. Whether in the hope of rousing Mr Orme to war, or simply from a desire to relieve his own overwrought feelings, Isaiah sent the flabby silk hat after the pipe.

The victim groaned feebly, and climbing over a stile, made a silent search for his missing property, whilst Isaiah watched him from the road. Still uncomplaining, Mr Orme returned, and resumed his journey with Isaiah at his side. He walked all the dreary four miles and more which led to the town, and Isaiah kept him in voiceless company. When they passed the dram-shop at which he had refreshed himself in the afternoon, he felt in such urgent need of comfort that he made an effort to enter it; but Isaiah, skipping nimbly round, intercepted him, and sent him onward by a single significant gesture of the thumb. The victim groaned again, and shambled dismally towards the railway station, his unwelcome companion still clinging to him.

'Got your ticket?' said Isaiah, breaking silence for the first time.

The wretched unresisting little fat man nodded. There was a moist appeal and terror in his eye which would have moved a soul less sternly set than Isaiah's. His persecutor took him by the arm as if he took him into custody, and led him to the window of the ticket office.

'Third-class for Warwick,' said Isaiah.—'That's where we're going to, ain't it, companion?'

Mr Orme in a scarce audible murmur answered that he supposed so; and Isaiah, who had taken an unexpectedly facetious air, led him to the platform. When the train came up he bundled him into the carriage with an exaggerated helpfulness which Mr Orme felt to be more cruel than open violence; and all the journey through Isaiah sat on one side of the carriage smiling forebodingly at his captive on the other. When the dreadful journey was over, he took him into custody again and led him homeward. There was no room in the mind of the miserable Tobias for further doubt. And he, who had never felt particularly courageous towards anybody, unless towards a boy of exceptional delicacy and cowardice, had never dreaded anybody as he dreaded Madame Vigne. He knew now beyond hope of error that he was to be ushered into that lady's dreadful presence, and to be exposed there as one who had attempted to wreck her plans.

Isaiah's knock at the door was answered by Madame in person.

'What is the matter?' she demanded severely, recognising her lodger in the dusk. 'You have been misbehaving yourself again; you have been drinking. I told you last time that I would forgive you no more. Go to your bed, and on Monday you shall leave. I will have my house respectable.'

'I don't think he's been drinking much this time,' responded Isaiah.

'It is you, Mr Winter,' cried Madame, in a tone of surprise. 'Come within-doors. What brings you in Warwick on a Saturday?'

Isaiah, gripping his captive more firmly, struggled with him through the doorway, Madame recoiling in surprise before them. In the little parlour Jousseau and Vigne sat playing at chess together. The boys were sitting at a side-table, John drawing, and Will leaning over his shoulder. Everybody looked up as Isaiah and Mr Orme came tumbling clumsily in together; and when Isaiah knocked his captive's hat off and forced him into an armchair with unnecessary violence, they all stared in astonishment. Madame had delayed a moment to close the street door, and entering in time to catch Mr Orme's hat in her arms, stood amazed.

'What is the matter?' she exclaimed.

'This is the matter, mum,' returned Isaiah. 'This gentleman—this nice old gentleman—has been to Castle-Barfield. What's more, he's been to Beacon-Hargate. What's more, he's been to see my gaffer, old Bob Snelling. And what's more,' Isaiah continued, by this time in the highest conceivable state of exasperation, 'he's sold the lot of us for a cheque for ten pounds, and he's got the paper in his pocket at this here very instant.' With that he began forcibly to fumble Mr Orme, as if with intent to rob him of his gains; but Madame intervening, her husband and the young artist rose together to her assistance; and the three, interposing between the victim and his assailant, made so loud an inquiry that for a minute there was no understanding anything. Mr Orme sat quiet, with an anxious eye. He directed his glance once toward the door; but the observant Isaiah precipitated himself in that direction, and closing the door with a loud bang, set his back against it.

'Now,' said Madame in rapid French to her husband and the artist, 'what is the use of everybody talking at once? Leave him to me, and let me find out what has happened.—Tell me quietly,' she continued to Isaiah; 'let me understand.'

'This party,' said Isaiah, scornfully indicating Mr Orme, who sat in the precise position in which he had been placed and made no attempt to depart from it—'this party has been to my master's house at Beacon-Hargate, and I heard every word that passed between 'em. He told my master that we was all in a plot together to keep the boys away from him. He mentioned me as a visitor here every Sunday. My master's coming over by the first train to-morrow morning, and he's given this fellow ten pounds for the news.'

Madame, translating this intelligence for her husband's benefit, M. Vigne stood by for orders, reserving his opinion of Mr Orme's conduct until his wife should express her own. Madame's views were always good enough for Monsieur, and he made it a sort of point of honour to have none of his own until hers were clearly set before him.

'I am sorry,' said Madame, shaking her head reproachfully at the traitor—'I am sorry to hear these things of Mr Orme. He has been kindly

treated in this house these three years, more kindly treated than he has deserved. He has not deserved it, and he knows it—well. Oh, right, right well he knows that he is not deserving.'

Mr Orme looked vacantly in many directions, but forbore to encounter any of the glances fixed upon him.

'He knows,' Madame continued, with a theatrical gesture of the right hand, before which Mr Orme blinked feebly, in anticipation of physical violence—'he knows that the children were kept here because they had been vilely ill-used at home. He knows that whatever has been done here has been done in kindness and at our risk. He knows'—Madame was going on at a great rate, and had grown quite parliamentary in accent and in gesture, and was turning from right to left, to impress her audience with a sense of Mr Orme's enormities, when her eyes lighted suddenly on John's face, and her eloquence was stayed in mid-torrent. The boy was white and terror-stricken, and the old look of bewildered vacancy, which nobody had seen now for half a year past, was on his face again.

'N'ae pas peur, mon enfant,' she said, in a tone suddenly grown soft and caressing, as she ran to him and put her big motherly arms about him; 'thou shalt come to no harm.'

'My cherished,' said M. Vigne, 'you are right, as always; but what is to be done?'

'We will talk it over between ourselves,' Madame returned.—'Achille, mount guard over that infamous, and do not permit him to leave the room.—Come with me, M. Vintare. Come with me, my children. Come with me, my husband.'

She swept out her brood before her; and turning back from the door in the very act of closing it behind her, bent a look of anger and contempt upon Mr Orme, and suddenly snapping her thumb and finger under his nose, in token of unspeakable derision, caused him in the suddenness of his recoil to strike his head with some violence against the mantel-piece near which he was seated.

'Oh!' said Madame, 'you disgracious, you thankless, you good-for-nothing old man!'

Mr Orme said nothing, but explored his waistcoat pocket to make sure his cheque was there. The action was mechanical; but the touch of his thumb and finger on the paper awoke him to the fact that by to-morrow morning the document would have grown worthless to him. At this reflection he gave a sudden whimper, and Madame, with a new snap of her fingers, swept from the room.

Jousserau, having first locked the door, sat down facing the frustrated informer, and producing a sketch-book from an inner pocket, began immediately and with an intensely business air to translate his lineaments to paper. Mr Orme, fretfully resenting this, and feeling as if it were an undeserved indignity, turned away; but the artist, rising from his seat, and laying down his drawing materials, rearranged him as if he had been a lay-figure, and cautioning him with a forefinger, resumed his place and his occupation.

'You are nice man, eh?' said Jousserau. 'Not? What? Eh?'

Tobias was less afraid of the small artist than

either of Madame or of Isaiah, and infinitely less afraid of him than of the other two in combination. 'It's no affair of yours,' he said sulkily.

'Ah!' returned Jousserau, shaking his lead-pencil at him—'traitor!'

'I won't have it,' said Mr Orme—'I won't put up with it. I am not a traitor. I have done nothing to merit so ignominious an appellation.'

'No?' said Jousserau, in mild inquiry. 'You are nice man. Very. Eh?'

'If,' said Mr Orme, with an air of virtue—'if any confidence had been reposed in me, it would have been a different thing.'—Jousserau responded with a satiric 'Oh!' as if he admitted that this explained everything.—'I had a right,' pursued Mr Orme, 'to expect that confidence would be reposed in me. I have been an inmate of this house for three years, and have always been treated with consideration until now. If the other inmates of the house had seen fit to continue their consideration, they might perhaps have had a right to expect that my conduct should have borne another stamp. As it is, it does not appear to occur to anybody that I am an elderly man, gaining a wretched subsistence by a distasteful occupation, or that the present enterprise lands me, I can assure you, Mr Jousserau, not less than nine-and-eightpence out of pocket.'

A part of Mr Orme's pathos was wasted upon the artist, but he knew enough English to follow the concluding statement. He was so barbarous as to clap his hands at it and to cry out 'Good!' with a look and accent of the liveliest satisfaction.

'Ten bob, less fourpence,' pursued Mr Orme, with a downcast air. 'You can leave the fourpence out of calculation. It isn't worth being considered under the circumstances, and ten bob represents two-and-a-half days' work. I might as well have done two-and-a-half days' work for nothing, and for a man of my years, Mr Jousserau, that is a painful reflection.'

'It is the years that make the difference,' Jousserau answered with a cheerful air. 'I like to think of it. That is, because I am younger.'

In view of this hopeless persiflage, Mr Orme went silent; and the smiling artist continued his sketch at his ease.

Meanwhile, Madame, her husband, and Isaiah were holding counsel together in the kitchen, Madame, by right of sex and volubility, presiding. There was the clearest belief in everybody's mind that Robert Snelling had intended neither more nor less than to make himself master of his ward's belongings. Nobody doubted for a moment that he meant to achieve this purpose by driving John into a condition of idiocy. That had become a creed with Isaiah, who was not without evidence for his belief; and Madame and Monsieur had long since grown to share his convictions fully. The elders had championed the boys, and if for no other reason than that, would have been strongly attached to them; but there were other and worthier reasons for liking, and the good Madame Vigne in especial was overflowing with affection towards both her charges. The idea of surrendering one of them to so pitiless a master as stood in her own mind for Robert Snelling never for a moment occurred to her, and in the heat

and affection of her partisanship she was ready to go all lengths and run all risks.

'We must remember the law, my dear,' said M. Vigne at the beginning of the conference; but Madame flamed out so at this that he dared to say no more. 'The law!' cried Madame. 'What do I know of the law, here or anywhere? I know what is the law of the heart; I know what is the law of heaven! If I were to go to prison for the rest of my life, I would not resign this poor angel into that monster's hands.'

'Precisely, my cherished, precisely,' M. Vigne responded, and so sank out of the discussion.

'That villain,' said Madame, turning to Isaiah, whom of course she addressed in English, 'must never be allowed to find the boy. My husband talks of the law; but the law shall never make me say a word. The children must be got out of the way—that will be easy enough. They can earn their own living. They have never cost us a penny that their diligence has not repaid. And for the matter of that, we are not so poor that we cannot afford to keep them for a little while if there should be need for that.'

'I've got the sack,' said Isaiah, 'as safe as houses.'

'What sack?' Madame asked, with a bewildered look. 'What houses?'

'It's an English saying, ma'am,' responded Isaiah. 'I mean I've lost my place for certain.'

'Oh, I fear so, for certain,' Madame answered. 'I am very sorry; but I hope it does not matter greatly!'

'The place was well enough,' said Isaiah; 'but it wasn't so good that a man need die before finding a better. I've saved a bit, and I've had a bit willed to me, and altogether I'm pretty well, thank you. If there's anything to pay to keep the lads out of harm's way, I can find my share; and I'd as soon hand John over to the Old Un at once as give him to his uncle's care. There's no turning Bob Snelling; and it's my belief he doesn't know what mercy means. As for the law, the lads ran away from home of their own free-will.'

'Ah!' said Madame, 'but we helped them. I do not know the law in England; but if we were in France I am sure we could be punished.'

'But then you see we ain't in France, ma'am,' Isaiah responded. 'We're in a free country, wheer an Englishman's house is his castle. As I was saying, the boys ran away from home of their own free-will; and they're game to do it again, if we only tell them wheer to run to.—Ain't you, boys?—Now, what do *you* say, Master William?'

'Oh, I'll go anywhere,' said the bulldog youth. 'I know what'll happen if old Snelling catches Jack. Let him wait till I'm his size, that's all. And old Macfarlane.'

'Whatever is done,' said Madame, 'must be done quickly.—Listen, Mr Vintare. My husband has a fellow-countryman in Oxford. He is of the same trade, and John would be useful to him as he has been here. He has a kindness for me, and will do anything I ask him.' Madame blushed at this, and added laughingly: 'He wanted to marry me once; but that was years ago, and he has married somebody else; but we are very good friends. The boys shall go to him. There are plenty of printing-houses in Oxford, for it is a

place of learning, and William will find something to do there easily. They shall go to-night, and M. Jousserau shall take care of them.'

She translated the scheme for her husband's benefit; and the good easy man consented. There was a mighty bustling to and fro whilst the boys' belongings were packed together, and there was a moving scene when Madame took leave of them. John clung to her almost despairingly, and the kind creature had at length to unwind his embracing arms. She cried plentifully when they were gone, but found a little comfort in upbraiding Mr Orme. That personage felt that he had brought his pigs to a poor market. Spurred by the promise of reward, he had walked until he was chafed and footsore. He knew that he was going to be on short commons for a week or two to come; and being easily susceptible to the opinions of other people, he was oppressed by the belief that he was very worthless and had disgraced himself. It was not a very profound sentiment, but the phantom threat of thirst stood at his elbow, and its presence was enough to lend poignancy to any trouble.

HAY-FEVER.

THE popular term Hay-fever gives but an inadequate idea of a curious complaint, the very existence of which was not fully recognised till the beginning of the present century, when Dr John Bostock published an account of his own symptoms and sufferings. At that time it was dimly regarded as a sort of fanciful hypochondriacal affection, of which those who had little or nothing to do became the subject; but cases have of late years been frequently recorded which prove the disorder to be one of great interest on account of the mystery attaching to its early history, its prevalence in all climates and countries, and the painful pertinacity with which it clings to its victims.

It is called in Germany *Frühssommer Katarrh*, or early-summer catarrh; and among ourselves, Hay-fever or Hay-asthma, since the more usual kind begins and ends with the hay season, varying in the time of year during which it appears according as the hay season is early or late. As long as the grass is in flower, it persists; with that, it ceases. The grasses productive of hay-fever are said to be the sweet-scented vernal grass, the rye-grass, and the *holcus* or honey-grass, common in damp meadows. It is found that the fresh plant is less potent in its effects than the hay made from it; and it was long ago discovered that some grasses owe their perfume to the presence of benzoic acid, which is well known to occasion violent fits of coughing and sneezing.

The complaint is, however, by no means limited to the flowers of the field. The same symptoms may be produced by very different causes: by sunlight, by violent exercise, by the dust of rooms; and so capricious are its ways, that it is sometimes difficult to assign sufficient cause for its appearance.

Rose-fever and rose-catarrh are well known in the United States, where the rose is largely cultivated. Peach-cold is an affection of a similar

nature. In India, the blossom of the mango is said to produce it; and Trousseau affirms that he always had asthma if he remained for a few minutes in a room with a bunch of violets. The neighbourhood of a privet hedge and the pollen of the common daisy are said to have given rise to more inconvenience than even the scent of new-mown hay. We are told of a lady who could never remain in the room with a single stalk of Indian corn without being seized with shortness of breath; and an instance is recorded of a man that he could never pass the shop of a certain ropemaker in his native town without suffering from asthmatic symptoms, presumably owing to the dust from the flax.

Cullen speaks of the case of a man who was seized with fits of sneezing whenever rice was thrashed in the neighbourhood of his house; and the effect of ipecacuanha dust is well known to hospital servants. Medical students have declared that they are attacked with shortness of breath if a bottle of ipecacuanha powder is merely opened in the room where they are, and that in none of them does asthma occur under any other circumstances: no other irritant will produce it. It is related that the wife of an apothecary was seized with asthma whenever ipecacuanha root was powdered in the surgery, even if she happened to be in another part of the house at the time. People insensible to ipecacuanha will experience the same sensations from linseed, mustard, or scammony; and an epidemic of sneezing was traced to the use of bitter apple which had been powdered over a variety of articles as a preventive of moth. Scents of all kinds may induce asthmatic attacks, and thundery weather provokes them.

An American writer has remarked that the complaint is patrician, occurring mainly amongst those in high rank and social position, or who are eminent for mental and literary attainments. Divines, poets, medical men, and ladies of fashion, are included in the list of examples. It is certainly a corroborating fact that farmers and field-labourers, who are of necessity exposed to the influence of pollen, rarely suffer from it, owing, it is contended, to absence of predisposition, which mental culture induces; whilst it is more simply explained that they are rendered insusceptible to the action of grasses by constant exposure to their influence.

Similar sufferings to those produced by vegetable effluvia occur from contact with many animals. Dr Hyde Salter, in his valuable work on Asthma, relates that he has met with many cases in which the effluvium from horses, wild beasts, guinea-pigs, cattle, dogs, rabbits, and hares would immediately give rise to a paroxysm. One of his patients always had a fit of asthma brought on by the presence of horses. He was the proprietor of an equestrian establishment, and was therefore always asthmatic; but he had no suspicion of the real cause of his symptoms till he made his fortune and retired from business, when he almost immediately lost them.

Cat-asthma, from nursing a cat or a kitten, closely resembles hay-fever, and the paroxysms are even more violent. The influence seems to be stronger in kittens from two months old and upwards than in full-grown cats; but after the removal of the cause, the symptoms very quickly

subside. Some people are attacked with sneezing in the presence of all animals.

Dr Salter mentions the case of a boy who was never able to keep rabbits in consequence of the effluvium from their hutches always bringing on asthma when he went near them; and another case of a lady who was unable to visit the Zoological Gardens without suffering. A still more curious one is told of a gentleman who was staying at a friend's house in the country when on two occasions he became seized with a fit of asthma, and found in both instances that there were deer feeding at the time immediately under his window. On a third visit, when the deer had been removed to a distance, he was quite free from any asthmatic symptoms.

A case of sneezing produced by contact with a caterpillar is probably unique. A gentleman who had suffered severely from acute pleurisy, the result of exposure to wet and cold while out shooting, became subject on his recovery to what he called 'hairy caterpillary asthma.' If by any chance he touched a caterpillar, especially a very hairy one, he was immediately seized with an attack of shortness of breath, often lasting an hour or more. He was not in the slightest degree affected by pollen. One of his daughters was a cat-asthmatic, attacks of sneezing being always induced by contact with cats, or even by the presence of one in a room. She was not subject to hay-asthma, and was rather inclined to laugh at her father's objection to caterpillars.

Dr William Murrell, of the Westminster Hospital, in a recent article on 'Paroxysmal Sneezing' in the *British Medical Journal*, gives the story of a country clergyman who was always rendered asthmatic by the neighbourhood of a hare or a rabbit, so that if by any chance he met with a man who had been poaching, he at once detected him.

There is no invention or imagination or exaggeration in these things, and what may be an irritant to one class of asthmatics may not be in the least so to another. One person is obliged to expatriate himself in the hay season; another cannot endure the scent of flowers; another cannot sleep on a down pillow, or use mustard in any shape, or pass a poultterer's shop. Even the sunlight is terrible to some inveterate sneezers.

A sudden fright may induce a fit of asthma, or, on the contrary, may cure it; indeed, a cure by violent emotion is more sudden and complete than by any other remedy. A confirmed asthmatic states that once when he was suffering from an unusually severe attack, so bad that he had been unable to speak or move all day, he was suddenly alarmed by the illness of a relative. He ran down two flights of stairs and up again, administered the restoratives he had procured, and then observed, to his astonishment, that his asthma was gone! Another sufferer relates that he was in bed breathing with the greatest difficulty, and unable to move, when a fire broke out opposite his house. When the excitement was over, he found that he had been standing with others looking out of the window, and that he had forgotten all about his asthma.

Of more usual and perhaps more certain remedies there are no end. Dr Murrell has found cocaine useful, and has been able to give relief

with it to many victims of this troublesome complaint. A cigar smoked the last thing before going to bed has often ensured a good night's rest. A very slight thing just at starting will determine the advance or the retreat of an attack, for the longer it is allowed to go on, the more uncontrollable it becomes. But a hay-asthmatic is warned never to smoke tobacco but for his malady. Smoking should never be to him a habit or a meal, for it then ceases to be a medicine. Indeed, to him it should be a deadly drug, for it is by poisoning that it cures.

AN ALTERED PURPOSE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

IT seems taken for granted that, according to the best authorities, and the highest, or at least the most prevalent fashions of taste, nothing need be said of the hopes, the fears, the trials, successes, and disappointments of any heroes and heroines who may get married. Those who have been fortunate enough to taste the wedded bliss of real life, know how far this is a sensible rule, and how far justified by the absence of all exciting episodes afterwards. However, we shall begin by adhering to this rule pretty closely, only indicating the course of Rodbury's life for a few years after his marriage; and it is but fair to his wife to start with the declaration that he was more happy with her than he had expected to be. The love was wholly on the girl's side. Rodbury had not for a long time the least idea of the love which glowed, and flamed too, in her heart. But he saw it at last, and, as a man would see, not as a woman, came gradually and logically to know and understand, that so long as he kept her love, and she knew or thought she had his, no pain, no sacrifice would be too great for her to suffer or make in his behalf. After realising this, he seemed to know, even better than before, that she had never had his love. Her earnestness and intensity almost frightened him; and often, when he was away from her, he would picture her conduct in certain contingencies or trying positions, and the result of these reflections was rarely increased cheerfulness on his part.

Two children were born to them, a girl and a boy. The girl was named Rose. Her mother had asked Rodbury if he would not like to have a second name, after *his* mother; but he said: 'No. My mother's name was not so pretty as your own; so let it be Rose only.'

With the boy it was different. Mrs Rodbury wished his name to be 'Francis John,' after her husband, her brother, and, as it appeared, her father; but here Rodbury was unexpectedly firm. He was very grave for a while, more silent and thoughtful, indeed, than Rose had ever known him for so long a time, and he would sit and watch the sleeping child by the hour together, when this spell was upon him. One day—he was to start on their country round upon the next one—he came in and said he had registered the boy, and his name was Cyrus. It had struck him as being a very pretty name, and he had

been reminded of it by a tale he had recently read.

Rose was quite mortified at this, and shed a few tears of vexation at the idea of her beautiful boy being called by such an outlandish name. Whoever had heard of Cyrus? Such an ugly, foreign-sounding name! Thus spake Rose; but the mischief was done. There was no doubt of that, for Sparle, whose chief failing was not that of placing implicit confidence in any one, went round to the registrar, with whom he had some acquaintance, and satisfied himself that Rodbury's statement was a true one, so far as it went. Sparle qualified it thus in his own mind, but said nothing openly: 'He must have had some reason for calling the boy Cyrus Launceston, and for holding his tongue about the second name.' Thus reflected Sparle. 'Well, I can hold my tongue as quiet as he can hold his, for a bit, anyhow. There is a place called Launceston somewhere; I am sure I have heard the name; perhaps he has something to do with that place. Anyhow, I shall be likelier to find out if he does not know exactly what I suspect; so we shall see.'

This little vexation was soon got over; and Rodbury and his wife parted good friends, when the former went off for his country round. Business was brisk upon this excursion, and there was increased geniality between the partners. A constant source of conversation was little Cyrus, of whom Sparle was quite as ready to talk as was the father, and this was not feigned on 'Uncle John's' part, as he was really fond of both the children. If he had any other motive in so often turning the conversation to this topic, he always managed to conceal it under the interest he assuredly did take in the young ones.

The tour was concluded, and so successfully, that some plans for dividing the round and working it more completely were discussed as the pair returned to London in the best of tempers with each other. They parted at their usual rendezvous, the stable and warehouse, and, as was natural, Rodbury went straight home, or nearly so.

During the time he had been with Sparle, he had called, on returning to and ere leaving London, at a certain restaurant—a 'coffee-shop' it was called in its neighbourhood, but modern taste prefers the foreign name—where, as he had arranged with his friend Mr Ashwell, such letters of importance as it might for any reason be desirable to screen from too general a gaze were to be sent.

Hitherto, these calls had been fruitless; but on this night the landlord said: 'Yes, Mr Rodbury, there is a letter for you at last; and any one would have thought you knew it was coming, for it has not been here an hour.'

Rodbury smiled at this, uttered some little jest in reply, then carelessly thrusting the unopened letter into his pocket, walked away with anything but the air of a man who was expecting important news. This indifference only lasted until he was fairly out of sight of the shop; he then tore open and eagerly read the note. It was brief, and emphatic: 'DEAR RODBURY—Come to me at once; I have news of importance for you—news which changes everything. Do not delay.—H. A.'

This was all ; but there was quite enough in these few words to disturb the reader palpably. With knitted thoughtful brow, he went on until he was within a quarter of a mile of his own home, then, just as he reached the corner of a large street from which his smaller thoroughfare branched, he paused, looked hesitatingly down it for a few seconds, then, as though he had suddenly come to some decision, turned abruptly round and at once struck off in another direction.

As will be imagined, his way led him to his friend Ashwell's, and on inquiry he found that gentleman was within.

'And never more glad to see any one in my life!' exclaimed Ashwell, after a few words of explanation; 'although I little expected so prompt an answer to my letter. You must have received it, friend Launceston'—

An exclamation and a warning shake of the head interrupted him here.

'Yes, I said Launceston, and I meant it,' continued Ashwell. 'I directed the note to Mr Rodbury, and repeated the name inside, according to our agreement, but for the last time, I hope. Henceforth, you are again to be Cyrus Launceston to me and to the whole world.'

'Why, what—what has happened?' said Rodbury; and his face paled, then flushed, while his voice faltered as he spoke.

'Your grandfather is dead. I was sent for by his special request, when it was plain that his hours were numbered,' replied Ashwell. 'He is gone; so you have no cause to fear; and, moreover, he had completely forgiven you, as I can amply prove.'

'But even if he had—which I could hardly believe if any one else had told me,' said his friend—'even if he had done so, there are others still more dangerous who know—who had proofs that'—

'Not a bit of it, my dear fellow,' interposed Ashwell, as the other faltered. 'But I had better tell you all about it; so, sit down there—take one of these cigars—and listen.'

Mr Ashwell then entered on a summary of what had transpired of such importance to his friend; a pretty lengthy summary too, requiring the best part of an hour in its telling; but a brief outline of his narrative will serve our purpose.

Herbert Ashwell and Cyrus Launceston had been playfellows, schoolfellows, and friends; while the latter, having once saved Ashwell's life at the imminent risk of his own, had earned the never-failing gratitude of his chum, although he made light of the service himself. He was wont to say, with a little spice of truth, that as it was the only good deed he had ever done, it shone out more vividly with him than it would have done with any one else.

Both Launceston's parents died when he was young, leaving him to the care of his grandfather, a wealthy and in the main a kindly man, but crotchety, hasty of temper, and tyrannical; not at all a model custodian for a youth, and such a youth. What judicious treatment and care might have done for Cyrus, it is impossible to say; he had enough, as he owned, of the family gifts to get a great deal of both these essentials, and he got nothing of them.

First, he quarrelled with the old man, violently,

too, as such a pair would be likely to quarrel; then, as nothing was gained and much lost by this, the young fellow took to craft, and tried to hoodwink his harsh old relation. Unluckily, he got hold of a very bad set; such a young man as himself was sure to get hold of a bad set; on which the need for cunning and craft increased rapidly. In plain English, Cyrus was a sad young fellow, selfish in the extreme, dissipated—of course hypocritical—and was sowing worse grain all round than even the traditional wild-oats.

Much detail of his behaviour is not required here; but it turned out that his grandfather, who was fully fourscore years of age, had held him more closely under watch than the young man dreamt of, so knew of nearly all he would have concealed, among other things of his having given post-obits, bills payable at his grandfather's death, and discounted at a ruinous rate upon the chance of his being made heir to the old man's property. At last there came an explosion, premature on each side, it would seem, for Cyrus could not afford at this crisis to quarrel with the old man, who on his part, had he but waited for a day or two, would have heard of something well calculated to cause a breach between them, had all else been satisfactory.

As it was, they parted after a stormy interview, in which, it was reported, the elder struck his grandson across the face with his cane so as to draw blood. On the next day his bankers advised him that he had slightly overdrawn his account. They had paid his cheque for a thousand pounds, but only out of courtesy to an old customer. This cheque was a forgery, and Cyrus Launceston the forger.

The old man was furious. He paid the cheque, and so obtained possession of it; but then he gave information to the police, and actually offered a reward for the culprit's apprehension. This was so trivial in amount, however, as to savour more of an insult than a stimulus. It was supposed that Cyrus would endeavour to make his escape to America; and as he was not stopped at the ports, it was supposed also that he had succeeded.

Ashwell kept upon friendly terms with the old man, and by his counsel and by his unflinching advocacy of Cyrus, who, he always contended, had never had a chance to do well, had gradually soothed the grandfather, who, with advancing years and declining health, became gentler in his memories of the boy, as he termed him, and a severer critic of himself. He thought that Cyrus must be dead; but Ashwell invariably asserted his conviction that he was not; he had stronger grounds for this conviction than he chose to confide to the old man; but the latter was very shrewd, and may have divined that Herbert knew more than he told.

Be that as it may, when the old gentleman died, it was found that the bulk of his property was left to his grandson, if claimed by him within seven years. The forged cheque had been destroyed in Ashwell's presence; while the old man had written to the police, and had advised the bank, that on reflection he saw it was probable that his grandson considered he had authority to sign in his name; and so there was no criminality in the act for which he had fled.

'So, everything is plain sailing for you,' concluded Ashwell, whose narrative, as may be supposed, did not include all the points herein detailed. 'You are worth a hundred thousand pounds as you stand there, besides the house and grounds. All is clear now. You can go and take possession fearlessly. You will look out for a handsome wife, and settle down among the best of them. And then, you know, by-gones will be by-gones.'

'And is such a marriage to be the natural result of my change of fortune?' said Rodbury, or Launceston. 'Is it in such a position I am to find my happiness?' He spoke with apparent difficulty, and ended with a short laugh, so harsh and strange, that Ashwell looked curiously at him for an instant ere he spoke.

'You are a queer fellow, Cyrus,' he said; 'but that you always were. Why do you pitch upon one harmless jest—if you like to consider it so—to the exclusion of everything else? When you come into your money, which practically you may do to-morrow, you will naturally think of settling, and then'—

'No! I shall not!' abruptly interrupted his friend. 'I am married.'

'Married!' The surprise had evidently rendered Ashwell incapable of saying more for the moment; but recovering himself, he continued: 'You are married, and have kept it from me? This was not friendly or wise, Cyrus. I should have been glad to know your wife; I might have done more for you, and her'—

'And the children,' again abruptly interrupted Rodbury, as we shall continue to call him. 'Yes, you may stare; but it is true. I have been married long enough to have two children; and my wife belongs to the tribe of hawkers and cheap jacks—or her friends do.'

'By Jove!' muttered Ashwell.

The quick ears of his visitor caught the exclamation, subdued though it was. 'I tell you, Herbert,' he went on, 'that notwithstanding this, she is good enough for me, and is a true and devoted wife, according to her light. I looked upon myself as no better than a fugitive convict, so what did it matter how I flung myself away? But even that last sentiment is all humbug. I repeat that she was quite good enough for me. To keep up my character, I suppose, and to ensure my marriage being in keeping with the rest of my honourable life, I married her under a false name. To her I am Frank Rodbury, and she is Mrs Rodbury.—You might have expected this from me—might you not?'

'Sit down again,' returned Ashwell; 'talk calmly, and reasonably if you can, and tell me all about this strange business.'

His friend complied; and his narrative evidently had the greatest interest for Ashwell. Now, the latter was an honourable man, a generous and devoted friend, as he had shown often enough. But he was, and always had been, under a sort of glamour or charm as regarded Cyrus, whom he rated far too highly, and for whom he always made excuses. He believed in him, as calculated to make a figure in the world if he could only get the chance; and this admiration, this belief, rendered him an unsafe adviser when his friend's interests were concerned; perverting his own honour and truth-

fulness into something wearing a very different aspect.

On the few occasions when, of late years, he had seen and conversed with Ashwell, Rodbury always left him the better for the interview; but he did not do so on this night. If the counsel Ashwell had given, or rather the hinted suggestions he had made, for the time had hardly come for direct counsel on the subject, were such as would prompt an ungenerous line of conduct on Rodbury's part, fate played strangely and unexpectedly into his hands.

Rodbury walked thoughtfully homewards; it will be admitted that he had some food for thought; and his reverie was so absorbing that it was more by habit than observation that he reached his house, but there he was suddenly aroused.

He dwelt in a small back street, lined with six-roomed houses, decent and quiet enough places, and his, like most of the others, held more than one family. He and Rose held four rooms, a man and his wife rented the other two, and all had hitherto gone on smoothly between them. The man was an omnibus conductor—it must be seen that the social change likely to arise from Rodbury's succession to wealth was great and tempting—so was from home a great deal, and on this particular day, chance, or fate, brought about a quarrel between the two wives, on some mean and paltry question of washing or drying clothes, as far as could be made out. In his then mood, a quarrel on such a basis was infinitely more galling and painful to Rodbury than any outbreak arising from more important matters.

'Why, Rose!' he exclaimed, as he threw open the gate of his little garden and saw his wife standing in the passage leading from the street door, which was wide open, her face flushed scarlet, while she was exchanging an 'angry parole' with some shrill feminine voice in the upper part of the house. 'Be calm, Rose!' he continued. 'Do not excite yourself. If Mrs Kilby has offended you, she shall leave.'

'Leave! Leave!' screamed his wife; her tone was pitched for the benefit of her unseen adversary. 'I should think she should leave! She shall go before dinner-time to-morrow, and I will turn her out myself, if no one else will do it.'

'You! you!—such a thing as you!' retorted the voice. 'It is more than you dare do. I can show my receipts for rent; and you lay a finger on me, or touch anything of mine, and I will have you before the magistrate—a thing I dessay you are used to, madam.'

'Come in, Rose! Do you hear? Come in, I say!' cried Rodbury, seizing his wife's wrist. 'You must not go on like this.'

But if he had not known it before, he was to learn now of how little avail are reasonings and commands with an infuriated woman. It was many minutes ere he could part the disputants, whose language grew hotter, as the 'hits' on either side told; and when at last he got his wife into her own rooms, she was seized, as a matter of course, with a desperate fit of crying hysterics.

It was specially unfortunate that such a display should have occurred on this night. Rodbury

had never before seen his wife at her worst; he always knew she was capable of violent passion, but she had not shown it so openly. Twenty-four hours earlier he would have been offended, angry, no doubt, but he would not have been so utterly disgusted and shocked as now.

Rose was penitent on coming to herself, and begged her husband's pardon for the outbreak. He had not shown many lofty characteristics since his marriage, it is true; but for all that, the girl was fully aware that he had been once in a very different sphere, and was not likely to tolerate such a display. She was very fond of him too; and this fact shone strongly through her penitence, her tears, and her promises of reformation.

In some strange manner, all this, even her affection, contributed to heighten the loathing with which Rodbury already regarded his home; but as he was a man to whom deceit always came easily, he assumed a forgiving mood much earlier, as his wife naïvely owned, than she had expected; and she thought him the kindest and best-tempered man in the world. The lodger was forgiven also; Rodbury actually uttered some jests about the skirmish, and so all was harmony in the household once more.

This was of course gratifying, and his excellent temper, after so irritating an incident, was, or ought to have been, gratifying also; but if Rose had some of the failings of a woman, she had a woman's instinctive quickness and penetration as well, and a vague alarm took possession of her. She knew not what she dreaded; but she felt almost frightened when in her husband's presence, and although she had really been a good wife, had never been so docile and watchful to anticipate his wishes as now.

The time had almost come round for the firm—Sparle and Rodbury—to make another start, and the latter grew gentler and fonder of his children's company than was his wont. He had not been a very attentive father, and even in this change there was the vague something which was now ever present to Rose. She tried to laugh it off, and spoke to her brother about it; but the experiment did more harm than good, for she found that a kindred feeling was in the man's mind.

'There's a change come over him that I can't make out,' was his summing-up; 'he keeps his affairs more to himself than he has any need to do; but he has got something on his mind, I am sure.'

The very next day after this consultation took place, Rodbury announced with some abruptness that he should not be able to commence the journey with Sparle, whom he would join about a week later. To the strong remonstrances of his partner, he only replied that he had some important business to look after, and that if any loss ensued, he, Rodbury, was willing to bear the whole of it.

So perforce the matter was settled, Sparle mentioning in confidence to his sister that 'if this was going to be the game, I shall not stand much of it; not but that I shall be glad to be away from him for a day or two.' If Rodbury had not married his sister, it is probable that Sparle would have preferred a dissolution of partnership, as he had never heartily liked the man.

This course was, however, out of the question, and so Mr Sparle started on his round alone; feeling that there was something in the air which boded no increase of comfort to the circle.

THE POST-OFFICE ON WHEELS.

To the vast majority of people the Travelling Post-office is a mysterious institution, very few having any idea of its working or of the mode in which it is conducted. Perhaps this article will have the effect of dispelling much of the mystery by which it is surrounded, so far as the general public are concerned.

It cannot be said that the Travelling Post-office of this country has in any sense had a languishing career; on the contrary, its history marks a continual growth of extension and expansion, so that now its ramifications stretch into the remotest corners of the kingdom. Changes in its constitution there have been, it is true; but in every case the object in view has been increased efficiency. As the railways have been augmented, so has the Travelling Post-office in an even greater ratio grown in extent and importance, till at the present time there is hardly a line of railway within the confines of the British Islands on which letter-sorting in a properly constructed carriage is not performed. The great acceleration which has taken place in the transmission of letters has been mainly achieved by the Travelling Post-office, and this acceleration has stimulated the trade and commerce of the country.

The particular portion of the 'Post-office on Wheels' which I purpose describing is the Special Mail which leaves London from Euston Station daily at 8.30 p.m. I have selected this mail not only because all the duties appertaining to the Travelling Post-office are performed therein, but also because it is the most important mail in the United Kingdom, probably in the whole world. In the Special Mail there are five post-office vehicles, each forty-two feet in length, and one of thirty-two feet—making a total length of carriage-space for postal purposes alone of two hundred and forty-two feet. There is a gangway communication between all the carriages, so that the officers on duty can pass from one to another throughout the entire length without going outside. All the carriages are lighted with gas.

The time is 8.15 p.m. The pair-horse vans which convey the London bags for provincial towns come dashing into the station in rapid succession, and as there are only fifteen minutes before the train starts, no time is to be lost. The bags are quickly removed from the vans, the name of each being called out in the process, thus enabling an officer who stands near to tick them off on a printed list with which he is provided. They are then stowed away in the respective carriages in appointed places. The hands of the clock now point to half-past eight; everything is on board, and the signal being given to start. The distance from London to Aberdeen is five hundred and forty miles, and this distance is covered in thirteen hours and twenty minutes, showing an average speed of a little over forty miles an hour, including stoppages. This does not appear to be a very high rate of speed for a mail-train of this character; but when it is borne in mind that the train

must stop at the large junctions for the purpose of exchanging the mails, and that these junctions are thirteen in number, it will be seen that the actual running-time is but a little short of eleven hours, so that the average speed whilst the train is in motion is close upon fifty miles an hour.

Having proceeded to the principal sorting carriage, we see that there are some thousands of the letters which have come from the London offices still to be disposed of. They lie on the desks in large bundles; but every minute there is a perceptible diminution of their numbers by means of the vigorous attacks of the men engaged. From end to end of one side of the carriage—that farthest from the platform—rows of sorting-boxes, or, as some people prefer to call them, ‘pigeon-holes,’ are fixed nearly up to the roof, starting from the sorting-table, which is about three feet from the floor. The boxes into which the ordinary letters are sorted are divided into sets, numbered consecutively from 1 to 45, and one sorter works at each set. The numbers on the boxes are in accordance with a prescribed plan, each number representing the names of certain towns, and into such boxes the letters for those towns are sorted. The plan mentioned is carried out as follows: Suppose we say that No. 10 represents Rugby, of course when the mail-bag for that town is despatched the box is empty. It is then used, say, for Crewe, and when the bag for that place is gone the box again becomes empty. It is then used for some other town farther down the line, and so on to the end of the journey. The set of boxes nearest the fore-end of the carriage is used by the officer who deals with the registered letters. This set can be closed by means of a revolving shutter, which is fitted with a lock and key; so that, should the registered-letter officer have to quit his post for any purpose, he can secure the contents of his boxes, and so feel satisfied that they are in a safe place. This officer also disposes of all the letter-bills on which the addresses of the registered letters are advised.

The set of boxes into which the newspapers and book packets are sorted is about twice the size of an ordinary letter set, and occupies the centre part of the whole box arrangement. This space is assigned to the newspaper boxes for two reasons: the set is exactly opposite the doorway through which the bags are taken in at the stopping station, so that they lie on the floor behind the sorter who opens them; he has therefore simply to turn round and pick them up one by one as he requires them, thereby saving both time and labour. Again, as the bags are opened, the bundles of letters which are labelled No. 1 and No. 2 respectively, in accordance with the list supplied to postmasters for their guidance, have to be distributed to the letter-sorters—No. 1 bundles to the left, No. 2 to the right, and this distribution could not be so conveniently performed were the newspaper or bag-opening table placed in a different position. Most of the newspaper boxes are about twice the size of a letter box; some, however, such as those used for large towns like Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, &c., are four times the size; and the necessity for this can be readily understood.

We will now look at the other side of the carriage—or that nearest the platform. Along the whole length of that side, strong iron pegs are fixed about an inch apart, and on these pegs the bags to be made up and despatched on the way are hung. Most of the bags used in the Travelling Post-office are of one size—three feet six inches long, and two feet four inches wide; but for the large towns, bags of greater dimensions are required. Each bag is distinctly marked on both sides with the name of the town to which it is to be forwarded, the letters forming the name being an inch and a quarter in length. The name is also stencilled inside the mouth of the bag, so that the sorter has it immediately before his eyes when putting the letters, &c., away. On reaching its destination the bag is emptied of its contents, is turned inside out, and then the name of the Travelling Post-office from which it was received appears in view. The bag is then folded up and kept ready for the return despatch on the following night. In this way it passes and repasses until it is worn out, when it is withdrawn, and a new one takes its place.

We will now assume the train is fairly on its way, and that we are approaching Harrow, the first station at which the mail-bags are received by means of the apparatus. As the machinery constituting the apparatus is of great importance in the system of working, I will here endeavour to describe it.

I may say that the apparatus in the Special Mail is worked in a separate carriage which runs immediately behind the one to which I have referred in the preceding details. A large and very strong net is firmly fixed on the side of the carriage on the near end, and the woodwork being cut away, an aperture is formed through which the pouches containing the bags are taken into the carriage. The net is raised or lowered by pressing down a lever very similar in structure and appearance to the levers which are seen in a signal-man's cabin. When the net is lowered, a strong rope is seen to stretch across from the fore-part, and this rope, being held in position by a chain attached to the back-part of the net, forms what is called a detaching line in the shape of the letter V placed thus, \vee ; and as the carriage travels along, the rope at the point forming the angle strikes the suspended pouch, and detaches it from the standard, when it falls into the net, and is removed by the officer attending to the apparatus. The machinery is also arranged so that a bag can be despatched as well as received. A man doing this work should possess keen eyes, steady nerves, and a full average amount of strength. On a dark or foggy night it is difficult to see the objects which serve as guides to the whereabouts of the train, and which are technically known in the office as ‘marks.’

The net is now lowered for the receipt at Harrow. In a second or two, a tremendous thud is heard, and a large pouch comes crashing into the carriage through the aperture, the men meanwhile keeping a respectful distance. I should perhaps explain that in the Special Mail a new form of net of recent introduction is used. The bottom of it is flush with the carriage floor, and as the lower portion is constructed with an angle of about forty-five degrees, the pouches roll into the carriage by their own weight. In the old

form of net the bottom is level, and as it is about three feet above the floor, the pouches have to be lifted into the carriage by the apparatus-officer. It is always advisable, whenever practicable, to fix the apparatus so that it should be worked after passing through a station, as the station forms the best 'mark' that the men can possibly have for their guidance.

We will now see what the pouch from Harrow contains. It is quickly unstrapped; the bags are taken out; and it is then laid aside, to be used for despatch at a subsequent station. There are three bags for the Travelling Post-office received in this pouch—two containing correspondence for England and Scotland, and one for Ireland. The bags are immediately opened by the proper officers. The first duty is to find the letter-bill; and if there are any registered letters, to compare them with the entries on the bill, when, if correct, the bill is signed and passed over, together with the registered letters, to the officer who disposes of that class of correspondence, and by whom an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letters is at once given to the bag-opener. It is in this way that a hand-to-hand check is established which ensures the practical safety of such letters.

The bag-opener then proceeds to pick out from amongst the mass of correspondence the bundles of ordinary letters, and to pass them to the right or left according as they are labelled No. 1 or No. 2. These bundles are cut open by the respective sorters who work at the several sets of boxes, the letters being laid in a row on the desk, and the men then proceed to sort them in accordance with the addresses they bear. As the boxes (each of which will hold about one hundred and fifty) become full, the letters are tied up securely in bundles, and the sorters, turning round, drop them into the bags which hang along the other side of the carriage. And so the work goes on in the same way throughout the entire journey.

I will now endeavour to show to how great an extent the Travelling Post-office has contributed to the acceleration of correspondence from place to place. On an examination of the letters received from Harrow, it is found that there are three for Aberdeen; and a similar number for that city will be received from the several towns between London and Rugby, and so on. Of course, the number of letters mentioned would not be sufficient for a direct bag between each of these places and Aberdeen; but the small numbers referred to being brought together in the Travelling Post-office, it is found that when the train arrives at Carlisle a sufficient amount of correspondence for the northern city has been received to fill a large bag. This bag is therefore closed at that point, and a fresh one hung up, to contain the correspondence for that city received northwards of Carlisle. The same may be said of the other large towns in Scotland. Now, if there were no Travelling Post-office, how would the few letters for Aberdeen (I merely mention the case of Aberdeen as being a typical one) emanating from the various towns in England be dealt with? In the first place, they would have to be picked up by a stopping train, and even if this train ran direct to Aberdeen, there would be a difference in the time of arrival of at least eight hours. But the letters could not go direct in such a case, as that would mean the making-up of separate bags at

each place; and I have already shown that the letters are too few in number to justify such an arrangement. They would have to be collected at some central office, say at Birmingham, where they would of necessity be detained some time; so that altogether it is probable they would not arrive at their destination early enough to be delivered on the day following that of posting. What, however, is the case now? Thanks to the Travelling Post-office with its mail-bag apparatus, the letters are whirled along at close upon fifty miles an hour without intermission, thus admitting of the delivery of letters from London at so remote a place as Aberdeen long before noon on the following day.

We will now assume that the train has arrived at Rugby, the distance—eighty-four miles—having been run in one hour and forty-six minutes. At this station, mails for Coventry, Birmingham, &c., are left to be forwarded by a branch train. After a stop of four minutes, the train again speeds on its way, the next stopping-place being Tamworth. Here a large number of mail-bags are despatched, including those for the Midland Travelling Post-office, going north to Newcastle-on-Tyne, which serves Derbyshire, Yorkshire, and the whole country-side bordering on the north-east coast; for the Shrewsbury mail-train, which serves the whole of Mid-Wales; and for the Lincoln mail-train, which serves Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.

The next halt is at Crewe, Stafford, where formerly a large exchange of bags took place, having been passed without stopping. Crewe is, for Travelling Post-office purposes, by far the most important junction in the kingdom; indeed, I may venture to say there is nothing like it in this respect in the whole world. Within three hours—that is, between half-past eleven at night and half-past two in the morning—not fewer than fourteen mail-trains, each with sorting-carriages attached, arrive and depart from this station; whilst the weight of mails exchanged here within the time specified is not less than twenty tons. A great amount of labour is involved in receiving and delivering such an immense weight of bags, the work being all done by hand, and the mail-porters have to exercise great care in keeping them in proper course for the respective trains. Nevertheless, these responsible duties are remarkably well performed, mistakes very rarely occurring.

I may here say that the Irish mail which runs from London to Holyhead, and in which correspondence for Ireland is almost exclusively dealt with, branches off at this station, the remainder of the journey being run by way of Chester and North Wales. This mail leaves Euston at 8.20 P.M., and the interval of ten minutes is maintained between it and the special mail down to Crewe, the two trains running on the same line of rails to that point.

The mails for Manchester and the numerous towns round about it are left at Crewe, as are those for the Potteries and for the whole of North Wales. A separate mail, called the Bangor and Crewe Travelling Post-office, runs through the latter district, the sorting duties in which are performed in the same way as in the Special Mail, the names of the towns served from it only being different.

Leaving Warrington, the next stoppage is at Wigan. Here the mails for Liverpool are despatched, and the receipt includes bags which have been brought through a long line of country, stretching from Newcastle-on-Tyne through York, Normanton, and Stalybridge, and thence to Wigan. The mails for Preston and East Lancashire are left at Preston, and running through Lancaster, Carnforth is soon reached. At this station the mails for North-west Lancashire and West Cumberland are despatched, and this is the last stopping-place before arriving at Carlisle, which is the terminal point of the North-western Railway.

I must, however, mention the noteworthy despatch of mails by apparatus at Oxenholme, the junction for Kendal, Windermere, and the Lake District. It is the largest despatch by that method in the kingdom, as many as nine pouches being delivered into two nets. Each pouch at this station weighs on an average fifty pounds, so that altogether four hundred and fifty pounds of mail-matter is despatched at this one station—no inconsiderable feat.

At Carlisle the mails for the Waverley country and for the whole of the south-west of Scotland, including Ayrshire, are left. Resuming the journey over the Caledonian Railway, there is another long run—about seventy-eight miles—without a stop, the apparatus being worked seven times in that distance until Carstairs is reached. Here, one of the sorting-carriages is detached, and proceeds to Edinburgh; and a few miles farther on three more are detached, and proceed to Glasgow from Holytown Junction. From that point, therefore, only two sorting-carriages remain in the train, and these go on to Aberdeen.

The next stop is at Stirling, where the bags for the Western Highlands are left; and we then run on to Perth, where the time of arrival is 7.30—just eleven hours after leaving London.

At Perth, the mails for Dundee and the northern Highlands are despatched, the latter being forwarded by a mail-train which runs on the Highland Railway viâ Inverness. Again the Special Mail starts on its way, there being only one stop—at Forfar—before arriving at Aberdeen, where the journey ends. Here the last bags are despatched. The carriage is clear. The sorting-boxes are carefully searched, to see that no letters have been left in them; and the carriage is then taken charge of by the railway officials, to be thoroughly cleansed and made ready for the return journey on the following day. The duties on the way to London are performed in a precisely similar manner to those on the journey northwards.

UNINTENTIONAL RUDENESS.

NOVEL-READERS, and readers of reviews of novels who hear a good deal said nowadays of the power shown by the modern American fiction-writers in what is known as analysis of character, cannot avoid having seen it remarked that in this respect English romancers and English people alike are to a great extent deficient. Perhaps it is fortunate that this should be the case, as no one with the smallest approach to the power which it is stated is so peculiar to our American cousins,

can fail to have felt that it is essentially a trait of the average English character to be enviably indifferent in its every-day dealings to the more sensitive feelings of its neighbours. Perhaps in no respect is this trait more clearly shown than in the vast amount of unintentional rudeness which is shown by otherwise very excellent people in the course of general conversation with friends and relatives. That there is a distinct element of satisfaction in the delivery of an intentionally rude remark, seems universally admitted. It has doubtless been long meditated, and there is a feeling of positive relief when the duty is despatched. The objectionable person has been duly notified of your sentiments in respect to his conduct, and you have come off possibly triumphant, the feeling of victory only checked by the hope that you have not gone too far; this sentiment, however, being entirely regulated by the importance of the person to whom we have given what in common parlance is known as 'a piece of one's mind.'

In all this, it is easy to see a large element of that irrepressible human nature which plays so important a part in the dictation of our daily actions. But what satisfaction can be obtained by those persons who constantly offend by chance, ill-considered remarks, ruffling all the finer feelings of those with whom they are conversing, it is difficult to understand. The very unconsciousness with which they act in this respect is only the more irritating; such persons, when accused of their thoughtlessness, will invariably be found to defend their conduct by the time-worn truism, that offence should not be taken where offence is not meant. It is perhaps to the universal acceptance among ordinary people of this argument that can be traced the very failing under discussion—the constant recurrence of remarks which, in nowise intended to be rude, as successfully ruffle the feelings of any person of sensitive organisation as the most studied insult. To choose among a legion of cases: a friend has asked your advice, say, in the matter of a list of a few novels to take to the country; one has replied to this flattering evidence of confidence by supplying a catalogue of the merits of which you feel certain even Sir John Lubbock would not criticise, and you are flatly told, perhaps apropos of nothing, on the return home of your friend: 'I don't think much of the choice of books you recommended.' The remark is a simple one, and delivered, doubtless, with a smile and with no intention of being rude; but it requires a heavy draft on one's store of good-breeding to reply in that tone of politeness which society exacts. Now, could not the same canons by which that necessity is dictated have suggested to one's friend that there might be half-a-dozen other less offensive modes of expressing one's opinions, or at least of palliating the ruffling reflection on your incompetence in matters literary.

And so the catalogue might be continued. One's errors are flaunted openly in one's face. 'I don't think much of your diplomacy,' will be the remark with which a failure in the conduct of some unimportant transaction will be greeted by a grinning relative. 'You put your foot in it there!' will say another; while who can calculate the accumulated stores of irritation caused by those thoughtless persons who seem

never to remember, even after years of acquaintance, one's many little prejudices with regard to eating, drinking, sleeping, cats, dogs, burning-hot fires, open windows, draughts, babies, political opinions, and a hundred other things?

It is doubtless because it is a little troublesome to word a phrase differently from the form in which it crudely presents itself to the mind, that so many persons acquire the unfortunate habit of unintentionally offending their friends. 'Evil is wrought,' as Hood puts it, 'by want of thought, as well as want of heart.' It is not exactly want of heart which is the cause of the many thoughtless remarks that are so wounding, because these flippant rudenesses are often addressed to those who are dearly loved; but it would seem as if those who speak of their affection were not fully aware of the exactions entailed by its expression; the due consideration which such a feeling involves for the sensitiveness of others. A little careful study of the mode in which a disagreeable remark can be made positively palatable will be found to be a most useful accomplishment. Such a study, so far from checking, as might be supposed, that spontaneous expression of feeling which some value so highly, will be found, on the contrary, after a little, to have increased the tone and suppleness of those who practise the art, and to have become as facile a habit as the expression of the more outspoken unvarnished truth. It is the wit and polish of the man or woman of the world which enables so many malicious little remarks to be uttered in a tone of such exquisite breeding as to render it impossible for offence to be taken. In this quality our French neighbours are acknowledged peculiarly to excel, not through any natural ability, be it remembered—for the ill-bred French *bourgeois* could with difficulty be matched for the savage rudeness of his average remarks, opinions, and prejudices—but through careful study, in great part through the schooling of those social influences the standards of which are so much more rigorously laid down and carried out by our continental neighbours than is the case with us.

To those familiar with America and American society—that is, in its more refined strata—it will occur that it is perhaps the fact of the large share of these social influences brought to bear on the rising generation that may in a measure account for the superior sensitiveness of the refined American character as depicted in certain of the transatlantic novelists. It is evident that it is not a little the more homely and purely domestic nature of Anglo-Saxon life that accounts—strange as it may seem to say—for the far too natural tone which exists in the every-day conversation of English people. We are prone to pride ourselves on this downright British quality of genuineness, as it is regarded; but there are two sides to the question. Of course, if by long habit we have grown so callous and unsensitive as to find that the unintentionally rude remarks of our friends and acquaintances—*Punch's* long list of 'things one ought not to have said'—pass over us without ruffling our inner nature, perhaps that is all which is required; but to those unfortunate enough not

to have acquired the enviable indifference of their less sensitive neighbours, association with their more thick-skinned acquaintances is somewhat apt to prove trying.

WATER-MARKS ON PAPER.

AMONGST the curiosities connected with the manufacture of paper none are more interesting than the water-marks on paper. From an early period in the history of the manufacture these marks have been used. It is in 1330 we first find a manufacturer's symbol; it is a ram's face, and this figure seems to suggest that wool might be one of the fibres used in the preparation of the paper. Holland gives evidence of the use of water-marks rather earlier than this—1301: among the memorials preserved at the Hague there is an account-book, the paper of which has a water-mark of a circle or globe surmounted by a cross; while on some paper of a little later date appears a rude representation of a jug or pot. The globe and jug are consequently the most ancient marks as yet discovered. The next specimen is from the paper on which is written the account of one of our own countrymen, Henry Burghersh, Bishop of Lincoln, of the expenses of an embassy in which he was employed in the year 1337. The mark is very like a pear.

By means of these marks we obtain certain fixed points, and they render great assistance in determining the age of manuscripts of great importance. The mark of the manufacturer has often been found of use in the detection of literary forgeries. This most ingenious and admirable invention was introduced into Europe by the Spaniards, but the originators of it are veiled in obscurity. The marks of the fourteenth century were for the most part very rudely executed. The most noteworthy amongst these, besides those already mentioned, were a circle enclosing the letter S lying longitudinally, surmounted by a fleur-de-lis; a circle containing what appears to be the letter h, and a straight line as if suspended by a thread; 'a can and reaping-hook,' which appears on a letter dated 1353, written by Edward van Gelre to the Zutphen magistrates; the 'Two Cans,' 1384; the 'Human Head,' 1386; and the 'Half-lily,' 1390. At the commencement of the sixteenth century the marks begin to present a symmetrical and artistic appearance.

The oldest document or paper as yet discovered with a mark is the account-book of 1301, supposed to be manufactured out of linen rags by the Holbein family at Ravensburg. Except this particular specimen, all paper manufactured by the Holbeins bears the 'Bull's Head,' doubtless taken from the coat-of-arms of that family, whereas, as we have already stated, this account-book is marked with the 'Globe and Cross.' The Globe and Jug are the most ancient marks as yet discovered; and these, together with the Post-horn, which appeared about 1376, became by the end of the fourteenth century the principal marks on paper manufactured in the Low Countries, whence they spread during the ensuing hundred years to Gouda and Delft.

Paper, as a rule, without any characteristic sign is the oldest; since the water-mark signifies a certain progress in the art of paper-

making. Other noteworthy marks are: a sprig with leaves and a fruit or flower; a drawn bow with an arrow; a perpendicular line with stars at each extremity between two circles; the letter R ensigned by a cross; two crescents through which a perpendicular line passes, terminating at each end; a cross, a bull's face, a demi-griffin, a pair of balances, the unicorn, an anchor, and 'P' and 'Y,' the initials being those of Philip of Burgundy and his wife Isabella, whose name at the time would be usually spelled with a Y. The Duke married Isabella in 1430, and before that date P only is found; after that date, P and Y. Caxton seems to have used paper chiefly obtained from the Low Countries, and in addition to the 'Bull's Head' and the 'P' and 'Y' there will also be found the 'Open Hand' worked on the paper on which the *Golden Legend* was printed in 1483, and also the 'Unicorn.' Other paper employed by this famous printer came from Germany, since in his *Recueil of the Histories of Troy* (1468) there appears the 'Bunch of Grapes,' which was a German mark. In the *Game of Chess* the paper bears evidence of Italian origin, as there is the mark of an 'Anchor enclosed by a Circle.' The 'Dolphin and Anchor' was a very famous mark, and after the 'Bull's Head,' perhaps the best known, the reason for this being because the device was extensively used by Aldo Manuzio, who has thus perpetuated to our day the ancient symbol of the city of Venice.

Many of these water-marks have determined the names of the different-sized papers. For instance, the post-horn was the mark of a paper now called Post paper, the texture and size of which have been little altered. Then there is the *fleur-de-lis* of the Demy, which also retains its primitive device and nearly its proportions. There is little doubt that the Fool's Cap gave name to the paper now distinguished by that singular epithet, although it has resigned its mark and adopted various others, such as Britannia, and the Cap of Liberty on a pole. Many of the water-marks for a considerable period have been emblematic, so to speak, of the subject-matter of the book. One of the early Strasburg Bibles, although it contains the common 'Bull's Head,' yet adopts a 'regal crown' on those pages which were devoted to the printing of the two Books of Kings. In the *Berlingheri Geographia*, the pages will when held to the light be found to be embellished with ships, ladders, arrows, and other figures symbolical of discovery and speed. At the present time, nearly every manufacturer has his own special device, so that any attempt to form a collection would be a task of immense labour. 'Paper-mark' is the more correct term to be used in speaking of these marks, since they are merely ornamental figures in wire or thin brass sewn upon the wires of the mould, and like those wires, they leave an impression, by rendering the paper where it lies on them thinner and more translucent. The manufacture of paper intended to be distinguished by a mark requires three contrivances—the sieve, cross-wires, and the mark or mould; to the second of which are to be ascribed the upright or transverse lines; and to the latter the particular figure or ornament of which it is the counterpart. These contrivances have in recent years been improved upon, so that shaded water-marks of the most artistic forms can now be produced.

As in the human countenance, while a general conformity of design exists, there is nevertheless sufficient distinctness to mark the identity of the individual; so among paper-marks, the various species or families, as they may be termed, while consisting of the same general figure or design, present a variety of minor characteristics by which they may be particularised. We have alluded to the names given to denote various kinds of papers, which are curious and in many instances absurd terms. In ancient times, when comparatively few people could read, pictures of every kind were much in use where writing would now be employed. Every shop, for instance, had its sign as well as every public-house; and those signs were not then, as they are now, only painted upon a board, but were invariably actual models of the thing which the sign expressed. For the same reason, printers employed some device, which they put upon the title-pages and at the end of their books; and paper-makers also introduced marks by way of distinguishing the paper of their manufacture from that of others, which marks becoming common, naturally gave their names to different sorts of paper. And since names often remain long after the origin of them is forgotten and circumstances are changed, it is not surprising to find the old names still in use, though in some cases they are not applied to the same things which they originally denoted. The same change which has so much diminished the number of painted signs in the streets of our towns and cities, has nearly made paper-marks a matter of antiquarian curiosity, the maker's name being now generally used, and the mark, in the few instances where it still remains, serving the purpose of mere ornament rather than that of distinction.

AN AMERICAN INDIAN POTLATCH.

THE word 'Potlatch' is one which to many of our readers may be unknown. We will give an explanation. It is a word in use by the American Indians of the North-west Territory, and means 'to make a present.' The ceremony which goes by this name is the following. When an Indian has accumulated wealth—usually in the form of horses, blankets, and weapons, and wishes to become a great chief—he sends out invitations to the chief men of the surrounding tribes and reservations asking them to come to a certain place at a given date. When the guests arrive, the early part of each day is taken up by the presentation of gifts by the inviter, and speeches and songs on the part of the receivers. The reader must not imagine that the gifts are absolute, as in reality they are merely temporary, and have to be returned with interest whenever the recipient in his turn gives a Potlatch. The Indian nature does not permit of anything being done without a clear prospect of making by the transaction in the long-run. The afternoon of each day is spent in horse-racing and betting, for greater gamblers than Indians it would be hard to find.

More than a year ago, the writer and a friend had the good fortune to find themselves at a rancher's house in the wilds of British Columbia

at the time when a very large Potlatch was going on in the neighbourhood; so, in company of the worthy rancher and one or two cowboys, early one forenoon we mounted our half-broken horses and began to make our way towards the Indian camp, which lay about four miles off in the same valley. All were in good spirits, and the day as fine as could be desired. The trail led us over stony bluffs, with here and there a fine smooth stretch of sage-brush and bunch-grass. On these the speed of our horses was tested as we raced along.

Soon we reached the last bluff, and there below us lay the camp. All around wandered the horses and mules, and here and there one saw an Indian boy, lasso in hand, on a barebacked horse, driving in some straggler. The scene was very picturesque: the flat bottom covered with fine grass; along the banks of the creek the fringe of cotton-wood and sumach trees with their bright yellow and crimson foliage; on either side the steep mountain-slope, covered with giant pines, with here and there a rocky crag standing out bare and hard, lay before us. These, combined with the animated scene and the gay dress of the Indians, formed a picture never to be forgotten.

After a moment's pause to take in the view, we made our way to the camp, where we dismounted, leaving our horses standing with the bridles hanging loose, which secures a native horse from straying. The number of Indians present was very large—some hundreds of men, with their wives or *klutshmen* and papooses. The men mostly wore a blanket as their main covering, and the brightest and gaudiest colours were evidently the most popular. A small proportion had their faces painted with red and white; but this custom seems to be dying out under the influence of rapidly advancing civilisation.

When we arrived, the giving of presents was in full swing. Under a large booth made of pine branches sat the giver of the Potlatch, surrounded by his squaws. When one of the young *siwashes* or 'braves' lifted up a present, the giver stood up and in a loud voice addressed the man for whom the gift was destined. This speech we were informed by our guide was a short history of the feats and exploits of the recipient. Whenever this was ended, all the *klutshmen* joined in a chorus, singing the praises of the great chief. Then the gift was carefully examined, and replies and thanks were given. In the short time we watched the proceedings, a large variety of goods, consisting chiefly of blankets, horses, and flour, changed hands.

In the other parts of the camp gambling with cards was almost universal, and the large sums of money staked were not at all in keeping with European ideas of Indian poverty.

Among other objects of interest was the native way of breaking a wild horse. Not far from where we had left our horses stood a small pine-tree, fastened to which by a lasso was a young horse. The lasso was tied round the animal's neck, and sufficient length of rope given, so that the horse when lying down had his head kept off the ground. In this way the animal was left. After standing quietly for a few minutes, the struggle was begun. Finding himself restrained by the rope, the colt tried by every means in his power to break the bond, striking with his forefeet and throwing him-

self down, squealing and screaming in perfect fury. Hour after hour came and went, and at length the spirit was so far broken as to allow a man to approach without a renewal of the struggle. The hind-legs were then lassoed, and the head-rope loosened, a saddle slipped on, and before long an Indian was firmly seated, and the horse's first experience of the supremacy of man began.

The afternoon of the day we spent watching and taking part with the Indians in horse-racing. The course was short, about six hundred yards; but the pace was good, and the riding of the Indians even better—far too good for fourteen stone of European flesh to have a chance against. The riders used no saddles, having merely a girth passed over the knees and drawn tight, as a support. The sole object of these races is betting, as no prizes are given.

As evening came on we turned our horses homewards, and soon reached the ranche, where a pleasant evening was spent. It does not often chance that a traveller happens to strike one of these gatherings, but should any of our readers have such luck, let him take the advice of one who has been present, and turn aside and visit what ere long will be a thing of the past.

A SUMMER MEMORY.

THE leaves that danced in the summer glory,

In crisp brown clusters around us lie;

No more they whisper the sweet old story,

That thrilled our hearts in the days gone by.

I was a king when we stood together

Beneath their shadow of tender green;

My sceptre, dear, was a sprig of heather,

The hills my kingdom, and you my queen!

You softly laughed on your throne of daisies;

Young Love kept watch through the rosy hours;

The fragrant wind seemed to sing your praises

Amid your vassals, the blushing flowers.

The sunlight flashed on the earth's green flooring;

The fairy clouds seemed to smile above;

And, ah! the lark o'er the cornfield soaring,

Your dear name trilled in his strain of love.

The dawn of love in your fond eyes shining,

One wild red rose in your bosom fair,

You shyly blushed while you watched me twining

A floral crown for your nut-brown hair.

My love, you were but a village maiden,

Your only dowry your rustic grace,

Your simple heart with truth's treasures laden,

Your winning smile, and your modest face.

Where first we plighted our vows, we linger;

But love lies bleeding, and hope is dead;

The ring of another gleams on your finger:

Your pallid cheek and your drooping head

Alone betrayeth the tearless sorrow,

That well accords with the autumn's gloom;

And we must mourn on the cheerless morrow

The Love that laughed 'mid the summer's bloom.

FANNY FORRESTER.

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A FEW WORDS ON DRY-FLY FISHING.

DRY-FLY fishing is a branch of the angler's art which has been developed only within the last few years. Neither Izaak Walton nor Cotton, as far as we know, ever dreamt of such a thing in their philosophy. Indeed, it is only on the chalk streams of Hampshire, Berkshire, and a few other of the home counties that the dry and floating fly is used to any extent. On these rivers, however, it is now acknowledged to be the most killing method of catching big trout in the daytime and in clear slow-flowing water. Sometimes, perhaps, with a stiff breeze blowing on the stream, the ordinary way may be adopted—namely, fishing with several flies on the line, which are cast down stream and allowed to sink. But when an angler has once taken to the more scientific method of using the single dry-fly, he will probably scorn to go back to his former tactics.

The best trouting in Great Britain is to be obtained within an hour or two's railway journey of the metropolis. The Test, Itchen, Kennet, and portions of the Lea all produce trout of great weight and beauty. The Kennet fish are remarkable for their brilliant colour when first caught, and for their beauty of form. We have seen a big Lea trout, five pounds in weight, 'cut' like a salmon. Nor are fish of this size by any means rare on some of the preserved portions of the river. But there are numbers of other less known streams with their tributaries which produce fine trout—amongst them the Colne, the Ver, and the beautiful Pang.

It seems to be an acknowledged fact amongst anglers that there is no sensation so pleasurable, no excitement so intense, as that imparted to the fisherman by the first wild rush of a big salmon: the hissing or screeching of the winch as the line flies off is no less melodious to his ear than the baying of the foxhound to that of the huntsman. And yet, as a sustained and never-lessening pleasure, it is hard to beat fishing with the dry-fly over a big rising trout. He has to be warily stalked; the gut must be like gossamer, and the cast finely

judged and executed; and then, even if the fish rises and is hooked, what a great chance he has of escape by snapping the gut, or by darting into a bunch of weeds and freeing himself from the cruel barb! With such fine tackle there is no certainty of success till the landing-net has actually enclosed his shining sides. Dry-fly fishers as a rule only cast over a rising or feeding trout. The fly after each cast is dried in the air by a backward and forward motion of the rod, and is presented to the fish up stream and floating. The artificial fly corresponds as nearly as possible with the real insect which is on the water and on which the fish are feeding. Pondering over these things, over fishing ways and fishing days, there comes back the memory of a pleasant day spent last spring on a beautiful trout stream within forty miles of town—an unpretentious little brook, and a tributary of Father Thames.

A beautiful May morning, just before the time when the tender verdure of spring is lost in the lavish vegetation, in the unbounded wealth of summer. From the little village inn we crossed the road and passed into some green water-meadows, through which the bright water glides so quietly. Thrushes were singing their loudest, and blackbirds fluted mellow notes from every topmost branch of oak and elm; the nightingale's song rang out clear from copse and hedgerow; butterflies, brimstone and orange tipped, came out in the sunshine, and tortoise-shells after their long winter sleep. All living creatures were full of movement, full of a great joy in the *réveille* of spring. Following the windings of the stream, we came to a little rustic wooden bridge, and leaning over, noted a good trout sucking in some of the 'olive-dun' flies which were sailing downstream. Getting behind the fish and creeping on hands and knees within casting distance, I put a fine imitation of the natural fly over him. He rose instantly, but missed it; and after this nothing would induce him to rise again. A great splashing and shouting close behind us announced the fact that an otter hunt was at hand. All hope of sport on the main stream, where the otter

hounds had been, was dispelled ; so we walked up to some little tributaries about a mile's distance. It was an easy jump across the widest of these streams, yet all were well stocked with beautiful fish up to a pound and a half and two pounds in weight. Mid-day still found me with an almost empty creel, for the 'rise' was slight. Espying a farmhouse across the meadows, we went up and begged a glass of milk, as the sun was hot. The farmer's daughter, a rosy-cheeked girl, willingly complied with our request, and showed us into the best parlour.

After quenching our thirst with the delicious milk, we turned towards the stream again. A little rivulet flowed right through the farmyard, forming a pond, which was clear and shallow. Imagine trout-fishing in a farmyard ! We took a nice fish here, and several more just beyond the house, where the water was overhung with brambles and rather rapid in parts. The 'rise' of fly was soon over, so we gave up fishing for a while and explored the course of the little brook. It is quite an idyllic trout stream, such as the Laureate describes so exquisitely :

I murmur under moon and stars,
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses.

Even though fish cannot be caught just now while we are waiting for a fresh batch of fly to come on, surely all around there is that which should fill the mind with sweet content. True, it is too early for the June wild-roses, with their white petals, which 'go straight to the heart ;' nor is the fragrant meadow-sweet in bloom yet awhile ; but cowslips and marsh marigold are gorgeous in the meadows, and the tender wheat never looks more beautiful than in this its young verdure.

In the copse hard by is a dell painted azure with bluebells : wood-anemones are there too, and slender cuckoo-flowers. A kingfisher flashes by in the sunlight, and at our approach a moorhen dives out of sight with a great spluttering. Wag-tails are running about, never very far from the cattle, and the breasts of some of these birds are yellow as the marigold itself. At the thin, feathery edge of the copse, and within a few paces of the water, there is a wild-duck's nest. In some rank herbage overhanging the water a dabchick is sitting on two stained eggs ; seeing us, she slipped into the stream ; and when we returned, half an hour later, the eggs appeared to have been taken away ; but the bird had merely covered them over with a few dead leaves. You have only to sit quite still for a while and the dabchick and wild-duck will both return to their nests. The water-rat fearlessly swims about within a few yards of you, while a rustling in the copse announces the approach of a timorous leveret. As for the sedge-warbler, he will come into the bush under which you are reclining and pour those sweet stolen notes into your very ears. But make the slightest movement and he instantly leaves off singing, the leveret rushes off in wild terror, and the dabchick slips into the water again. As for the fish, a shadow will alarm them ; indeed, you must stalk your trout just as you stalk a rabbit feeding in the woodland path or a deer on the hillside. Practice and care alone will tell the angler how near he can approach a fish without

alarming it. And herein, as much as in anything else, lies the difference between a good and bad fly-fisherman : the former creeps patiently towards his fish inch by inch, and often on hands and knees ; he takes one or two casts in the air, to judge the distance to a nicety, and keeps the point of his rod well down, to avoid flinging a shadow on the water. The latter strides forward with his rod held straight up, and instantly makes a bungling cast. The trout sees the rod or the angler himself, and is gone like a flash of lightning.

Fly-fishing, then, in our southern counties is somewhat of an art in itself. It takes us through no wild mountainous scenery like that of the North, but through peaceful fields and woodlands, and by clear limpid streams, where there is the fragrance of the flowers, the brimful joy of the summer fields, and the ever murmurous refrain of the brook.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE sun was setting in a great skyey field of ruby and topaz when Robert Snelling, scrupulously attired for out-of-doors, stood at his own gate an hour or so after his interview with Mr Orme. He was not a man who at any time made much outward show of his inward sensations, but just at this moment there was an air of solid purpose about him which might almost have been called portentous. The dark-blue cutaway coat, buttoned tightly over his massive chest, revealed a mere segment of sprigged white waistcoat, not as yet too portly, but giving such promise of girth and weight as a typical British yeoman of Snelling's inches might reasonably desire to show among other signs of comfort and prosperity. His dogged chin settled itself with its own air of bullying resolution in the cleft of a faultlessly starched high collar, over a bird's-eye necktie secured by a small gold pin. As to his nether man he was equipped in brand-new cords and boots. His hat, a shade broader in the brim and lower in the crown than common, gave a proper finish to his figure. From head to foot he was solid, prosperous John Bull, a thought too pompous and too dictatorial, even in repose, but looking rectitude and competence all over.

He was not thus splendidly bedizen for any common occasion, and the solemn bucolic dandyism of his attire was indeed in itself enough to proclaim to all the thoughtful and experienced of the neighbourhood the intent of the wearer. It was known, and had been known for a month or two past, that Snelling 'hung his hat up'—that is the local phrase—at the abode of Ephraim Shorthouse, whose daughter Cecilia was grown to a marriageable age, and was known to have come to her, one of these days, a very pretty penny. Not a word had been spoken on either side, but in such a case the most elaborate statement could have made things no clearer than they were. A pretty girl, a handsome jointure, a widower yeoman of middle age turned seriously dressy on a sudden, and riding over with the regularity of Time himself to the house of the lady's father for six months on end as surely as the Saturday night came round—who needed to

ask an explanation of these things? One would as lieve have asked for an explanation of the pretty girl herself as to the change in Robert Snelling's aspect or the purpose of his weekly visit.

He wore no spurs, but he carried in his ungloved right hand a heavy and supple riding-whip with which, now and again, he slapped his trimly booted calf resoundingly.

'D'ye mean to be all night bringing that mare round?' he shouted at length, without turning.

'Coming, gaffer, coming,' a voice responded from the region of the stables; and shortly after, the nondescript groom and man-of-all-work led the mare delicately clicking over the bricked pavement of the yard.

'How comes it you keep me waiting i' this fashion?' Snelling demanded.

'She put her off-hind into the stable bucket, gaffer. That white stocking takes a deal o' polishing to look nice.'

The man stood at the bridle; and Snelling, putting his foot into the stirrup, mounted solidly, and settled into the saddle with an air of being twice as strong and twice as ponderous as he really was.

'Where's Isaiah?' he asked with surly majesty.

'I haven't sin him since this morning, gaffer,' the man replied.

'Tell him,' said Snelling, 'to be indoors when I come back again; I have a word to say to him.'

The fellow touched his forelock, and the master rode away, a personable and commanding figure.

He had been accustomed all his life to set his purposes ahead of him and to go straight towards them, and having once resolved, had very rarely troubled himself to look behind or to examine anew the motives which had started him. But the news of the afternoon had stirred and shaken him more than he cared to confess, and in the very midst of the assurance and resolve which he told himself he felt, there were all sorts of earthquakey tremors, and now and then a fear which might have been inspired by conscience. But the one thing which most animated his spirit was a settled glow of wrath against young John. It was no part of Snelling's character to desire to understand his own emotions, and he did not pause for a second to inquire why he was angry with his ward. If he had made such an inquiry, the answer would have been simple and easy to find. Young John stood between him and his desire. He had a right to stand there, and Snelling had no right to the desire, but that made no difference worth speaking of, unless some underlying latent sense of it lent fuel to the flame. What right had the young brute to have a right at all? What right had anything or anybody to stand between that grasping Ego and his wish?

He had kept strict account between the estate and himself of every farthing, partly because of a rooted business instinct, but partly as a guard against a possible accusation. No neighbour should be able to tell him, at such or such an hour you began to think this property your own; and if ever claim or investigation should arise, he was safe and clear. But almost from the moment of John's disappearance the houses and the land and the incomings therefrom had

taken that sort of root in him which a man's own property is apt to take, and by this time it had grown to be a part of him, so that he felt it was no more easily separable than a living member of his body. Of the two, if the choice had been given him, he would rather have sacrificed a limb. It is imaginable that there are many people in the world who would do as much as that to retain their own, or even to become possessed of other people's property; but there was an unusual grip in Snelling's character, and wealth was a passion with him.

And now, on the top of security and ease, this abominable news of John's health and mental prosperity came with a sort of shock which seemed to justify any intensity of hate and anger. To get the boy back into his own hands was the first prime necessity, and beyond that he pretended to see nothing, though in the hidden recesses of his mind he kept one fixed and wicked purpose. He might as well have given it the whole daylight field of fancy to roam about in. If he had acknowledged to himself this villainous offspring of his greed, he might have encountered it less often, and have been less troubled by it; but forcing it to lurk and hide, he had to force himself to keep an eye upon it; and it was the very centre of himself, and occupied him altogether with a torturing insistence. 'I am here,' said the black phantom—'here, ready and waiting for your bidding, and you know the purpose you mean to put me to.' Not to listen, not to see, not to admit to himself that the thing was there, was a constant grinding preoccupation to him.

The clean-shaven calm face, with its healthy red and white and resolute shallow eyes, told nothing. He rode at serious jog-trot through the scented summer dusk, and presented to all whom he met or overtook the same image of portly rectitude and prosperous honesty. There are many sorts of men who in rural districts would have fallen under suspicion if they had been situated as he was. To be in trust of valuable estates for a boy reputed to be of weakish mind, and to have that boy mysteriously disappear within a few months of his natural protector's death, would have looked too lucky to be natural; but Snelling's probity was beyond doubt or cavil. There is nobody so suspicious as a rustic, nobody so fond of evil surmise and scandal; but his neighbours left him tranquilly alone, and nobody saw so much as a movement of Robert Snelling's little finger in the fortune which had befallen him. Isaiah and his wife, for their own sakes, had kept their own counsel, and nobody else had a gleam of light about the matter.

Snelling had some four miles to ride, and at the end of his journey the cosy lights of curtained windows peered at him through a network of darkened foliage. The click of the mare's shoes had hardly come to a standstill when a door was thrown open, and a fat man appeared in the doorway, standing like a comic silhouette against the glow of the lamplight.

'Who's there?' said a voice.

'It's me, Shorthouse,' Snelling answered.

'I had a notion as it might ha' been.—I'll send somebody round for the boss in a minute.' With that the fat man disappeared for a moment, and by-and-by his voice was heard uplifted in the

back premises. A farm-servant came shambling out and led the mare towards the stables. The host reappeared in the doorway, and stood there to welcome his visitor.

'You're a bit late to-night, Robert.—Come in.'

'Yes,' said Snelling; 'I'm a bit late. I've been delayed by business.'

'Here, Cecilia!' cried the host; 'come and tek Mr Snelling's hat from him.'

'No, no,' said Snelling, with ponderous politeness; 'I can hang my hat up without a lady's help.'

'You're cliverer than I be, if you can,' returned Shorthouse chuckling. 'In my day, a young fellow had to get the gell to help him.'

This, in the fashion of the country, was quite a delicate hint as to the position of affairs; but Snelling kept silence in a stately resentment of it. Cecilia was there already, waiting with outstretched hand. She was standing with her back to the light, and Snelling from his superior height saw her head directly against the lamp, which made a dazzling halo round it, and kindled certain wavy locks into live gold.

'If you will give me your hat, Mr Snelling,'—she said.

'I take it as an honour, Miss Shorthouse, of which I am unworthy.' He surrendered the hat with a rustic bow, and she slid away with it. Snelling stood in the middle of the roomy floor with his feet planted somewhat apart, and his shoulders squared with a sufficient air of self-importance, pulling off his left-hand glove, and bending first one knee and then the other to ease the tight embraces of his riding cords.

'Yes,' said Shorthouse, as if translating the solid swagger of his visitor's demeanour, 'theer's no mistake about it, Robert; you're a fine figure of a man—a very fine figure.'

'That's well to know,' returned Snelling stolidly; and placing his gloves and riding-whip upon the table, he drew up a chair and stood with both hands resting upon it until Cecilia returned and took a seat beside her father. Then, with another rustic bow, he sat down.

'Fine ripening weather, Short'us.'

'Pretty middlin',' Shorthouse answered, and pushed a leaden tobacco-box across the table towards him. There was a solemn filling of pipes. The girl handed a lighted spill to each, and then there was a solemn silence. After a lapse of five minutes, the lover renewed his courtship.

'Got the Hilly Piece drained yet, Short'us?'

'Very nigh.'

'Toughish bit o' work it's been, I reckon?'

'Ay!' Shorthouse responded; 'toughish.' Three minutes later he added: 'You may call it toughish, and say none too much about it.'

'Yes,' said the courtier, 'I suppose so.'

After this outburst, the impassioned affair went on as before. The two men smoked as if that were the sole business of their lives, and the girl folded her little muslin apron into aimless plaits. She was a pretty little creature, and looked as if she could have taken part in a livelier entertainment. Once or twice she lifted her eyes to look from her father to the stalwart gentleman who came a-courting. A momentary gleam of mirth lit her face, but she dropped back instantly to an expression of the demurest primness, and her

fingers went on mechanically with their idle business.

'Just call for supper, Cecilia,' said her father, when the courtship had gone on upon these lines for perhaps an hour.

The girl obeyed; and a substantial joint of cold roast beef was set upon the table, together with a home-made loaf and a great jug of foaming ale. When the meal was over and the table cleared, Cecilia kissed her father, shook hands with Snelling, and retired. Then there was more smoking and another silence, until the courtier dropped one hand heavily on the table and turned towards his companion. 'Short'us,' he said, 'a word with you.'

'At your service, Robert.'

'You've took notice, I daresay, as I've been calling here pretty regular of a Saturday evening for some time past?'

'Why, yes,' said Shorthouse, with the tone and aspect of a man who is not willing to commit himself too far; 'I won't say as I've let that go by altogether onregarded.'

'I've had a purpose in it,' Snelling pursued, 'as you may or may not have lighted upon.'

'Percisely,' said the other. 'I may or I may not have lighted upon it, as you say, Robert.'

'I don't suppose,' said Snelling, 'as you'd have any particular objections to regard me in the light of a son-in-law?'

'No,' answered Shorthouse, with drawling deliberation; 'theer's nothing particular agen you, Robert, so far as I know.'

'Very well, then,' said the ardent lover, 'we may look on that as settled; and I'm willin' to talk business whenever you've a mind to.'

'Hold on a bit,' rejoined Shorthouse. 'Fair and softly rides far. As for looking on it as settled, that's more than I can say. Theer's the little gell to be considered, and it's more her affair than mine.'

'Cecilia,' said Snelling, with more than common solemnity and slowness, 'can hardly have mistook my meaning. A well-conducted young woman would naturally take steps to put a finish to a courtship if it was distasteful to her.'

'There's something in that,' returned the elder. 'Cecilia's a sensible gell. Her knows very well as you haven't come and took your victuals and smoked your pipe every Saturday hevenin' for the last six months for nothin'.'

'Just so,' said Snelling. 'I suppose I may leave the matter i' your hands?'

'Her'll hardly ha' got her frock off yet,' said papa. 'I'll go up and fetch her down.'

'No, no,' responded the lover. 'Theer's no such hurry as that comes to. You can speak about it i' the morning.'

'Very well, then,' returned the father, who was anxious to show at least as business-like a composure as the other displayed. 'I'll give you a word about it i' the hevenin', if you'll ride over.'

'I'm not quite sure about to-morrow,' answered Snelling; 'I've something in hand as won't bear waiting, and I've got a bit of a journey to take to-morrow.'

'Very well, then,' returned papa; 'make it Monday. I'll have it out with Cecilia in the morning, and you can come for your answer when you please.'

Snelling had not meant to be so precipitate in his declaration; but he had a reason for accelerating the pace of love's impetuous chariot. If he proposed whilst it was still an understood thing amongst his neighbours that the property he held in trust was virtually his own, he thought that he stood a better chance of acceptance. He was solidly well to do without the farm, the mill, and the malthouse, and was quite conscious that he was no bad match for any girl of his own rank in the whole country-side. But he was persuaded that John Vale's acres would have their due weight in Shorthouse's mind, and in his daughter's also, and the events of the next day or two might seem to take them from him. He had vowed already that nothing should take them finally away, and his whole mind was fiercely dedicated to that vow.

THE COUNTRY OF A THOUSAND LAKES.

FINLAND.

ON the eastern shores of the Baltic, the last resting-place left to a race whose original seat was in the Ural Mountains, and who have been pressed back east and west from this centre, live more than two millions of people. Finland—that is, 'Fen Land' (Finnish, *Suomenmaa*, the Swampy Region)—with its deep bays and inlets, its innumerable lakes and islands, its moraines and its roaring cataracts, is a country which undoubtedly has a brighter future. The people, who call themselves *Suomilainen* (Dwellers in the Fens), and who are known to us as Finns, are the most advanced of their whole family, the Magyars being the only other Finnic race that has become civilised, and these the Finns have far outstripped in intellectual capacity.

A moment's glance at the physical aspect of the country will show that after the retreat of the glaciers, the land must have gradually subsided, giving access to the sea, which slowly penetrated eastward and westward, and thus formed the Gulf of Finland. This subsidence was evidently followed by an upheaval, which is still slowly but surely going on, and of which proofs are not wanting both on the coast and in the interior. Nowhere in Europe are erratic blocks more numerous. Stones of all sizes are scattered about or heaped together grotesquely, especially at the outlets of the valleys, and they are yearly stranded in more or less quantity on the islands. There are also very many *harju* or moraines to be found in Finland, and, like those in Sweden, these cross the lakes here and there, looking like broken ramparts of ancestral castles. The high-ways, connected where it is necessary by bridges and ferries, follow throughout their length. The most remarkable of these, and the one most frequently visited by travellers, the Punga-harju, is one hundred feet high, and connects the two sides of one of the northern basins of Lake Saima, south of Nyslott. Its entire length is seven miles, but it is strengthened towards the centre by an island formed of blocks of gneiss. Aided by such natural formations as this, the inhabitants gradually acquire land, which becomes year by year,

owing to the felling of timber and the process of cultivation, more and more fertile.

The Finn has by long experience become proficient in the science of draining swamps and skilfully directing the course of streams, and he is constantly altering the face of the country. Sometimes, however, the engineers are deceived in their calculations when constructing a dike, as in the case of Lake Höytiäinen, north of Joensuu, in East Finland. For the purpose of gradually lowering the waters of this basin, the level of which was seventy feet higher than that of the neighbouring Lake Pyhäselkä, a ditch ten feet broad was begun in 1854, and soon changed to a widening stream by the rains and melting snows. But on August 3, 1859, the dikes intended to carry away the overflow suddenly gave way, followed by a rush and roar heard at Joensuu, six miles off. The inundations lasted three days, during which time Lake Saima, which received the overflow, was so agitated that the vessels navigating its waters could scarcely resist the violence of the waves. The mass of solid earth carried down formed a large delta in Lake Pyhäselkä, and greatly reduced its upper area. These inundations are of frequent occurrence, the upper lakes tending constantly to drain into the lower.

Finland, however, of all European countries has least succeeded in getting rid of the surface-waters representing the lacustrine period which followed the glacial epoch. It is completely intersected with lakes, pools, rivers, and swamps, and of its southern portion nearly half the surface is under water. The rocks and boulders are of hard granite, gneiss, and porphyry. Although, owing to the slight elevation of the interior, the falls and rapids are not so numerous, yet in their rugged surroundings and wild leaping waters, they may compare favourably with Scandinavia. The well-known fall of Imatra, which some have even ventured to call the Niagara of Europe, and which no visitor in Finland fails to see, is the most beautiful of these. The river suddenly descends through a rocky gorge, having a fall of seventy feet in a distance of ten hundred and seventy feet; below this, it again spreads out into a wide still basin. The hotel, which is situated near the Falls, is a favourite resort of both natives and foreigners, and the fishing in the stream and lake is undoubtedly good.

The northern part of Finland lies within the arctic circle, and the climate in these high latitudes is necessarily severe. The long dull night of winter gives way at length to a brief ardent spell of summer, during which the sun never sets, but just drops into the wide waste of waters, and poised there to dye the whole stretch of lake and forest and the midnight sky with its rich passionate floods of colour, rising again to shed its warmth upon the quick-ripening grain and suddenly-maturing summer vegetation. The evening and the morning twilight are, says a popular and well-known Finnish legend, two lovers, betrothed, but parted by the stern decree of darkness. In weariness and waiting, but still with patient endurance, they pass the long nights and weeks and months of winter, and are for a fleeting moment united in the kiss of the midnight sun, soon to be once more parted, and to resume their separate existence. This myth betrays the tendency to poetic

fancy and figure which is such a strong characteristic of the Finn. He believes as no one else does in the power of words, and words in song have with him a magic influence. The belief in magic itself has also always had a strong hold upon him, and still has in the country districts, where incantations and charms are yet practised, in spite of enlightened Christianity and the penalties of the law.

The Finns have an ancient and peculiar mythology, which has no close resemblance to that of any other people, but which has, of course, the same general ideas as run through all mythologies developed from poetical versions of natural phenomena. The popular poetry of this people bears witness to a high intellectual development, and their epic songs, recorded by oral tradition alone, still live among the poorest of the people, and preserve all the features of a perfect metre and a more ancient language. Jumala, the heaven, is the name of the great divinity, the ruler of all things. He rules over the clouds and sends the rain; the winds are his breath, the thunder his voice, the lightning his sword, and the rainbow his bow. His consort is the earth-mother who produces all, and takes all back into her bosom. Their children are Wainämöinen and Ilmarinen, the heroes. The former is the lord of wisdom, of song, and of music; the latter is king of the winds, of water, of fire, and of the forge. One represents the intellectual, the other the physical powers of man. Tuoni is the god of death, Kauna reigns over the tombs.

Songs telling these stories and of the great deeds of their gods were long known to exist among the Finnish peasants, before any effort had been made to reduce them to writing or to collect them in any systematic manner. In 1822, Dr Zacharius Topelius made a collection of poems, which he published in five parts; and in 1831 a number of young men in the university of Helsingfors formed a Literary Society mainly for the purpose of perpetuating and improving their national literature. Among them was Elias Lönnrot, the son of a peasant, who in the intervals of his labours as a physician had already made some progress towards the desired result by a profound study of the Finnish tongue, Swedish being at that time the language universally spoken. The Society contributed a sum of money to Lönnrot for the prosecution of his labours, and for many years he wandered from hut to hut, along the remote and winding shores of the lonely lakes, and through the forest-crowned heights and rocky valleys, sitting by the fireside of peasants and fishermen, learning from old man and child, gleaned here and there a broken fragment or a connecting link, and at last weaving the whole chain of scattered song and fantastic legend into a grand epic poem, which Professor Max Müller says 'will claim its place as the fifth national epic of the world, side by side with the *Ionian* songs, with the *Mahābhārata*, the *Shāh Nāme*, and the *Nibelungen*.'

The poem was called the *Kalévala*, from Kava, the mighty one, and the importance of it was at once, on its being printed by the Society in 1835, recognised throughout the country. It is written in eight-syllabled trochaic verse, which is the peculiar and characteristic metre of the Finns. Poetry is their natural speech. The mother as she hushes her babe, the old man telling stories to

the child, the children playing around the open door, all insensibly fall into verse. Ordinary speech is occasionally metrical. There is no rhyme in the *Kalévala* except by accident, but much alliteration, and the language is strongly trochaic both in accent and quantity. The metre may be slightly compared to *Hiawatha*, both in its simple form, and because also of its constantly repeated echo. There is in the *Kalévala* a certain unity of plot, although it is rather a cycle of songs than one poem, and it is evident they are the work of different minds at different ages. It is singular to notice the occasional introduction of Christian ideas, which have no doubt become incorporated with it during the process of being handed down by word of mouth. There appear now and again glimpses of a Trinity, and the poem has almost a Christian ending. The Virgin Maryatta bears a son, whom Wainämöinen, in consideration of his miraculous birth, orders to be killed without being baptised. But the magic child speaks, and convinces him of error and injustice; whereupon Wainämöinen grows sad and puzzled. The child, who is none other than the Christ, grows up, and becomes king of Kaléva; then Wainämöinen, unable to endure the new dispensation, sails away to the west in a wonderful brazen bark, leaving his *kantele* or sacred harp and his songs as a legacy to Finland.

The leading idea throughout the *Kalévala* is the old one of the strife between the powers of darkness and of light, between good and evil. The poem consisted originally of thirty-two runes, which have in the later editions grown to fifty. In these the story is told of Wainämöinen's birth, offspring as he was of the daughter of the air, the winds, and the waters. Many winters and summers he spends floating on the bosom of the ocean. Wherever he lifts his head, an island is formed; when he stretches out his arm, he creates a promontory. At last the eagle, king of birds, flying westward, and seeking for a place of habitation, beholds the god in mid-ocean. She builds her nest upon the knees of Wainämöinen, and lays seven eggs; six of these are golden, and the seventh of iron, to which Finnish mythology attaches always a peculiar superstition. From this insecure resting-place the eggs fall and are broken; out of their fragments are formed the earth, the sky, the sun, stars, and clouds. Thus Wainämöinen, or Ukko (the venerable, the old), is the creator of everything; he brings down to mortals the celestial fire, he invents the *kantele*, and, like Orpheus, he enchains every creature upon earth by his music. All turn to him for succour and help. The sweat that drops from his body is a balm that heals all sicknesses; he is the god of peace, of order, and of harmony.

The language of the Finns is peculiarly adapted to poetic form. The flexibility of its construction, the variety and picturesqueness of its expressions, the abundance and originality of its figures, all tend to make it the fit vehicle of that poetic inspiration which the Finn receives from his environment—the long dark stretches of birch and pine forest, wreathed with garlands and fringes of lichens, which in this northern climate are particularly beautiful, and whose sombre shadows form a telling background for the leaping cascades and waterfalls, clad in their white mantle of foam.

Although there are but nineteen letters in the language, the dictionary published by Lönnrot contains over two hundred thousand words. The constant repetition of the same letter may be seen in the following short extract from the *Kalevala* :

Vaka vanha Wainämöinen :
Sen varsin valehtelitti,
Ei sinua silloin nähty,
Kun on merta kynnettiin,
Meren kolkot kuokittihin,
Kala-haivat kaivettiin,
Kauhutta kuletettaissi
Aurinkoa autettaissa
Otavaa ojennettaissa
Taivoa tähitettäissä,
Miekkojasi, mieliäsi,
Tuuriasi, tumiasi,
Waan kuitenki, kaikitenki
Lähe en miekan mittelöhön
Sinun kanssasi katala
Kerallasi kehno raukka.

The *Kalevala* has been translated into Swedish, German, Hungarian, and into French prose by M. Léouzon le Duc. A more recent translation into Swedish has been just completed by Mr Karl Collán, librarian of the Public Library of Helsingfors; and the third and fourth runes, with slight portions of the first and second, were translated into English by the late Professor Porter of Yale College, whose knowledge of the people and their language eminently fitted him for the task, which, however, was only undertaken during the last few declining years of his life. It is in the metre of *Hiawatha*, and was published in New York in 1868. A quotation from it, descriptive of the birth of the brief, fruitful summer which near Uleåborg suffices to sow, ripen, and reap wheat within the space of forty-two days, follows :

Rise, O earth ! from out thy slumbers ;
Bid the soil unlock her treasures ;
Bid the blade arise in beauty ;
Bid the stalk grow strong and stately ;
On a thousand stems uplifted,
Let the yellow harvest ripen ;
Let it cover all my cornfields
Hundredfold for seed I planted.
Ukko mighty ! God above us,
Gracious Ukko ! Father in heaven,
Thou who all the sky commandest,
For the fleecy clouds appointing
Every morn their course and pathway,
In thine airy realm consulting,
In thy kingdom taking counsel,
Send us clouds from east and north-east,
From the south and from the sunset ;
Let them scatter drops refreshing ;
Bid them all their sweetness sprinkle,
That the ear may lift its treasure,
And the corn make haste to ripen.

Soon from out the earth and darkness,
Lo ! the tender blade uplifted,
And anon the ears unfolded,
Through the care of Wainamöinen.

A more recent translation of the *Kalevala* is that by Mr J. Martin Crawford (London and New York, 1889).

There are two distinct types of Finns—the Tavastian and the Karelian, each taking its name from the province it inhabits. They are a fine, tall, well-built people, their hair becoming much darker as they grow up, although as children it is almost white, and has given rise to the proverb, 'As fair as a Finn.' In religion they are Lutheran, and their translation of the Bible and Psalter dates

back to soon after the Reformation. The physical aspect of Finland is unfavourable to its ever being largely populated ; and the whole area, which is larger than Great Britain and Ireland, has at present scarcely half the population of London, the proportion being at the rate of about five to the square mile. As in most other countries of Europe, the female sex is largely in excess of the male, and this is accounted for partly by the drinking habits of the men, but chiefly by the risks of the seafaring life, in which so many are engaged ; over five hundred, it is computed, being annually drowned. The tide of emigration sets mainly to Russia and the northern parts of Norway, but a large colony of Finns have long been established at Hancock, in Michigan, where they publish journals in their own language.

The history of Finland is simple. Its union in the thirteenth century with Sweden was productive of lasting benefits ; thence it obtained Christianity, western civilisation, and a constitution of liberal laws, but with this disadvantage, that Swedish became the language of the cultivated classes and of the schools. Finland remained united to Sweden for nearly six hundred years, and was on the whole a faithful ally. It was to the Finnish courage and endurance that Sweden owed many of her brilliant victories under Gustavus Adolphus. But from the time that Peter the Great founded, on territory conquered from Scandinavia, the capital of the present powerful empire of Russia, the acquisition of Finland was only a question of time. Piece after piece was taken ; till, in 1809, Sweden yielded the whole to the Emperor Alexander I., who convoked the States at Borgo, and assured them that he would preserve intact their constitution, their laws, and liberties ; after which they did him homage as the Grand-duchy of Finland.

The old town of Abo was formerly the seat of the university, which was founded there in 1640, but removed to Helsingfors in 1820. The latter city is also the seat of government, and boasts the most northerly Botanic Garden in the world, it being several degrees nearer the Pole than St Petersburg, Upsala, or Christiania. Helsingfors is also noted as the birthplace of Professor Nordenskiöld, the celebrated Arctic explorer, who was educated and received his degrees from this university, although he afterwards became naturalised as a Swedish subject and took up his abode at Stockholm.

Various lines of railway intersect the southern part of Finland ; but the chief communication is by steamboat, of which, during the summer, there is a frequent service between the towns upon the many lakes. There are no diligences ; but in the country districts, a small two-wheeled conveyance, drawn by native horses of a rather under-sized but remarkably strong and enduring breed, is much used.

The cultivation of the soil forms the occupation of a large portion of the Finlanders, and this industry receives great encouragement from the government, who have established Farming Schools in many centres for the training of women in the theory of agriculture, as also in that practical part of it which they have invariably undertaken. At the same time the government assists small farmers by advancing, under certain conditions, sums of money without interest.

The manufactures of Finland are chiefly woollen, cotton (the town of Hammerfors is called the Manchester of the country), leather, and a curious and elegant kind of pottery. In the country-places, many people are occupied in making articles such as baskets, cradles, pouches, boots and shoes, from birch-rind, which they strip off the trees in large pieces, and then cut and prepare for use, rolling it up in balls.

Within the limits of this paper, we have only been able to touch on a few of the more salient points in the characteristics whether of this unique country or of its inhabitants; and there have been, up to the present time, few accounts of travel in Northern Europe written in the English language which do more than devote a stray chapter or two to Finland. It is probable, however, in these days of universal travel that it will not be long before we become better informed concerning the natural history, geology, constitution, laws, literature, industries, and future possibilities of this Land of Lakes; and until this is accomplished, the inquirer may turn to the admirable works of Retzius, Ignatius, and Buch, from which all statistical information can be obtained; or the charming romances of Topelius, several of which have been translated from the original Swedish.

AN ALTERED PURPOSE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. III.

DURING the next few days Rodbury was from home a great deal. To his wife's inquiries he repeated his statement that he had some important affairs to attend to; and in this he was in a sense telling the truth. Among other things he visited a shipping office in the city; he saw his solicitor more than once; he arranged with the executors of his grandfather's will, and he was with his friend Ashwell every day, sometimes twice in the day.

He was with him one night just before the time he had agreed upon to join Sparle, only one clear day being left.

'You do not look well, Cyrus,' said his friend; 'you are letting these matters excite you to a dangerous extent.'

'Perhaps I am,' returned Rodbury, passing his hand over his brow. He had indeed a fagged, haggard look, which justified his friend's remark. 'It is very well to advise me not to allow these things to worry me; but just consider for a moment what "these things" are. No one but a scoundrel could do them at all. I have had such a hardening career, that I must own I am really surprised at having enough vitality in my conscience to disturb me.'

'I am sorry to hear you speak like this,' replied Ashwell, who was palpably hurt by his friend's words. 'You know you are releasing the girl from a union which will soon be, if it is not already, hateful to her, while to you it must be simply maddening. You provide handsomely'—

'Oh, yes, yes!—that is all right,' interrupted the other; 'and you must not think I intended any reflection upon you—far from it. I know

that your advice has been for what you felt was the best; but then, you see, you have not to carry it out. I shall be out of the way of her ravings and frenzy, I know; but I can picture them, and shall hear them as plainly as though she was by my side. Then the children too—they are helpless innocent things, who have done me no harm.'

'They will certainly not be more helpless by your action,' said Ashwell; 'you provide for their education and their future. Do think, if only for a moment, of what they would grow up to be, with such a mother and such friends! However respectable according to their own standard, to you they would be a constant source of misery and mortification'—

'That is enough, Herbert,' again interrupted the visitor. 'I am going to do it; that is settled. But I am not well to-night; I shiver one moment, and feel all on fire the next. I shall not be better until the next two days are past. Everything is ready, and to-morrow night I start from Euston Square. I will tell you how I have arranged.'

He went on to detail certain plans, connected, as the reader must long since have perceived, with the abandonment of his wife and children. He was going abroad for at least a year, perhaps two years—it might even be for ever; and a solicitor—not the Launceston family solicitor, we may be sure—would explain to his wife that the marriage being illegal, she was at liberty to marry again; that Mr Rodbury was gone, never to return, but that she was left independent, as were the children. This handsome mode of dealing with her would effectually allay all anger at the desertion; and long ere Cyrus returned from his tour, her wealth would have gained her an alliance in her own sphere, and all inquiry for him would have ceased.

Of course there were an infinity of details springing out of such a scheme as this; a mean dishonourable scheme, in which, but for the facility with which the best of us find arguments to justify our wrongdoing, it would have been wonderful to see such a man as Ashwell allowing himself to take an active part.

After a long interview, which was far from tending to compose his nerves, Rodbury went home, conscious that he was indeed 'out of sorts,' as he phrased it, and conscious too, once or twice, that he had forgotten where he was, and even where he was going. He rallied from this immediately; but these were ugly symptoms, and each moment he felt that he required a greater effort to throw them off. 'I shall be glad when it is done,' he muttered, as he turned into his own secluded street. 'I shall not, I hope, then feel quite so much of the hangdog and the sneak as I do now. I can hardly bear to see the light in the window where I know Rose is waiting for me, listening for my step; and listening, too, for the slightest noise from the room where the children are sleeping. They have never done me any harm, and poor Rose has striven to the best of her power to make me happy. Egad! I am a model husband and father!'

Then, he started to find himself wandering into a wholly different train of thought, and although his feet had mechanically, as it were, carried him to his own gate, he had for the last minute been

in fancy walking over the well-remembered downs and hollows among which his youth had been passed. 'Another week of this would kill me,' he muttered as he opened the door; 'I almost wish I had not come home.'

As he had divined, Rose was awaiting his return, and had prepared some delicacy—it passed for a delicacy with her friends—for his supper. When she found he would not touch the little repast, and complained of his head, her wifely anxiety took alarm; she noted how flushed and strange he looked, and insisted upon his lying down at once, then busied herself in applying cooling lotion to his brow, and made him a cup of tea, midnight though it was.

She was a good nurse, and a loving tender wife, despite her faults and vulgarities, for which, indeed, she was in nowise responsible. She had been taught no better; and that her character was such as Rodbury well knew it to be, proved the goodness of the heart, which could not be materially affected even by such a training as hers had been.

'If you are not better in the morning, Frank,' she said, as she sat by the head of the bed and looked anxiously into his flushed face, 'we must send for Dr Berge, the first thing.'

'I shall be all right in the morning,' said Rodbury; but his words were hardly distinct; 'only I feel so chilly now.'

She knew he could not be suffering from great cold, yet laid more clothes on him, and then in a few minutes he complained of the heat, and reproached her with smothering him under so many blankets.

All his utterances wandered away into broken incomprehensible speech; and thus it continued all night, Rose never slackening in her attention, or murmuring at the irritable, often unkind remarks he made. It was a long night, yet morning came at last; but no care on the part of Rose, no change from night to day, could benefit Rodbury, and Dr Berge had to be sent for.

By this time the invalid had ceased to speak, or, at anyrate, to speak distinctly, although he almost constantly uttered unintelligible phrases. His wife asked the doctor if there was any danger of some kind of fever coming on; there had been a deal of it in the neighbourhood, and she had been very frightened on account of the children.

The doctor said she was right. Her husband was down with a fever, but not of the kind which, as he knew, better than most persons, had been so rife in the vicinity. Her husband was suffering from smallpox. So, for the present, Frank Rodbury's scheme ended in the disease which seems to inspire more terror than any other of the malignant scourges which afflict humanity.

The house was speedily cleared of all inmates save the sick man, his devoted wife, and a trained nurse; for the Rodburys were for that neighbourhood wealthy people, and could afford all which might lighten or soothe such an illness. Yet such an illness was never yet passed lightly through, although in the end Rodbury recovered, and was as well as before—he used in after-years to say he was better—and although it happened with him, as it does now and then with such

patients, that he was scarcely marked by the terrible 'pitting' of the disease.

Dr Berge congratulated him, and told him that he owed his escape chiefly to his wife, 'who,' said the portly, genial old doctor, 'is the best nurse I ever saw. Mrs Garminger, whom I recommended, you know, is a first-rate nurse, as professional nurses go; but it is no disrespect to her to say that Mrs Rodbury is worth half-a-dozen of her or any other paid attendant.'

Rodbury agreed in this opinion. He knew, and had marked all through, without prompting, what his wife had done; and now he was out of danger and could think collectedly, he did so think of Rose, and was not satisfied with his solution of the old problem, let him study it as he might.

With regained strength he felt, and despised himself for so feeling, his previous horror of his position; and with the morbid sensitiveness of an invalid noted, even watched for, the faults and shortcomings in the woman who had risked her own life to save his, and whose pale thin features so brightened up when she saw him smile, and who was so happy when he showed symptoms of reviving strength.

He had long since written to Ashwell, at an agreed address, and directed to a feigned name—such an arrangement would be sure to suggest itself to Frank Rodbury. This was, in a sense, to Ashwell's relief, for he fully thought that his friend had gone abroad without seeing him again, or, which was as strange, without taking full possession of his inheritance. He, Rodbury, had said that he would call on his friend as soon as it was safe for him to go out, and consult him as to what should now be done.

Never before had Rodbury known such a conflict in his mind as to what he should do and what he ought to do. What he should and what he ought to do was, it was true, chiefly considered as regarded his own welfare and comfort; but yet some minor amount of thought for others mingled with this and greatly aided to trouble him. All through his life he had been accustomed to consult only the gratification of his own desires, and to act as seemed most agreeable to himself, so that even so much wavering as this was a sign of improvement.

But he was heir to a large fortune; there was a fine home in one of the most beautiful of English counties awaiting him, or scenes of gaiety and brilliancy in foreign lands might be his, should he prefer to seek them; and despite his better but feebler self, the loathing of his present home—and horror at the idea of taking from it such a woman as Rose to show as his wife—rolled back upon him like a tide, and he determined to carry out his old resolve.

'It will be better for her as well as myself,' was the ready sophistry which rose in his mind. 'She will be a good deal happier in her own sphere, where she shall never want; and the children—well, she would not like to lose them.' So by the time he was fairly convalescent, his plans were in much the same position as before his illness.

He had been out several times. On the first occasion Rose went with him for a ride. This was in a carriage hired from the nearest livery-stable. They traversed the West End of

London—Hyde Park, Buckingham Palace, Regent Street, Oxford Street, and the like being included in the tour—thus affording a treat of the highest kind to Rose, who, although a Londoner born and bred, had not seen this fashionable, this aristocratic, this fairyland district in short, half-a-dozen times in her life.

She was delighted with the excursion, and so pleased to know that her husband was able to be out again and could sit by her side, looking as handsome as ever—his beauty must be taken on Rose's estimate—that her poor eyes, weakened, it might be, by the fatigues of nursing, or perhaps by some hidden cause, filled ever and anon with tears. Yet she would not go for a second drive, and was indeed more languid and weak than even her recent fatigues would account for, or than suited her brisk, energetic temperament.

Rodbury saw this, but decided it would pass off; women were always nervous, or defiant, or excited. These, or one of these, accounted for all her symptoms to one so easily disposed to be satisfied.

Again the eve of his intended departure arrived; again he had an interview with Ashwell, when he boastfully contrasted his renovated health with the wretched state in which he was when he paid his previous farewell visit, as it was intended to be. Ashwell was less enthusiastic; he had been touched by what he heard of Rose's conduct, and had once or twice ventured upon a suggestion, or an approach to one, by which he hinted at Rodbury's taking his wife abroad with him, where nobody would know her, or be likely to find fault with her; but this was not well received, and so was not pressed.

Going home from this final interview—home for the last time! after that night he would be free from all these sordid surroundings—he was startled by coming suddenly upon Mr Sparle, his partner, who was sauntering slowly up and down a neighbouring street, and evidently waiting for him. He was dressed respectably after his fashion; but this was a fashion which almost proclaimed his trade, and he was smoking a short clay pipe.

'I thought you were a hundred miles off, Jack,' said Rodbury, overcoming a strong impulse to shudder in disgust; 'I did not dream of seeing you here.'

'No, I daresay you did not,' replied Sparle; 'but somehow, I did not feel easy about Rose, and—and there were two or three other things weighing a good deal on my mind, so I have run up, you see.—No; I am not going in yet, nor you neither,' he continued, as Rodbury was about to turn into the street in which he lived; 'I want a little talk first.'

'Talk away then!' exclaimed his companion, assuming a lightness and indifference he was really far from feeling.

'I came up to see how Rose was getting on,' resumed Sparle. 'I was up two or three times while you were ill, as I suppose you know. But I heard from a party who lived about here some things I didn't like; and, in fact, he says he believes you are going to make a bolt of it.'

This speech was enough to stagger most men. To find his secret intention so accurately divined, and by a stranger of whose very existence he had been ignorant! It required his utmost nerve to repeat his careless laugh, and to inquire: 'What

next? Am I going to take the stock with me, or do I mean to make you a present of it?'

'I had thought of that,' said Sparle, after a pause; 'and I am glad to hear you speak so easy about it. We have never been exactly chums, you know; but I did not believe you were the man for such conduct. But here is another point: why don't you come out candid and say who you are, and what your friends are? You never told us why you named your boy Cyrus; you never even told us what his right name was. I found out, however, that he was registered Launceston as well'—

'You did, did you?' interrupted Rodbury.

'Yes, I tell you straight I did,' returned his companion; 'and more than that, I found there was a place of that name down below Plymouth; and I sent a man as had been in the police, all the way down there to inquire after any Cyruses and Rodburys what he might find. It cost me ten pounds, if it cost me a penny, and all to no good.'

'That was a pity indeed,' said Rodbury, as the speaker paused. He was far quicker than Sparle, and had run swiftly over the probable consequences of this activity on the part of his brother-in-law.

'Now, don't sneer at a fellow's anxiety,' resumed Sparle. 'I have no relations in the world but my sisters, and I would do anything for them; yes, and for your two children, Frank. You may not think it, but I am very fond of them as well, and I want them as well as Rose to be put straight, especially now.'

For a little while Rodbury said nothing; his companion had unconsciously supplied him with additional reasons for carrying out his plans without delay. Sparle's quest had luckily failed, in one instance; but some unfortunate accident might betray him—Rodbury. The knowledge of his son's second name, given when he never dreamt of the inheritance which had since become his, and the bestowal of which he now bitterly regretted, showed how dangerous such inquiries might become.

'Well, we will go in now,' he began at last, 'if you have quite finished all you have to say.'

'All right; I understand you,' retorted Sparle. 'I have pretty nigh finished, so we will go in. You have not been home all day, I believe?'

'No, I have not. You are correct in that belief, as in so many other things,' replied Rodbury. 'Have you anything to say about that?'

'Well,' Sparle began slowly, after a brief pause, 'not a great deal, only you heard me say "especially now," when I wanted things put straight, did you not?'

'I did; and wondered why it was "especially now," as you seem to have been meddling in my affairs for a good while past,' was the gracious answer of Rodbury.

'What I meant was just this,' continued the other: 'you have not been home since breakfast, so do not know everything. If I was anxious about Rose before, I am more anxious now, for while you were out, she got worse. I went for Dr Berge, and he says she is very ill. In fact, Frank Rodbury, your wife is took with the worst kind of smallpox, and I don't think even you will sneer at that.'

'Rose attacked by smallpox!' echoed Rodbury,

who was almost stunned for the moment at hearing this, while a host of images instantly flashed through his mind.

'Yes, sir,' replied Sparle gravely; 'your wife is took with the smallpox, and Dr Berge says it will go hard with her.'

MILITARY GYMNASISTIC SCHOOLS.

GYMNASTICS, as an item of military education, are of comparatively recent introduction into the British service. Only about a quarter of a century has elapsed since the establishment of the parent schools at Aldershot and one or two of the lesser standing camps in the south of England; and even now, though to be found in the more important stations, the gymnasium has not yet become a universal institution in connection with military centres. As applied to the training of soldiers in modern times, gymnastics were first introduced in the Prussian army about 1806, at a period when the famous teacher, Guts Muths, had made such exercises exceedingly popular among the young men of the civil population. In the course of time the Prussian troops displayed obvious signs of the advantages of this species of training; and in 1844, Louis-Philippe established a similar but considerably extended and improved course of instruction in the French army. Subsequently, gymnasia were introduced into almost all European armies, though, as already hinted, our own military authorities were somewhat tardy in taking steps for their adoption.

The buildings constructed as gymnastic schools for our soldiers are very similar in plan. The walls are lofty, and the roofs high-pitched, chiefly to offer facilities for what may be termed aerial exercises, which will be noticed a little farther on. Most of the older schools are wholly built of wood, and at a distance present very much the appearance of Aldershot huts of exaggerated dimensions. The newer buildings, again, have walls of stone or brick, and are altogether of a more substantial nature than their precursors.

As the outward aspect of the gymnasia usually shows little variety, so the internal fittings are in most cases very much alike. There is invariably a small office for the superintendent, who is a non-commissioned officer in possession of a certificate as a thoroughly qualified instructor, which qualification he has obtained at Aldershot, the headquarters of this department of army education. The superintendent or sergeant-major has assistants, varying in number according to the attendance at the school. They are ordinary soldiers who have displayed proficiency as gymnasts, and have gained certificates of a less ambitious sort than that of the sergeant-major, who is practically in supreme command of the school. An officer, however, who is also certificated, occasionally looks in to see that everything is in 'good order' and the work being carried on according to regulation. The officer sometimes essays to instruct in person, and he is not unfre-

quently found competent to do so in a masterly manner, having himself had to pass through an exhaustive course in order to obtain his certificate.

The office, above referred to, of the superintendent contains among other things a weighing-machine; for every man, on beginning a course of instruction, is weighed, or, in technical phrase, 'weighed-on.' Likewise, on the conclusion of his curriculum he is 'weighed-off.' He is also measured so as to ascertain the dimensions of his chest, arm, and forearm; and when 'weighed-off,' is expected to show, not so much an increase of weight as an improved muscular development of the parts alluded to. These particulars are carefully entered in a book, which receives the sedulous attention of the sergeant-major, and is kept with the neatness and accuracy of a ledger. This book, then, and the weighing-machine and measuring tape, are the most noteworthy objects in the office.

On entering the gymnasium itself, one observes at a glance that it is furnished with an ample supply of the paraphernalia necessary for its function. A pole, technically known as the 'mast,' reaches from the middle of the floor to the highest central portion of the roof. Around this at a little interval are suspended ropes for climbing. These are what are called 'slack' ropes—that is, they are not attached to the floor, but swing freely from the ceiling, to which they are securely fastened. Along one side of the building are pegs, on which are placed the belts and shoes used by the men when at gymnastic drill. There are also 'horses' for vaulting, parallel bars, horizontal bars, 'back'-boards, and a variety of other appliances, including a large assortment of dumb-bells and bar-bells, single-sticks, foils, and 'dummy' rifles with bayonets.

Courses of army gymnastic instruction are of two kinds. The first is the recruit's course; the other the course for the 'trained soldier.' The recruit's course is of longer duration than that of the trained soldier by some weeks; and may be stated to continue for one hour daily for a period of sixteen weeks. It is on the whole the more arduous of the two courses, partly, no doubt, in consequence of the comparative awkwardness of the men, and also in some degree owing to the more rigid attention bestowed upon it by the instructors—the exercises being found to be important auxiliaries to the efforts of the drill-sergeant in 'setting up' the recruit. And the recruit has to perform some hours of drill daily while attending the gymnasium: the trained soldier is 'struck off' for gymnastics, and does very little of his customary duty at other times. In most essential points, however, the courses are not dissimilar; and in the case of the soldier who develops an aptitude for 'applied' gymnastics, every facility is given him both in the way of instruction, and in allowing private practice apart from the regular hour of 'school.' Most non-commissioned officers pass through the course along with their companies; but in addition to the usual routine, they meet at a separate hour for instruction in fencing, sword *versus* bayonet, and the like.

When a detachment, whether of recruits or of trained men, is 'struck off' to undergo a course of gymnastics, the first thing to be accom-

plished is to pass a medical examination. This, however, is not of a very searching character; for the officers or pay-sergeants of companies are usually careful not to present any man who appears to be weakly or has a record showing much 'hospital service.' As a consequence of this system of 'weeding,' the word 'fit' is inscribed by the doctor after nearly every name on the roll. Then follows the work of 'weighing-on.' The men are weighed and carefully measured in the nude state, a proceeding which is not inappropriate, considering that the word gymnastics is derived from a Greek adjective signifying 'naked.' On each successive day the exercises commence with running drill, which, weather permitting, is conducted in the open air—the 'runs' increasing both in distance and speed as the course progresses. Then comes a period of dumb-bell and bar-bell exercise, under the supervision of the sergeant-major. As discipline is maintained as though the men were engaged in ordinary movements of parade, this is gone through in no perfunctory fashion, and everything is done to word of command. Dumb-bell exercise over, the soldiers are divided into sections, each under an instructor, who marches his little band off to the ropes, the 'horses,' or the 'wall,' as the case may be. To one who had never previously entered such a 'school,' perhaps the 'wall' would offer a curious subject for observation. To the height of thirty feet or so it presents the appearance of a vast dovecot, being perforated by innumerable pigeon-holes. This wall has to be scaled with the aid of these holes, hands and feet being inserted in them in the ascent. The climbing, moreover, is not done in an independent or haphazard manner: the instructor draws up his squad at the foot of the wall, calls the men to 'attention,' and gives the word of command, 'Climb!' Hands and feet are then placed in the pigeon-holes according to the regulation method, which it would require too much space to describe adequately, until the top is reached, when the curious spectacle of some twenty men hanging midway between floor and ceiling is presented.

From the point where these pigeon-holes cease to diversify the surface of the wall of the gymnasium, a plank some eighteen inches wide stretches away in the direction of the 'mast' already mentioned; and it will be understood that this plank is at a very considerable elevation above the floor. The man nearest the plank with a certain amount of difficulty gets upon it, and warily walks along it towards the mast. This elevated walk is attended with at least some degree of danger, and there are always one or two men in a squad who can never be prevailed upon to venture along the plank. While about a yard and a half distant from the mast, it terminates. By this time the plank in rear of the man we are following is occupied by the rest of the squad, who have in succession scrambled upon it; and supposing our man to be a little nervous, his retreat is cut off. In front of him yawns a great chasm reaching down to the floor, and he cannot get hold of the mast from his somewhat unpleasant position on the extremity of the plank. But two ropes, each about an inch in diameter, hanging a yard apart, are suspended from the roof in the chasm, as we have

termed it; and the instructor, from below, calls to the nervous man how to proceed. He now seizes one of the ropes in each hand, and swings himself across the gulf to the mast, which he contrives to encircle with his legs. Then our gymnast leaves his hold of one of the ropes and gets his arm round the mast. To get the other arm round it is a comparatively easy matter, and he slides swiftly down the mast to the floor. It is right to say that the latter is covered with pretty thick mattresses, in case of accident. Mishaps, however, are almost unknown, though some difficulty is occasionally experienced in assisting the descent of men who have 'stuck' on the plank.

Another squad will meanwhile be engaged at the 'back'-board. This is a board fixed so as to form a very steep inclined plane, with handles along each margin. Leaning against the board with his back, the man, by an alternate action of his hands and feet on the handles, drags himself to the summit; and then, by a reversal of the process employed in ascending, returns again to the floor. The chief benefit to be derived from this exercise is the promotion of that squareness of shoulders so pleasing in the eyes of the drill-sergeant.

There are two 'horses' furnished with spring-boards to assist the act of vaulting. One of the horses is of no great height; the other is of somewhat imposing stature. The lower horse is used for elementary vaulting, which is at first done in two motions—the man springing upon it, and remaining there in either a standing or sitting posture for a moment, before leaping off on the other side; while the high one is for more advanced pupils, and indeed some practice is necessary ere it can be got over in anything like creditable style. Another variety of what may be popularly termed jumping is included in the curriculum of the gymnasium. A shelf some four feet square projects from the wall at a considerable distance from the floor. From this the men are required to leap, a mattress being placed on the floor to modify the concussion. The use of the 'shelf' is probably to give soldiers confidence in jumping from any unusual height.

A good deal of attention is bestowed on rope-climbing. The ropes, as already noted, are in the vicinity of the mast, and are four in number. To climb such a rope, when once the peculiar method of doing so has been mastered, is not a very difficult feat, and many men become expert in climbing who make but a poor show in other exercises.

The above examples may serve to give some idea of the exercises carried out in a military gymnasium. As the course proceeds, the men become much more dexterous, and are consequently able to overtake a far greater amount of work in the hour of drill. While at first almost the whole of the time may be consumed in getting a squad along the plank or over the 'horses,' towards the close of the course of instruction the same squad will make nearly a complete tour of the gymnastic appliances within the hour. But when this stage of proficiency has been reached, the date for 'weighing-off' is not far distant. And when the last man of the detachment has been weighed and measured,

the particulars being entered in the book, the sergeant-major turns over a new page and awaits the arrival of a fresh party to be 'weighed-on.'

THE DIAMOND THIEF.

FROM time to time the general public reads of some wonderful jewel robbery, and marvels at the sagacity of those thieves who prefer to turn their talents, often of the highest order, to a dishonest account, when they might make an honourable and profitable livelihood. But there have been one or two audacious robberies which have never found their way into the newspapers, from some cause or another best known to the losers. Some days ago we had the pleasure of meeting one of the partners in a wholesale jewelry business, dealing principally with the better class of West End shops, though they are always ready to accept a private customer. In course of time the conversation turned upon jewel robberies; and for something over two hours my new acquaintance kept us interested while he detailed more than one audacious plot by which the firm had suffered loss. After the silence which followed a tale of more than usual interest, one of the circle asked the narrator if ever private customers were tempted to rob them. The answer was the following story:

Of course we do occasionally have cases of that kind, said the narrator; though usually they are quickly detected. Occasionally an aristocratic customer—some one with plenty of money—is tempted to purloin a valuable ornament. You see kleptomania is a luxury which only the rich can afford to indulge in. I remember once waiting upon a lady in Park Lane with a rare lot of ornaments, out of which she selected some hundreds of pounds' worth. A diamond and Limoges enamel star, which she had particularly admired, was missing when I came to re-pack my cases. A younger man would have lost his head, and there would have been a scene, ending, perhaps, in a prosecution, which, let me tell you, under such circumstances would have done us incredible harm. But, as the Yankees say, 'I had been there before.' All I had to do was to make out a list of the things purchased and those kept for approval; the diamond star figuring prominently at the foot of the list. My customer looked at me a moment, half afraid, till I reminded her, as suavely as possible, that she had slipped it in her pocket in a moment of temporary abstraction. Of course she saw what I meant, and acknowledged her blunder very prettily.

But perhaps the greatest loss we ever had was in a measure due to one of the best customers of the firm, a member of the Upper House, with a town residence in Arlington Street, and no one knows how many seats and estates in

different parts of the country. Probably you all remember his daughter being married some four years ago—at St Peter's, Eaton Square, or the Savoy Chapel, I forget which, with a royal personage to sign the register, and wedding presents from Her Majesty downwards. His lordship is a very rich man, and his presents were worth a small fortune. But they cost him more than he anticipated.

I was in the counting-house one morning some two months before this marriage came off, discussing it with my partner, both wondering if we should have an order from the earl, when a slim-looking gentleman came in and laid a note upon the table. It was an order from the earl to repair at once to Arlington Street with a *parure* of diamonds, of which we make a speciality. I arranged to call a little later in the day, a fact of which I informed the slim gentleman. But towards the afternoon I received another note by the same hand advising me that his lordship had left town suddenly for M—— Castle, his seat in Loamshire, and that I was to come down there for instructions in the course of the following day. I remember being somewhat annoyed at the time, for I had an important family engagement on the morrow; but I had to swallow my impatience and inform the messenger that I would do myself the honour of obeying his lordship's commands. My partner was in the inner office, and it was my duty to show him the letter. Judge of my surprise when I could find neither of the earl's notes, though I distinctly remembered placing the second one upon the desk before me whilst I was giving the messenger my reply. I thought little of it at the time, though how their loss affected us afterwards you shall hear.

I went down to M—— the following day with more valuables than I have ever carried before or since. I must have had at least thirty thousand pounds' worth about me altogether. But I am not a nervous man, though men in my line have been robbed in a railway carriage before now.

I knew the earl very well by sight, though I had never had a personal interview with him before. I had occasionally seen him in the counting-house, and had listened to his peculiarly grating voice—a deep stern voice, with a rough rasp in it like the noise of a saw—a voice I could pick out amongst a thousand. I had no occasion to find fault with my reception: an elegant luncheon awaited me in the dining-room, and his lordship's own man—the slim gentleman aforesaid—was told off to administer to my creature comforts. He was extremely chatty and agreeable, without being the least forward, as 'gentlemen's gentlemen' too often are; and asked a variety of questions about my business, commiserating me upon the anxiety I must suffer in travelling the country with so vast and tempting treasures in my possession.

I will not detain you with the result of my interview with the earl and his daughter. I was fortunate enough to have in my possession the precise ornaments they required; and as I returned to town that night, well pleased with my journey, and the big cheque in my pocket, I congratulated myself that my treasures were so considerably lightened since the morning. It

was more than twelve months before I heard from the earl again.

It was one dull November morning, with a fog beginning to settle over the city, so dense that we had lighted the gas, though it was not long past eleven, when a visitor was ushered into the counting-house—no one else than the slim gentleman, who gave me a smiling recognition and held out a note for my perusal. I was somewhat astonished and not a little pleased when I saw that it was an order from his lordship for a *parure* of diamonds; in fact, almost the same order as I had received nearly eighteen months ago. In a jocular way I pointed out this resemblance to the slim gentleman. To my surprise, his face became grave, and he looked around cautiously, as if afraid of eavesdroppers, and coming a little closer, began in a significant tone: 'Of course you understand, sir, that confidential servants are often obliged to know things that it is as well other people should be ignorant of. Every noble family has its skeleton, and our family has theirs. Now, in the first place have you another suite of diamonds the counterpart of the others my lord purchased?'

I intimated that we had such another suite, as the earl must remember; but my visitor waived the question aside impatiently.

'You might possibly have sold it,' he said; 'and there is no time to make another. The fact is, Lady R——, who is staying with us now, must wear those jewels at a dance we are giving to-morrow night. And this is where the difficulty comes in, for they have been stolen!'

'Good gracious, you don't say so!—But why make a mystery of the matter?'

'Because we happen to know who the thief is!' said the valet, dropping his voice still lower. 'To a great extent I was instrumental in detecting the delinquent myself. It is a deplorable affair, a shocking affair—such a promising young gentleman too.—But I am saying too much, perhaps.—Mr ——, we must have those jewels at any price. If not, one of the highest families in the land will be terribly compromised. Do not be at Arlington Street later than half-past two.'

I always had a weakness for a mystery, and here was one ready to my hand. I could understand, from my visitor's little indiscretion, that some terrible scandal had happened, though I admired the fellow's cautiousness in checking himself before he had said too much. Under the circumstances, I need not tell you that my cab reached Arlington Street on the stroke of half-past two.

The drawing-room blinds were down; the shutters, too, all over the house, with the exception of the dining-room. In the clearer atmosphere it was fairly light, light enough to do without gas. In the front dining-room a young man was standing before the fire, who pleasantly introduced himself to me as the Honourable Claude V——, a name I knew well enough, though I had never seen the young gentleman before. In spite of his naturally amiable manner, I thought he seemed anxious and ill at ease, frequently breaking off in the middle of some observation to listen to the sound of voices, which came plainly enough from behind the thin ornamental partition dividing the two rooms,

and whence the earl's peculiar grating tones could be heard every now and then raised in something like anger. I could catch from time to time allusions to diamonds, and occasionally the word 'thief' was used in tones of immeasurable contempt. In the midst of this the door opened and the gentlemanly valet walked in. Even he seemed somewhat restless and uneasy, a circumstance I should scarcely have expected from a person of his unusually even temperament. He held in his hand an open telegram, and a letter for me, the ink still wet upon the envelope. I tore it open, and read that his lordship had suddenly been summoned to M—— Castle, the valet at the same time showing me the telegram, signed 'Mary.'

'You will have to go down to M—— to-morrow, sir,' he said to me; 'unless perhaps you have no objection to allowing the earl to take the jewels with him. However, for the present that matters but little.'

I immediately expressed my willingness to comply with this arrangement. With seeming reluctance, the valet took my bag, and presently I heard the sound of conversation resumed in the adjoining apartment.

'Thank goodness, there is a way out of it,' I heard the earl say.—'No, I will not look at anything else now. Take the bag back to Mr —— at once.—And, Evans, I must have a cab immediately.'

'You are usually cautious in your profession,' remarked the Honourable Claude to me, as I made a hurried inventory of various costly nick-nacks I had brought with me on the chance of a sale, for even confidential servants are not always to be trusted.—'Nothing missing, I trust?'

There was nothing missing, as I smilingly hastened to reply, though my answer was drowned by the rattle of a cab on the pavement outside. I heard the earl's voice in the hall admonishing the faithful Evans, and caught a glimpse of his well-known figure as he climbed into the cab. As the horse sped rapidly away, my companion heaved a voluntary sigh of relief.

'Of course you have guessed there is something wrong, Mr ——,' he said gravely. 'I am not at liberty to favour you with any details; but you will be doing us all a favour by observing a discreet silence concerning everything that you may have heard the last half-hour.'

Needless to say that I promised, also that I fully intended to adhere to that resolution. I stayed chatting with my aristocratic acquaintance for some time, considerably taken by his pleasant chatter and keen observation on men and things. Judge of my surprise when, on looking at my watch, I found it to be past four. I had already missed one appointment by my carelessness, and I excused myself hurriedly; and half an hour later I was back again at our counting-house in Hatton Garden. As I drove up, another cab stopped at the door, and out of it descended a figure which filled me with astonishment. It was the Earl of —— himself! He seized me hurriedly by the arm, contrary to his usual dignified manner and bearing, and almost forced me into the office. Once there, he lost no time in telling me the occasion for his errand, a narrative which, as it proceeded, more than confirmed my worst fears.

'I thought it best not to telegraph you,' he commenced; 'electric messages get into suspicious hands occasionally, so I came up from M—— straight here.'

'You have only just arrived in town, my lord?' I asked feebly. 'Do I understand that?'

'I reached Paddington scarcely half an hour ago. The fact is the jewels I had from you for my daughter have been stolen.'

'So I have been informed,' I replied mechanically, 'only half an hour ago.'

'So you have been told! Where on earth did you get your information?'

As coherently as I could, I told my tale; and fortunately was able to produce the two notes in evidence of my sanity, which up to this time had been open to argument.

The earl put on his gold-rimmed spectacles and read them with a judicial air. 'I am afraid, very much afraid, you have been the victim of a cleverly planned robbery. Yesterday morning Evans came to me and asked for two days' holiday, a favour which I need not tell you was readily granted. It was only last night that my daughter, who is staying at M—— with her husband, discovered by the merest accident that she had been robbed. Of course none of us suspected Evans. I should not have suspected it now, if I had not seen you; and my object in coming here was to get a technical description of the missing gems for the use of the Scotland Yard people. What a pity I did not come earlier!'

By this time I was in a frame of mind suspicious enough to make me suspect any one, including the earl himself. I pointed out to him, none too courteously, the fact of the letters, and my conversation with the Honourable Claude.

'I have a good memory, Mr ——,' said my visitor kindly, 'and I recognise these letters as the two I wrote to you prior to my daughter's marriage.—Evans, I understand, delivered both of them, and must have purloined them whilst your back was turned, with a view to this very robbery. It is true that I have a son Claude, only, unfortunately for your theory, he is at present with his regiment in the West Indies.'

'But I could have sworn to your lordship's figure as I saw you getting into the cab; and, pardon me, I could make oath to your voice amongst a million.'

'You recall a little circumstance I had quite forgotten,' the earl replied in amused retrospection. 'Evans, I regret to say, was uncommonly clever at mimicry; indeed, on one occasion I am informed that he presumed to counterfeit my dress and general style, even my voice, for the amusement of a select circle of friends, in a manner which filled them with astonishment. They say, like master like man, Mr ——; but it is very sad to see so clever a man so great a rascal.—And now, as I am in a measure the author of your loss, and as we are, moreover, comrades in misfortune, pray, consider my advice, need I say my purse likewise, at your convenience.'

We drove to Scotland Yard together and laid our complaint before the authorities. They were very wise and confident; but, as I imagined, the real culprit was never captured. The 'Honourable Claude' was picked up some few months later, but he turned out to be only a cat's-paw in the

hands of the older and abler scoundrel. But the astute Evans, the successful mimic, was never found; and those two splendid parures remain lost to the world to this day. But in consequence of the daring robbery being committed under his own roof, the Earl of —— insisted upon making good our loss, as a kind of penalty, he said, for placing a premium upon temptation.

'How did they get into the earl's town-house in his absence?' asked a listener when the narrative had concluded.

'That was the easiest part of all. Of course, the town-house was only used for a month or two in the year, and then left in charge of an aged caretaker, all the valuables being removed. If a confidential servant wished the use of a room for an hour or two, the rest is easily managed.'

'Were you not suspicious when you were asked to part with your valuables?'

'In a general way I should not have parted with them, not even to a relation of my customer; but the romance of the thing deceived me, the half-vested air of mystery, and above all, hearing the earl's voice so close to me, and every stray word I could catch bearing upon the servant's cunningly told tale. Usually I am caution itself, but I was fairly "had" there.'

'I suppose the old chloroform business is quite exploded now?'

'Pretty well; for it is rather dangerous, you see. A man may be a bad subject for the drug, and again he may be armed. That kind of thing used to pay best in a railway carriage, like loaded cigars, and narcotics in a glass of wine. My railway-carriage experience was, however, of a different description. Another evening you may perhaps like to hear it.'

GUARDED LANGUAGE.

'I TOLD her she was the most ignorant person I ever met,' said the late rector of Lincoln of a young lady who had asked his advice about writing a book; 'but of course without hurting her feelings.' This, surely, is the acme of guarded language, and a great many of us would be willing to sacrifice much if we could only attain to such a superlative degree of perfection in the art of saying unpleasant things without being unpleasant. Few persons, however, can do this; and they have, therefore, either to avoid matters likely to give offence, or to use rather ambiguous language.

Everybody knows that religion is a dangerous topic. Sir John Macdonald, the Canadian Premier, once astonished his friends by defending the orthodox side of certain points of theology. Finally, one of them asked: 'Sir John, what are you—heterodox or orthodox?' to which the statesman replied: 'Put me down paradox!'—a reply at once clever and witty. The answer to a somewhat similar question, that 'All wise men are of the same religion,' is attributed to several eminent men. Mr Froude, in his *Short Studies*, gives the following version of the anecdote, without, however, quoting his authority. 'Of what religion are you, Mr Rogers?' said a

lady once.—‘What religion, madam? I am of the religion of all sensible men.’—‘What is that?’ she asked.—‘All sensible men, madam, keep that to themselves.’ Somewhat similar is an anecdote told in a note by Speaker Onslow to Burnet’s notice of the Earl of Shaftesbury in the *History of his Own Time*. A lady called upon the Earl one day, and at last the conversation turned into a dispute upon subjects of religion. ‘After a good deal of that sort of talk,’ the note proceeds, ‘the Earl said at last: “People differ in their discourse and profession about these matters, but men of sense are really but of one religion.” Upon which the lady says of a sudden: “Pray, my lord, what religion is that which men of sense agree in?”—“Madam,” says the Earl, “men of sense never tell it!”’

Literary criticism upon books privately presented with the compliments of the author, and with the request for an opinion upon the book, is proverbially a difficult task. Sometimes, however, the matter cannot be altogether shirked, and if the book under criticism be really bad, it requires some tact to avoid saying so outright. Max O’Reil gives an instance of how one gentleman overcame the difficulty. An English author had sent his latest production to several men of letters, requesting them to give him their opinions of his book. A Scotchman replied: ‘Many thanks for the book which you did me the honour to send me. I will lose no time in reading it.’ This reply acknowledged the letter and the book, without expressing any opinion as to the merits of the latter. The habit of authors importuning literary men for advice has been the means of originating many famous guarded answers, the most important of which was that given by Sir Thomas More. An author having asked his opinion of a book, Sir Thomas told him to turn it into rhyme. He did so, and submitted it again to the Lord Chancellor. ‘Ay, ay!’ said the great satirist, ‘that will do, that will do. ’Tis rhyme now; but before, it was neither rhyme nor reason.’ Johnson’s answer on a like occasion was deliciously vague. When the great talking philosopher had done reading a translation of some work, the author, says Boswell, ‘asked him bluntly, “if, upon the whole, it was a good translation.” Johnson, whose regard for truth was uncommonly strict, seemed to be puzzled for a moment what answer to make. As he certainly could not honestly commend the performance, with exquisite address he evaded the question thus: “Sir, I do not say that it may not be made a very good translation.”’

During the last half-century there has been a great increase in the use of guarded language. The present generation deals largely in euphemism and periphrasis. In the House of Commons the members are allowed to use any euphemism they like for liar, but they must not, as *Punch* said, use the good old Saxon word. In literature, too, there has been a great toning down of phrases. We have no ‘slashing’ reviews nowadays. ‘Drivelling nonsense,’ ‘murderous attacks on his own literary reputation,’ ‘than the volumes now before us we never saw anything better calculated to excite disgust and anger in a lover of poetry,’ ‘insufferable stuff,’ ‘inanities’—these are a few literary gems culled at random from reviews

directed against Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth. What language was employed with regard to the productions of the smaller fry it is difficult to imagine. All this kind of criticism is, however, now dispensed with; and the present mild system of reviewing is much more satisfactory, and, in the case of a bad book, accomplishes just as much as the abusive language of a past generation. ‘Who,’ asks Thackeray, ‘was the blundering idiot who said that “fine words butter no parsnips?” Half the parsnips of society are served and rendered palatable with no other sauce.’ And as these fine words are calculated, and this two-edged language is allowed for, there is no harm done, and not the slightest misunderstanding.

Even the beggars, according to a well-known author, are becoming adepts in the use of delicate language. A man asked the narrator of the incident for alms. ‘You have a violin there,’ he said, ‘but you do not play it.’—‘O sir,’ was the reply, ‘give me a penny, and don’t make me play. I assure you, you won’t regret it!’ Clearly, it was impossible to resist an appeal of this sort.

It has frequently been noted that the New Englander is very cautious in his language, and that he rarely gives a direct answer to a question. A gentleman said to a friend whose family were not noted for very active habits: ‘Was not your father’s death very sudden?’ Slowly drawing one hand from his pocket and pulling down his beard, the interrogated cautiously replied: ‘Waal, rather sudden for him.’

LOVE AND THE WORLD.

SWEET is the evening breeze
That whispers through the trees
Low lullabies;
Sweet is the rosy light,
Lingering o’er cloudlets white
As the day dies.

Each old familiar sight
Brings me new joy to-night,
And strange surprise;
Fair is each half-closed flower
At this calm evening hour,
As the day dies.

Because Love came to me,
And granted power to see
With clearer eyes;
Because, no more alone,
I am with thee, my own,
As the day dies.

My life’s last sun must set,
Dearest, ere I forget
Such memories;
How shall I wish to live,
What can the future give,
When *this* day dies?

ROBERT EVERED.

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RAILWAYS AND FAST TRAVELLING.

THE conditions of speed and safety which characterise railways at the present time have not been obtained without much thought and most expensive experiments, until the nearly perfect system of working them has grown almost to a science. In the early days of railways the method of signalling for stopping a train at a station was a flag or movable board by day, and a candle placed in the window at night; but in the course of years an elaborate arrangement has been devised. On entering a signal-box, the spectator is bewildered by the number of bells, needles, instruments, and long rows of bright levers, all conspicuously numbered and named. The latter have been aptly compared to the keyboard of an organ; but with this difference, that the organist can produce discord at will, while with the railway signallist, discord or a mistake is barely conceivable; for he cannot open the points to a line, and at the same time show a safety signal to another line crossing it. Every line is in a manner under lock and key, for when one is opened, it secures by the same movement of the lever all those from which danger can come. This result is effected by mechanism of great simplicity; while the separate levers, with their signals, are so arranged that a mistake is practically impossible. Even when signals are out of view from the signal station, if at night a lamp is broken and the light extinguished, a very simple but effective electrical apparatus rings a bell and operates a signal in the office giving immediate notice.

Still further to ensure safety for trains in motion, continuous and automatic brakes have been brought to great perfection. The Board of Trade has enforced their use, and Railway Companies have expended large sums of money in bringing them to their present state of excellence. It is not many years since, that a train, running at forty-seven and a half miles an hour, could not be brought to a stop within twelve hundred yards' distance and eighty-six seconds of time, and this with the best appliances then in use.

In the competition at Newark-on-Trent a few years ago, a train of the same weight and speed, but fitted with Smith's Vacuum Brake, was pulled up in four hundred yards and in twenty-six seconds—a saving of nearly half a mile in distance, and sixty seconds in time. A single second in railway practice means a great deal, for at sixty miles an hour it may mean eighty-eight feet from fearful disaster. Trains have been known from the failure of a coupling screw to get divided, some of the carriages being left behind; and in this case, the automatic brake, if in operation, comes into action on both portions, giving the conductor and driver instant notice.

Ninety-three per cent. of the railways in England are now worked by the interlocking and block system. Without this safeguard, it would be impossible to work lines where a great many trains pass in rapid succession, as on the Metropolitan, which has a train passing every two minutes. Here the signal stations are necessarily very close to one another. When a train arrives at a station, the signallist controls the section behind by giving notice of arrival, and again of its departure, and forward in the same way. Signals thus precede and follow every train throughout its course; and in this way no two trains can ever be on the same section at the same time. The telegraph and signals are so connected in working the trains, that they may be compared to the nervous system of the human frame controlling the movements of the body.

In view of all these precautions to make railway travelling perfectly safe, and that, too, while extensions are continually going on—with a greater and ever increasing number of trains of all kinds running with accelerated speed—it is gratifying that railway accidents have diminished in number about sixty per cent. In 1882, the chairman of the London and North-western stated that there had not been a single passenger killed on their line within the previous three years. Sir John Hawkshaw, speaking of safety on railways generally, said 'that only one passenger was injured for every four million of miles travelled;

and on an average a person may travel one hundred thousand miles each year for forty years, and the chances are of not receiving the slightest injury.' Again, Sir E. Watkin 'maintained that railway travelling was safer than eating, because it is a fact that more people choke themselves in England than are killed on all the railways of the United Kingdom.' Further, it is quite clear that with appliances so perfect, it would now be possible to start a fast train on the most crowded railway, worked on the block system, without any previous warning along the line; and yet it would pass through with safety and without causing any derangement of traffic. It is a wonderful consideration connected with the fast express service of this country that all the railways are so nearly equal in speed, although the general opinion is that the Great Northern, with a running average of fifty-one and a half miles an hour, steadily maintains the fastest time; while the regular equality of running and punctuality shown by the London and North-western Railway cannot be surpassed. It is on two of the three routes between London and Edinburgh, called the East and West Coast routes, that the Companies which compose them seem to put forth their greatest efforts. The East Coast is the shortest route, and is generally more favourable for speed; while the West Coast line, besides being eight miles longer, has several hills to climb; and it is evident that the motive-power of the engines employed is nearly taxed to its utmost limit, more especially if we read aright the lesson of last year's famous race from London to Edinburgh.

The race referred to has marked an epoch in railway travelling, and a brief résumé of its most noticeable features may be interesting here. There are three routes between London and Edinburgh, as stated: (1) The East Coast route, which runs over the Great Northern, North-eastern, and North British lines; (2) the West Coast route, composed of the London and North-western and Caledonian lines; and (3) the Midland, including the Waverley Route, which, being a longer line and more difficult to run over, took no prominent part in the race. For some years, a train familiarly known as the 'Flying Scotsman,' had been running between London and Edinburgh over the East Coast route, and doing the distance, 392½ miles,* formerly in ten, and latterly in nine hours. The express trains on the West Coast route started from London at the same time (10 A.M.), and took ten hours on the journey, 400½ miles, being one hour more than its rival.

This was the condition of things until the approach of the tourist season last year, when the West Coast line gave notice that after June 1st trains would run from Edinburgh to London, and *vice versa*, in nine hours, that being the same time

as on the East Coast line. The East Coast replied by giving notice that from 1st July the time would be reduced to eight and a half hours; and the West Coast made a similar reduction of half an hour, arriving in Edinburgh at 6.30 P.M. The East Coast Companies were now so eager to retain the supremacy for speed, that they still further reduced the time, and on August 1st, the Flying Scotsman was in Edinburgh at six P.M. Five days later, August 6th, the West Coast train ran the 400½ miles in eight hours, including stoppages. Another four days passed, and the Flying Scotsman reached Edinburgh at 5.45 P.M., or seven and three-quarter hours. Three days later, August 13th, the West Coast train was in Edinburgh at 5.38 P.M.—400½ miles in 458 minutes, including stoppages, actual running time 427 minutes. The day following, the East Coast train reached Edinburgh at 5.31 P.M.—392½ miles in 418 minutes actual running time. On the 28th of the same month the East Coast train reached Edinburgh at 5.28 P.M.; and on the 31st at 5.27 P.M., or in 414 minutes of actual running time. This may be said to have ended a contest giving results such as the world had never before seen. Both lines have since covered the journey in eight and a half hours.

Some of these runs were unprecedented. We have seen short runs at as great if not higher speed; but these were long runs, made day after day, with little or no variation, and free from mishap or accident of any kind. On the West Coast line the run from Euston to Crewe, one hundred and fifty-eight and one-eighth miles, was done in one hundred and seventy-eight minutes, a continuous speed of nearly fifty-four miles an hour, and said to be the longest fast run ever made in the world without a stop. The West Coast Companies ran the four hundred and one-half miles in nineteen minutes less than the advertised time; during which the Caledonian train ran from Carlisle to Edinburgh, one hundred and three-quarter miles, in one hundred and two and a half minutes; and when we consider that this included a flight over one mountain ten hundred and fifteen feet, and another eight hundred and seventy feet high, we are safe in saying nothing like it in railway work was ever done before. It was followed next day on the same route by an equally remarkable performance. The London and North-western portion of the route from Preston to Carlisle, ninety miles, was run in eighty-nine minutes, including a thirty miles' run over the Cumbrian hills, nine hundred and twenty feet high. On the East Coast route, even keeping in view that it is a much easier line to run over, some remarkable results were also obtained. The run was made from Newcastle-on-Tyne to Edinburgh—with two engines—one hundred and twenty-four miles in one hundred and twenty-three minutes. Taking the *length* of the runs into consideration, these results are altogether unparalleled. Competition of this kind will certainly add to our experience in many ways, and teach us possibilities that could be obtained in no other manner.

No special preparation for accelerated speed had been made. The engines were those in daily use; and except that the number of carriages was reduced, the trains were in all respects the same as those which had been running the ordinary

*The actual distance is 392½ miles; but the railway mileage is calculated at 393½—the extra mile being given the Railway Company by statute, to compensate them for the extra expense of the high-level bridge at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

express. There is no doubt that much more powerful engines could be built to run at a greater speed with heavier trains; and it has been matter for surprise to many that Mr F. W. Webb, engineer of the London and North-western Railway, did not run his compound locomotives; for if steam is to hold its place as the motive-power of the future, then the compound locomotive will be the engine of the future on railways. It is said to be, when running at high speed, comparatively free from that oscillation which is so destructive to the permanent way, while it gives greater power with much less consumption of fuel. But the engines which have been made at Crewe of this type are as yet designed only for heavy trains, and their great tractive power would have been wasted, while their wheels are too small for great speed.

On merely local lines, where haste is not so great a consideration with passengers, the mere rate of speed does not become so pressing a question; but in the case of great through lines—those lines that are, as it were, the main arteries of the railway system, and which carry passengers long distances—the rate of speed is a matter of great importance. And the public appear to encourage this haste. As a mere question of Speed *versus* Safety, it has been remarked that if two lines were laid alongside, one to run at thirty miles, the other at thirty miles an hour, with the advantages of greater safety and punctuality which the slower speed would give, the great majority of passengers in the United Kingdom would choose the faster train, and run any risk to save a few minutes on a journey, even although the time saved may have no special value on arrival.

The comparison of our special trains with those on the Continent shows greatly in our favour both for speed and punctuality. In fact, the only really fast express trains run in France, Belgium, and Italy are those which are in 'correspondence' with ours; and in general, they are from five to ten miles an hour slower than ours; or a running average of thirty-five to forty miles an hour. In the United States some of the fast trains are not much behind ours in speed; at the same time, whether from the long distances or from the generally inferior condition of their lines, they have no trains which will at all compare with those of this country in punctuality and regular speed, with freedom from accident. There are many things connected with high speeds on railways which tax the ingenuity of locomotive engineers to the utmost. The lines have to be made strong enough to withstand the heavy blows of the locomotive, for the other portions of the running plant are light in comparison. A railway train at sixty miles an hour may be compared to a huge projectile, and subject to the same laws. The momentum is the product of the weight of the train multiplied by the square of the velocity in feet per second; and if we allow a train of one hundred and twenty tons, travelling at a speed of sixty miles an hour, then the work required to bring it to a standstill would be fourteen thousand four hundred foot tons exerted through one minute, or nearly a thousand horse-power, which gives some idea of its destructive force if, unhappily, it should come into action; and yet this terrific power is so

entirely under command, that the strength of a child turning the small handle of the vacuum brake can bring the train to a stand in a few seconds.

There is no doubt railways and locomotive experience have revolutionised many of our established theories and ideas of what was suitable and possible in mechanical motions and structures; and in this way one of the most important of the sciences, dynamics, has been better understood and established. In fact, every improvement in railways, while adding to the comfort and safety of passengers, seems to open out new avenues to still further improvements and to create new requirements. There is much left that might have been referred to here, such as the electric light and signals, communication between passengers and conductors of trains, &c.; but perhaps enough has been mentioned to show that every week Railway Companies are honestly and successfully trying to make railway travelling safer and more attractive; while, as the late John Bright said, 'railways have rendered more services and have received less gratitude than any other institution in the land.'

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SNELLING rode home, revolving these and other matters in his mind. He was filled with a stolid wrath against Isaiah. 'He was always an impident feller,' mused Mr Snelling; 'but I never thought as he would turn agen me and take up with a parcel of foreign strangers. I shall have to be rid of him. I'll have no feller round me as work agen me behind my back.'

He was not a clever man, or shrewd at reading other people's motives; but even whilst he pretended to be struck with wonder at Isaiah's treason, he understood his motives perfectly.

'They keep the lad away from me,' he growled inwardly, 'as if I'd meant him a mischief. What harm, I should like to know, should I ever ha' done the boy? He's my own flesh and blood; and his father's last words was to say as he expected me to take good care on him. Me hurt the lad? What had I got to hurt the lad for?'

His clumsy mind put on airs of virtuous indignation, and he told himself whatever seemed likely to influence the judgment of other people. In a while it all began to seem reasonable, and even impregnable.

'Here's that Isaiah, as my father bred from a boy, been spreading evil reports and thinking evil things about his gaffer.' He felt dimly a mingling of scorn and pity for Isaiah stir within him. 'I should ha' thought better of him; I should ha' thought Isaiah would have acted square; I should ha' fancied as Isaiah would have come to me plain and straightfor'ard.' He shook his head mournfully over his servitor's moral shortcomings, and jogged on, nine-tenths persuaded of his own rectitude. 'For two pins I'd warm his jacket for him.'

Here came reflection, and the current of his righteous wrath grew cool, and began to roll sluggishly. If he parted with Isaiah suddenly, it

would take him a month or two to seize and gather up all the business threads which would be left loose. He began to cast about in his mind for excuses for delaying the faithless servant's discharge, and finding none, saw more clearly than ever how ill-used he had been. It was awkward to part with a trusted servant in such a way that he could force from him nothing but a formal surrender of his trust. In his business habits, Isaiah was kindred with the mole—he liked to work underground. He would make slow, tentative approaches towards a bargain, and Snelling knew from old experience that he might have half a score of profitable little business enterprises almost ready, about which, if he were abruptly dismissed, he would naturally say nothing. These reflections, of course, made Isaiah's treason only the more obvious, and his own attitude of righteous anger the more tenable.

Isaiah was not at home; and his injured, wrongfully suspected employer sat down in wrathful patience to await him. He dismissed to bed the servant who admitted him, and sat over his sober glass of grog and his pipe in a severity which grew momentarily more and more magisterial. To vindicate his own outraged honour, he would have to suffer pecuniary loss; but he was prepared to bear it. Slowly there grew up in his mind the image of Robert Snelling, British yeoman to the core, generous, well-meaning, the holder of a solemn trust, who meant at any cost honestly to discharge it, and who had been traduced by a vile suspicion. Curious as it may seem, he grew actually to believe in this personage, and the only note in all his thoughts which jarred with that belief rose in a murmur so faint as hardly to be audible to his inward ears: 'Theer's nobody in the world as has got a grain of evidence agen me.'

He sat late into the night, and there still being no sign of Isaiah, he locked and chained the front door. Then returning to the room in which he had been sitting, he scrawled the words, 'Half-past seven' upon a sheet of paper; and leaving this in the centre of the table, went up-stairs to bed. That sterling figure of the British yeoman looked altogether credible to his mind. The monster who would have attempted to injure his own kith and kin grew altogether improbable, unbelievable, and he fell asleep in the consciousness of his own unblemished reputation.

He was awakened at the hour he had indicated, and having breakfasted, attired himself with as scrupulous a care as he had displayed the night before.

Mrs Winter appealed to him for news of Isaiah.

'I don't know where your man is, my good woman,' Snelling answered; 'but I can go so far as to tell you that I do not care. If he was only aware of it, he's got the best o' reasons for keeping out o' my way. If he comes back dooin' my habsence, you can tell him as I've found him out. I fancy he guesses as much already.'

'I'm sure, Mr Snelling,' said Isaiah's wife feebly, 'as Isaiah's done nothing as he knows to be wrong.'

Mr Snelling's only answer was a scornful grunt. The good woman was too much afraid of him to push her inquiries further, and he left her in great uneasiness of mind. He rode into Castle-

Barfield; and having seen the mare comfortably stabled at an inn, made his way to the railway station, and in due time took train for Warwick. Isaiah's all-night absence seemed strange to him; but he did not as yet connect it with Orme's appearance, and was fully persuaded that he was about to take by surprise the foreigners who had harboured his ward. He found with very little difficulty the street they lived in, and identified the house at once. He sounded an important summons at the door, and Madame Vigne answered it. The two looked at each other for quite a considerable little time without speaking. The colour in Madame's plump cheeks had all drawn into two hectic-looking spots. Her lips were tight set, and her eyes sparkled dangerously. Snelling was prosperous rustic dignity all over, and having no nerves to betray him, he was by far the more self-possessed of the two.

'Well?' said Madame brusquely, when she had inspected the stranger so long that her own silence had made her feel awkward and embarrassed.

'I want a word or two with you, ma'am, if you please,' said Snelling, mounting the first step of the snow-white little flight of three which led to the doorway.

'Will you be so good as to enter?' said Madame, standing on one side to make way for him. She was as ready to fight for the children as a hen for her chickens. She would have fled from a mouse in abject terror, but for a mere man she had no fear.

Snelling marched in solidly; and Madame, closing the door behind him, led him to the sitting-room. The apartment was furnished sparsely, rather after the continental fashion than the English, and gave the untravelled man a false estimate of the people with whom he had to deal. A little foreign-looking man, spare and dark, with jet black hair and eyes, and teeth that flashed like ivory under his moustache, rose as he entered the room and bowed. The little man held a small-sized sketch-book in one hand and a pencil in the other, and when he resumed his chair, as he did immediately after his salutation, he sat toying with these whilst Madame placed a seat for the visitor. Snelling waved it away, and Madame gravely took it for herself.

'Your name, sir?' she asked.

'Robert Snelling is my name.'

'Pardon,' said the little man from his corner. 'You do forget, sir. Your hat.'

Snelling took off his hat and laid it on the table; and Madame followed up her first question.

'Your business?'

'My business, ma'am,' said Snelling, 'is very easily stated. I am the guardian of a youth—a young youth,' he added, so that there might not be any mistake on that point, 'by the name of John Vale. He was so misguided as to run away from home a twelvemonth back, and I'm given to understand as he's been living here. I want to see him.'

The long drawl of his speech, with its decisive and authoritative snap here and there, had the same kind of deliberate weight here which it always carried. The ponderous figure, the respectable dress, the clean-shaven face, the very bunch of old-fashioned seals he played with as he spoke, all helped. He stood there like a picture

of British respectability. Jousserau and Madame Vigne had vaguely expected to encounter somebody quite different—something meaner, smaller, more cunning.

'The boy is not here,' Madame answered.

'That is as may be,' replied Snelling; 'but here or no, I have reason to believe that here he has been, and I want him delivered over to my care.'

'Yes,' said Madame, 'I suppose so.'

The little dark man in the corner laughed; and Snelling's attention being drawn to him by the sound, he grew aware of the fact that the coal-black eyes were fixed upon him with an unusual wary intentness which he could not fathom. As a matter of fact, Achille was sketching the visitor, and was studying his lineaments for that purpose; but Snelling felt the gaze to be at once penetrating and insolent, and repaid it with a scowl of dogged anger.

'I suppose you are aware, ma'am,' he said, turning to Madame Vigne, 'that by the law of this country you have no right to take a boy away from his natural and proper guardians?'

'From his natural guardians, yes; from his proper guardians, yes,' said Madame; and Jousserau gave an approving grunt at the close of each brief sentence.

'The father of this youth,' said Snelling, 'was my first-cousin. He trusted the lad to me on his deathbed, and he trusted him to me by his last dying will and testament. I am his lawful guardian; and, moreover, the lad has his rights as well as I have. It doesn't take much to understand what you mean. The lad will be well-to-do one of these days, and you have some hopes of keeping hold upon him.'

'That,' said Madame Vigne, 'is a wicked lie.'

'I am not here to bandy words with you, ma'am,' said Snelling, with his best air of dignity; 'I am here to claim my rights. I have the law behind me, and if you resist, you'll suffer.'

'We know,' said Madame Vigne, 'why you want the boy again. You want him to ill-use, to frighten, to make him so that his poor little brains will work not; to make him so that you can say, "He is an idiot; he cannot use his money. I will take care of it for him for good and for always."—Oh yes, we know why you want the boy; and we know why you will not have him. You speak of the law? I speak of the law. The law is good and sensible; the law is generous and wise. You cannot frighten us with your law.—What! You say I shall be punished for taking a poor heart-broken little child and helping him. I feed him, clothe him, love him, make myself in all things his mother, and I am to be punished? Oh! a likely story. And you, you take him from his father's hands, you break your promise to the dead, you try to crush the poor little brain and the frightened heart, and you—you shall punish me!'

Madame was up, and in the whirl of her excited progress to and fro about the room had overturned a spindle-legged table and a chair or two. She took no heed of these things, but wound up her oration face to face with Snelling, seeming so to threaten him with the vehement French gestures of her hands that he fell back a pace or two.

'Are you mad, woman?' he asked when she

paused from mere want of breath. 'I hurt the lad? What cock-and-bull tale is this? I never laid a finger on him in my life.'

'You made others do it,' she flashed back at him.

'You're a knowing kind of person, you are,' he answered slowly; 'you know more about my affairs than I do. I tell you again there's law in this country, ma'am. You shall prove your words before you're done with me. It's come to this, has it? A blameless man's character's to be took away by a pack o' foreign trappers coming from no man knows where, and going no man knows whither.—Find the man that says these things about me, and I'll flog him within an inch of his life.'

'Oh! you are big,' said Madame; 'but we are not afraid of you.—Achille, tell Mr Vintare to come here.'

Isaiah's entry at this moment was so strikingly appropriate that it seemed more than probable that he had been listening at the door.

'You're here, are you?' said Snelling.

'Yes, gaffer, I'm here,' Isaiah responded.

'It's you,' said Snelling, 'that's been setting flying these reports about me.'

'I've set no reports a-flying,' Isaiah answered; 'I've believed 'em maybe.'

'Believed 'em, have you?' said his employer.—'Look me in the face, Isaiah Winter. How long have you been i' my service, man and boy, and in my father's service afore mine?'

'A matter of thirty year,' returned Isaiah.

'Did you ever in all that time know me to do a man a wrong?'

'Nothing illegal,' responded Isaiah guardedly.

'Did you ever know me want a penny as belonged to another?'

'The law's always been o' your side.'

Snelling, finding his witness thus refractory, tried another tack. 'You lived i' the same house with John and me from the time of his father's death for'ard, till he was that misguided as to run away.'

'I say nothing about misguided, gaffer.'

'You lived there all that time?' Snelling demanded.

'I lived there—yes.'

'Did you ever know me raise a hand agen the lad?'

'I've seen you mek him cry five hundred times.'

'How, and what for?'

'The what for's best known to yourself, gaffer.'

'Very well,' said Snelling. 'It's pretty plain where all these stories come from. I shall see my lawyer i' the morning, and I shall make you prove your words.—You as well, ma'am.—Mean-time, you'll do what you like about the lad. You own as he's been here, and as good as own that you know where he is. You'll have to hand him over, and I'll see you punished as far as the law can go, if I spend a thousand pound.'

'All right,' returned Isaiah. 'If I'm to be hanged, I'll have my money's worth; and I tell you to your face I misliked Farmer Vale's will from the very hearing of it. I never thought you the man to be trusted with a soft-headed lad as had got such a heap o' money.'

Snelling looked down at him gravely. 'You

mean to tell me, Isaiah Winter, that believing me to be a man of that sort, you stopped in my employment? Why, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.'

'Well, now you come to remind me of it, gaffer, so I am.' Isaiah thought so highly of this retort that he nudged Jousserau to call his special attention to it.

'Very well,' said Snelling. 'I can trust my neighbours; I can trust my record. I've done the square thing from the time as I can first remember, and no man's got the right to wag a finger at me.—You've got the sack, you have; and we'll see whether a discharged servant's word is good agen my own. You've got yourself into mischief, my lad, and I'll give you cause to remember this day as long as your life lasts. Why, you silly fool, who do you think's going to believe your story? Who's going to back it for you?'

'All the lads in Macfarlane's school is going to back it,' said Isaiah.—'D'ye think folks'll believe Macfarlane 'ud ha' leathered the lad as he did, in his father's lifetime?—D'ye think as he'd ha' dared to do it agen a man like you without he'd had the word to do it?'

That shot went home, and for a mere instant Snelling stood confounded. 'Good!' he said, recovering himself. 'I shall see my lawyer before I make a move; he'll teach you a thing or two.—Good-morning to you.'

He could not convince himself that he had made any great impression upon his auditors. The figure of perfect rectitude which he saw so clearly seemed invisible to them. But for himself the interview had done something. He had formulated his figure, had given it bulk and outline. He was permanently certain of himself. He had meant well from the beginning. The actual dark knowledge that he meant evil now did nothing to flutter his peaceful fancies.

(To be continued.)

THE HIGHEST WATERFALL IN THE WORLD.

NEW ZEALAND can still boast of one natural celebrity, which will compensate in a measure for the loss of those unique marvels of nature, the Pink and White Terraces, which were so suddenly destroyed by the disastrous earthquake of 1886. The credit of the discovery of the stupendous waterfall, which is still unknown to the world at large, but which is now found to be the highest of any hitherto brought to light in any other portion of the globe, rests with a Mr Sutherland, a well-known explorer of the west coast sounds, who has taken up his abode for many years amid these surroundings of solitary grandeur, far from any inhabited portion of the country, in a part of New Zealand still inaccessible except from the coast. Here he lives alone with Nature in all her pristine splendour, receiving news only from an occasional passing ship, unless, perchance, another pioneering spirit come across him in his wanderings in this picturesque region of magnificent solitude.

A few months ago, a small party of gentlemen of scientific tastes started on an expedition, not free from danger, with the object of reaching and, if possible, measuring and fixing the position of the Sutherland Waterfall, so called after its discoverer, who up till then was the only human being known to have accomplished the feat. The first step on their journey, Milford Sound, was reached on the 27th of September, and here were landed all the necessary *swags* (the colonial term for a knapsack), and provisions, together with material for a canvas boat for use inland in crossing Lake Ada. The following account of their adventure is taken from notes by one of the party, Mr Mackenzie, M.H.R., and published in the *Otago Daily Times*.

In passing, we must mention that the grandeur of this spot can hardly be realised by those who are not acquainted with the New Zealand bays. Lovely as is the peculiar beauty of the Swiss Alps, and reminded as one constantly is in this country of the unspeakable charm of its picturesque valleys and snow-laden mountains, yet there is an immeasurably awe-inspiring grandeur in this unknown region, where the foothill of man is unheard, and the only sounds are the songs of strange and beautiful birds, and the rippling or roar of waterfalls and courses. There is, too, a beautiful fall of water in Milford Sound, of which till now we have felt proud (Bowen Fall, now measured by Mr Adams as five hundred and thirty feet). 'My first glance at this, after misty rain, which still hung in clouds obscuring the tops of the mountains, was truly magnificent, the water appearing to pour down from the shadowy clouds which encompassed it. It was in verity an artist's dream.'

From Milford Sound our party proceeded to Lake Ada, to which stores, *swags*, boat, &c., had to be carried bodily through the bush; no easy undertaking, through its unyielding and prickly tangle. However, the lake was reached; and next day saw the frail canvas craft put together which was to carry the adventurers across it. This trip, says Mr Mackenzie, proved a very dangerous one, the whole surface of the lake being a mass of snags. Accounting for this, he says that at some early period a heavy avalanche is supposed to have come down and formed a moraine across the mouth of the Arthur River, 'thus transforming a comparatively level flat of high birch-trees into a lake of from ten to forty feet deep. The trees have decayed between the air and the water-line, the water preserving the timber, so that now the lake simply bristles with the sharp-edged tops of huge trees, some a foot above water, others six inches; some just tipping the surface, and others at all depths. The wind was blowing a little fresh, just causing a ripple sufficient to prevent our seeing the submerged points. As a consequence, we were continually getting on to them; but fortunately none came through, although the sixteenth of an inch of cotton canvas was all that was between us and them. The lake is about four and a half miles long by a mile to a mile and a half wide. On either hand, huge mountains rise almost perpendicularly from the water's edge, covered with snow and ice, and waterfalls come tumbling down on all sides. On the right, Terror Peaks and Giants' Gates (seven thousand feet) are the most remarkable features. Ducks of every

variety skim upon the surface of the lake, such as paradise, blue mountain, gray, and teal. These abound, and pay little heed to strangers. Several gigantic mountains—among them the Castle, the Danger, Mount Hall, and Mount Daniel—surround us, rising from six to seven thousand feet high; and we saw some fine avalanches coming down the Barron slopes with a thundering roar. Several rivers fall into the head of the lake. We selected the centre one, which turned out to be the Poseidon; and after rowing about two miles up, night coming on, we camped.

Our narrator goes on to say that next day he and another of the party, Mr Pillans, pushed on to their destination, following the course of the Poseidon river, and came across the 'Hermit of the Sounds,' Mr Sutherland, who accompanied them to the foot of the falls, about eight miles from where they left their boat, telling them that, with the exception of himself, who had known it as far back as ten years ago, they were the first persons who had reached that spot. 'I must leave to some able writer,' Mr Mackenzie says, 'the work of picturing to the world in suitable language the grandeur of what will soon be known as the highest waterfall in the world. It consists of three leaps in an almost direct line; but when standing about a quarter of a mile away, it has the appearance of a straight leap with two breaks. The two upper leaps are equidistant, and the lower one shorter.'

From a more detailed account in the *Otago Daily Times* we take the following: 'The water issues from a narrow defile in the rock at the top of the precipice; it then makes one grand leap of eight hundred and fifteen feet into a rocky basin on the face of the cliff; issuing forth once more, it makes another fine leap of seven hundred and fifty-one feet; and then goes tumbling headlong in one wild dash of three hundred and thirty-eight feet into the pool right at the foot of the precipice. It will thus be seen that the total height of the fall is nineteen hundred and four feet, thus making it the highest waterfall that has yet been discovered in the world. Proceeding right on to the pool at the foot'—hewn out, we are told, by the heavy fall of water from the mound of stones and debris projected over in times of flood—'at the expense, however, of getting drenched with the spray, a splendid view of the whole is obtained; and when the sun is shining, the effect is enhanced by a beautiful rainbow of colours of the most brilliant kind conceivable. This bow is nearly a full circle; and the closer you get to it, the smaller it grows, till it is right in front of your face—a brilliant-hued ring a yard in diameter.'

Mr Adams—organiser of the party, and chief surveyor, who got through a great deal of surveying-work during the expedition—greatly admired this beautiful phenomenon, and said if one approached it nearer so as to encircle the head, one could imagine one's-self a halo-crowned saint entering paradise. Unlike most falls of great height, this one does not fall in spray, on account of the great volume of its waters, and consequently it comes down with a tremendous roar. Just beside the fall is a shower-bath, which Mr Adams thinks is about three hundred feet high, and must be the highest ever discovered.

Many uncommon ferns and plants as well as

rare birds were met with in this solitary region; amongst the latter was a lovely bird, the scarlet wattletail, also the New Zealand thrush and the saddleback. Kiwis, rowas (the wingless birds), and kakapo (the ground parrot), were fairly plentiful, we are told.

The adventurous company, together with a Mr Mackinnon and a Mr Mitchell, who had themselves just succeeded, after great hardships, in 'blazing' a track right through, returned overland from Sutherland Falls to Lake Te Anau, which is a feat that has now been accomplished for the first time. The scenery, they tell us, all the way is simply magnificent. Thus, a new field is being opened up for those searchers after Nature's glories, which will probably rival in beauty and splendour any other known part of the habitable globe. The promise of a substantial boat to convey tourists across Lake Ada has already been made to the government by the U. S. S. Company, and arrangements have also been made to form a track from the lake to the Falls, and to erect a hut there for the convenience of travellers.

AN ALTERED PURPOSE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. IV.

SPARLE'S information was only too correct. Rose was ill, was suffering from a virulent type of smallpox, and was even in this short time seriously altered for the worse. Again was the house cleared; again was the trained nurse sent for; and it was plain that each person who saw Rose took an unfavourable view of her case.

She was beginning to wander in her mind; but she never failed to know Rodbury, smiling, after a sad, tearful fashion, when he came to her side, and kissing his hand, while she strove to say in broken words how sorry she was to find herself giving so much trouble—rather an incoherent speech, it may be; but she wished him to know it was upon his account, not her own, she was regretful.

Now, this was a terrible fix for Rodbury, to quote his own reflection. He was for the second time ready to start upon his journey, was actually on the eve of departure, and again, as on the previous occasion, a serious hindrance cropped up. He—and the nurse had said as much—'did not like the look' of Rose, and, in fact, had at once made up his mind that she would die; and so, although he had resolved to leave her—had persuaded himself that he was entirely tired of her and her associations—yet how could he desert the girl, his own wife, just as she was dying? When she was gone, there would be no one to see to the poor children; and, besides, there came with an awful force and suddenness upon him the memory of all the devotion she had displayed during his illness. While thinking thus, it also swiftly flashed upon him that it might have been his illness which caused hers; another reason for showing a little more consideration for her.

A twinge of something like remorse pained him when he thought of this, and of the train of selfish, unfeeling plotting by which he had repaid her. Perhaps from that moment he was conscious of a tenderer feeling for his wife than he had hitherto believed to be possible. Come what

might, he resolved he would not leave London just at once; he would stay to see that his children were properly disposed of; he would see the end of Rose; and—yes, he ought to do that—he would be kind and considerate to her while he was with her. It is possible, we repeat, that from that time Rodbury was less entirely wrapped up in selfishness, and his thoughts held more of tenderness for his wife than they had ever held before.

So day after day he postponed his departure, and day after day he was in the sick-room, full of contagion to all but those who, like himself, were hardened by having passed through the terrible ordeal. He was surprised, after a week or so had elapsed, to find how attentive he had grown; how it seemed no trouble to him to hold the cooling drink to poor Rose's feverish lips, to moisten her burning brow, or to shift her painful position; and it was wonderful how the girl preferred his help to all other, and how, when at the worst, she brightened at the sound of his voice; yet more wonderful than this was the happiness it gave him to be able to render these services.

But it gave more pain than pleasure to hear her, in her scarcely audible accents, thanking him, and saying how she should never, never be able to repay her dear husband for all his kindness—the best and most devoted husband in the world. It was impossible for any one who had nourished and matured such designs as had so lately been Rodbury's, to feel otherwise than guilty—a base guiltiness—on hearing language which was more touching than the keenest reproaches.

When she was quiet, too weak to speak, but not too weak to smile as she held his hand while he sat by her side in the darkened room, he would recall the time when she was a bright, healthy girl, and afterwards a happy mother, devoted to her children and to her husband: all her faults and foibles sank to insignificance then, and he began to doubt whether among the fresh scenes he was to seek he would ever be happier. He doubted, too, whether he should ever find another so entirely earnest in her love for him, one who, to use a homely phrase, would go through fire and water for him; and following up this train of thought, he doubted if she would live when she found herself deserted by him. The shock might kill her; but beyond that there was a chance that so fiery a spirit as was hers, with all her love, would lead her to put an end to her own life, if nothing still worse followed.

Sparle had gone back to his district, being unable to spare any more time, so he was not to be feared. To do Rodbury justice, he was hardly likely to hold Sparle or any one else in personal fear.

At last, after much deliberation, more painful than he had expected to find the task of decision to prove, he resolved to wait a day or two longer, so as to see her through the crisis, and then he would leave her. He was angry with himself for showing such hesitation, which, indeed, surprised as well as angered him. He did not dream that it was one of the best symptoms his careless selfish nature had ever shown; nor did he properly estimate the pains which the prospect of parting with his wife and children gave him.

The proposed time elapsed; his wife seemed duly passing through the necessary stages to convalescence; she certainly was growing stronger. Her eyes, it was true, were covered by a bandage; but this, Rodbury knew, or thought he knew, was a very common incident in this terrible disease. Thus the days went on, until once again, for the third time, the eve of his departure had come. 'And I wonder,' he muttered as, after a short saunter in the fresh open air, he came in sight of his house, 'what will happen to upset my plans to-night? There has been the worst of luck about them at present.'

He was conscious, while persuading himself that he was anxious for a final success, that his heart was not so much in the scheme as it had been, and that its completion would cause in him but a moderate exultation.

He went into the house and into his wife's room. It was now the early twilight of an August evening. Everything, even in that crowded neighbourhood, happened, as he remembered many and many a day afterwards, to be hushed. No vehicles were passing; the vendors of street goods had not come out for the night, while those who plied during the day had ceased their calling; even the children on the street were quiet. How well Rodbury afterwards recalled the unaccustomed peace and hush of that moment!

The room had hitherto been kept darkened, but the blind was now drawn up, and it was light enough; yet Rose still wore a shade over her eyes. The window was open, and the soft balmy air of summer's last days made pleasant even the confined apartment.

Rose turned to her husband as she heard his step, with a smile. He had grown used to see in her smile something very sad; but as the light fell upon her face this evening, there was then an expression which it pained him to see, and the same light showed how terribly she was disfigured by the disease. Hitherto, this unsightliness—such a dreadful calamity for Rose, and her bright pretty face—had been used by her husband in his attempts to steel himself for his task; but now, he could not understand why, although he had never seen the disfigurement so plainly, and though her features had never appeared so seamed and unattractive, he yet felt nothing of the repulsion such a change might have been expected to produce.

He sat down by his wife and spoke to her. She smiled again, but this time her lips quivered strangely; then, as had been her habit of late, she felt for his hand, pressed it in her own, clasped it to her for an instant, then kissed it passionately, and burst into a rain of hysterical tears, striving through her wild sobbing to say something which she could not render intelligible.

Rodbury threw his arm round her, and drawing her head down upon his shoulder, spoke soothingly to her, and asked with a solicitude he had no need to feign, the cause of this outburst—rallying her, too, on the folly of thus giving way, now that she was getting well so fast, and had passed all the dangers of her fearful illness.

'O Frank! my own, my dear husband!' at last exclaimed the girl, 'do not speak like that, or you will kill me! I have never been fit to be your wife, I know, and have always known it; you have borne with me because you were

kind, and I had, perhaps, some common prettiness.—No! do not interrupt me,' she said, as Rodbury began to speak; 'all that is true; but do not argue upon it, for you do not know what is coming. My face, even such as it was, is utterly disfigured—I can feel it is; my mere touch tells me how I must look. I shall only know it thus, for I am now less fit than ever to be your wife. I am blind, Frank! completely and hopelessly blind! I shall never see the light of day again; and worse than that, far, far worse! I shall never more look on the kind face of my dear husband, or see my darling children.—Ah! you draw from me! I knew you would. Why should a sightless, disfigured'—

'Draw from you, Rose!—shrink from my dearest wife!' exclaimed Rodbury. He had involuntarily pushed back his chair at the first shock; but now he clasped the girl in his arms and spoke with an earnestness which had the ring of truth in it. 'I will hope for better than you tell me. With time'—

Poor Rose's tears burst into a fresh flood at this, and she gasped: 'No, no!—never! Dr Berge told me so to-day.'

'Then I will always stay with you, Rose!' cried her husband. His words had a deeper meaning than was dreamt of by their hearer; 'and you shall not miss even your eyes while using mine. I have news also; but I will say only this at present: we shall always be above any need for toil, above all fear of want. You shall have no care for our living or the comfort and well-being of our children, and I need never again go out with John. My circumstances are greatly changed.—Now, dry your tears, and tell me where you should like to live, with the children, and what they shall have to please them.'

He said a great deal more, certainly in a strain which he had not intended to fall into when he entered the house; but without thoroughly knowing it, Frank Rodbury, so to call him still, had been undergoing an improving discipline for some time. He had, until that hour, persuaded himself that he was as determined to carry out his plans of emancipation as ever; that is, he thought he was as selfish as ever, but his churlishness had been greatly undermined, and he was an altered man. Now, the terrible announcement made by his wife; the sight of her seamed and pitted face, with the poor girl knew was disfigured, but which she would never see; the picture which arose constantly in his mind of the children, *his* children, soothing and clinging to their blind, unsightly, and deserted mother, was too much for him.

He was sincere in what he said; and despite the shocking circumstances which surrounded them, he passed an hour or two by his wife's side more happily than he had passed any interval for months. After a day or two, all fear of contagion being gone, Rose was moved to a healthy northern suburb of London, and her children were brought to see her. These were in robust health. The girl could toddle about freely and talk with a very pretty tongue; while a finer little fellow than the boy never greeted a father's eyes.

Rodbury groaned when he reflected that the poor mother would never again look upon their blooming features or see their pretty curls; and

then, with a still keener pang, he thought: 'What could I have been dreaming of, to plan the leaving such beautiful little creatures as these? children that many a lord would give half his lands to own.'

This was a great change from his previous lines of reflection; but Rodbury was not conscious of any inconsistency; he only knew that his heart now seemed bound to his wife and children, and felt that he could not be happy apart from them.

It need merely be said here that the subsequent report of the doctor and the condition of the patient herself only too strongly confirmed the painful announcement Rose had made. She was blind, hopelessly and wholly blind. Yet, as it so often happens with us in our worst afflictions, there was even with this some alleviating power, for in the increased attention of her husband—the softened tone and tenderness which she so soon recognised—Rose had an under-current of happiness despite of her blindness; and the sad smile which was once familiar to her lips was changed for a brighter if still a subdued one.

As soon as it was safe to do so, Rodbury went to his friend Ashwell and consulted him as to the best plan to be pursued under his altered views. These views considerably astonished Mr Ashwell, who was greatly affected by poor Rose's story, and honestly reproached himself for having given counsel to her husband which involved so much pain to her. He had no doubt now as to the counsel he should give, and this exactly chiming with his friend's own views, it was immediately adopted.

A great deal might be said about the important changes which took place; but as the result must be plainly foreseen, it will not be worth while to postpone the close of our story. Rodbury—he never changed his assumed name—decided upon going to the Far West, to California, indeed; and revealing to some extent his altered position, he asked Mr Sparle to go with him, seeing many ways in which the sound practical sense and business habits of his brother-in-law would be valuable; but Sparle's reply was a decided negative, and—as his last utterance in our chronicle—shall be recorded.

'No, Mr Rodbury,' he said. 'I am much obliged to you, but it won't do. I am not half so surprised about your money as you may expect, for I have always seen you was of a different stamp from ourselves; and if I could have stopped her, Rose should not have married you—that's straight. I can see why you are taking her and the young ones to America; you will not meet any of your friends in California; and I dessay you will manage very well there, and bring up the girl and boy like a lady and gentleman. But you could not make a gentleman of me; and after a time I should be in the way, and be always reminding you, if it was only by my being there, of these times. We should quarrel, and Rose would be miserable. No; we are best apart, and we both feel it.' In his heart, Rodbury was probably pleased at this decision.

Within a fortnight from this interview he sailed for New York, Rose and the children travelling in such state—with four servants or nurses, these not so much for the journey as for help in their new life—as almost frightened her.

This, of course, she soon got over; and her unfortunate blindness shielded her in her intercourse with the other passengers, who might otherwise have marvelled at the manners of their fellow-voyager.

California was duly reached, and a farm, which they soon learned to call a 'ranche,' purchased. If Sparle's prediction about bringing up the children as ladies and gentlemen was not literally fulfilled, yet all five, of which number his family eventually consisted, were brought up by Rodbury in a befitting manner, and he was as happy as a man can well be.

We close this history by telling how a friend of Mr Ashwell, having been on a sporting tour out West, called upon that gentleman on his return, and in the course of his narrative said: 'While in California, whom do you suppose I came across? Why, Cy Launceston! You remember him? A fellow down in Leicestershire, whom everybody expected would drop into penal servitude some day, even if he escaped the gallows. Well, there he is, quite an influential settler, and a most successful one. He has a great estate, and calls himself Rodbury. I understand his name is now legally this in the States. Anyhow, there he lives with his wife. Poor creature, she is blind; from the smallpox, I believe, and certainly I never saw any one more marked with it. However, in spite of this, she is a bright cheerful little woman, and seems to worship the very ground her husband walks on; at least, so I heard from the neighbours. He has five of the finest children I ever saw—three sons and two daughters. You should see them ride their ponies! It took away my breath—and I am a pretty fair hand across country, I flatter myself—to see some of the ground they went over! There he is, as I tell you, a regular Yankee citizen; and some day, for all I know, he will be in Congress, so high does his character stand. Only think! Cyrus Launceston, of all persons in the world, being presented as an embodiment of the moral, social, and in fact general virtues!'

It was strange, no doubt, to one who, like the speaker, knew some of the antecedents of the person in question; but it is never too late to mend.

HENRY TINSON.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

EVER since the invention of the telephone, there has been a difficulty in using it on wires which are hung near other wires employed for telegraphic purposes, for the reason that the sounds of the working of the instruments in the telegraphic circuit are distinctly audible on the telephone circuit, and make a most distressing rattling. This phenomenon is known as induction; and many electricians have striven to obviate its effects. Among these, some time ago, was Mr Langdon Davies, who, after giving much study to the matter, was led to recognise the so-called induction as a distinct variety of electrical energy, which, instead of being avoided, might be utilised beneficially. After a number of experi-

ments, he constructed an instrument which takes advantage of this force, and which is so closely connected with the phenomena of sound that he calls it the Phonopore. We had recently in London an opportunity of seeing the apparatus in action, and were much impressed with its wonderful capabilities. Attached to an ordinary telegraph line, and by the aid of ordinary transmitting and receiving instruments, phonoporic messages can be sent from both ends of the one wire at the same time, while another message is being sent without any interruption by the telegraph operators. The Phonopore thus becomes a most useful auxiliary to a line which may through some local circumstance be called upon to do more work than it is calculated for. The instrument is readily attached, and will at once triple the capabilities of the circuit.

It has been reported in the *Times* that two large Russian guns have recently been constructed for the ironclad *Sinope*. These weapons have a twelve-inch bore, weigh each fifty tons, and will throw a projectile which weighs nearly half a ton. With a charge of two hundred and seventy pounds of powder, the guns will have a range of thirteen miles; and as the object fired at will at that distance be quite out of sight, the guns must be directed by the aid of a map. We confess that we cannot exactly see how this can be done from the deck of a ship.

A correspondent of the *Scientific American* describes a well of six-inch bore and two hundred feet deep at a town in Colorado which exhibits phenomena that liken it to a barometer. This well is driven through limestone, clay, and gravel, until water is reached in quicksand. Before the occurrence of a storm, this boring emits a blast of pure cool air with a roaring noise, which is loud enough to be heard some distance away; but as the storm passes, the air-current is reversed, and is sucked downwards with an equal force. There are other wells in the vicinity which exhibit the same peculiarity.

A writer in one of the leading New York papers complains bitterly of the amount of destruction which is wrought upon fruit-trees and crops by the English sparrow. These busy little birds have increased to an enormous extent since their importation into the country. The United States Agricultural Department became fully alive to this evil of over-population among the sparrows some time ago, and in one of their Reports recommended the employment of poisoned grain as a means for their destruction, and full directions for preparing it are given. It is believed that the only animal pest which is capable of doing more mischief than the sparrow is the rabbit, which is causing such havoc in Australia. Both depredators were imported from England most probably for mere sentimental reasons.

At the recent International Photographic Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, a number of novelties in the shape of apparatus were exhibited. But the most striking feature of the display was the daily exhibition of lantern photo-

graphs upon an enormous scale, and which helped to demonstrate the wonderful perfection of the photographic image. These lantern pictures measure less than three inches in diameter, and cover, say, eight square inches of surface. They were enlarged at the Exhibition to thirty feet in diameter, representing one hundred square yards of surface. A good photograph submitted to this searching test is actually improved by the magnification, and many unsuspected objects in the picture are brought into view.

We have heard from time to time so many anticipations with regard to the results which will accrue from a cheaper mode of producing the metal aluminium, that we were glad to see that the manufacture of this metal formed the subject of a paper read recently before the Society of Arts by Mr W. Anderson. The particular method of working described in this paper is known as the Deville-Castner process, which has for some time been carried on at Oldbury, near Birmingham. The price of the metal is at present forty shillings per pound; but we must remember that it is so light that a pound of it is the bulk of four pounds of iron. It is brilliantly white, non-corrosive, sonorous, and will retain a high polish. But its chief use is believed to be as an alloy with other metals, upon which it confers new and valuable properties. It gives a marvellous tensile strength to copper, for instance, and thus renders that metal available for purposes for which without its aid it could not possibly be employed.

A very interesting paper was lately read at a meeting of the Society of Chemical Industry by Mr Kingzett, who took for his subject the comparative values of various chemical substances as antiseptics. The experiments described were of such a simple character that they can be easily understood by all. A meat extract was prepared, and after having been divided into various measured portions, each portion was treated with a five per cent. solution of the particular chemical the virtue of which it was desired to test. The various solutions employed were too many in number to be mentioned here in detail, but it will be sufficient to say that they consisted of various metallic chlorides, nitrates, and sulphates. The results bear out what has been before indicated by previous experiments—namely, that the chloride of mercury (that is, ordinary corrosive sublimate) is by far the most powerful of any antiseptic known. Unfortunately, it happens to be also one of the most virulent poisons with which the chemist is acquainted, and therefore it may be said to be inapplicable to general use; but at the same time, in the hands of a doctor or other expert it must prove more valuable than any other substance used for antiseptic purposes.

The question of exhaustion of our coal-fields, which assumed such prominence a few years back, has again been raised in a paper on the coal question, which was read at a recent meeting of the Royal Statistical Society by Mr Price Williams. This engineer believes, from calculations which he has made, that the coal of the country will be exhausted in about one hundred years, and dividing the coal-producing counties into districts, he states that the eastern division of South Wales will be coalless in less than fifty years. The coal

of Warwickshire must give way in fifty-three years; in South Wales in seventy-nine years; in Yorkshire in ninety years; Scotland, ninety-two years; Northumberland and Durham, ninety-four; while at the present rate of output, Denbighshire and Flintshire have enough coal to last for two centuries and a half. Mr Price Williams points out that if the various trades dependent upon coal continue their present prosperity the production of that mineral is bound to keep pace with them; and he advises that great efforts should be made to husband our resources in every way, and to put a stop to waste both in working mines and in coal consumption generally. Let us hope that before a coal famine seriously threatens us, other means of raising steam and supplying fuel may come to the front.

A short time ago an account was published of a German apparatus for teaching slaughterers how to strike with the poleaxe so as to obviate the cruel necessity of trying their 'prentice hands on living cattle. A correspondent of the *Times* points out that such an apparatus is unnecessary, if slaughtering were carried on in the humane manner practised at Chicago, and possibly at other places in the States. He tells us that the bullocks to be killed are driven into narrow pens from the stockyard, and that above these pens there stands a man with a repeating rifle; and that as each animal passes below him, he fires a bullet into its brain. Death is instantaneous; and by simple machinery, the carcase is at once lifted out of the way and prepared for market.

Some experiments have lately been made in order to test a new gunpowder which is prepared by chemical means from straw. Its advantages are said to be that it is smokeless, gives no flame, will not heat or foul the barrel of the gun, and that the recoil and report are diminished. The experiments took place at Harrow, and were comparative with similar experiments with ordinary gunpowder. The advantages claimed for this new powder do not seem to be quite realised by these experiments; but there is no doubt that it is a very powerful explosive and that it is flameless and smokeless. Weight for weight it would seem, too, that it is one hundred and fifty per cent. stronger than black gunpowder, and it is conclusively proved that it cannot be exploded by mere concussion. The experiments are full of promise, and there is no doubt that the new powder will be valuable in several applications.

According to the Report by the United States Consul at Patras, an immense quantity of currants find their way from Greece to France, where they are used for making wine. Currants have been imported into France for the use of distillers for the past twelve years, and at first the fruit was simply used to produce alcohol. It was found that the spirit from this source was of very fine quality and nearly as good as that distilled from wine. But the price of the fruit soon became too great to tempt the distillers, and the currants have since been used for wine production, and more especially for the making of cheap wines used by the labouring classes. The process of manufacture appears to be very simple. The fruit is put into large wooden vats holding many tons, with a measured quantity of water. At

a certain temperature, fermentation ensues, the liquid is strained, and after a few days it is ready for use—a ruby-coloured wine of good quality. Currants are also used in the French vineyards to add to the fresh grapes, and the whole are allowed to ferment together. The wine obtained is of fine quality, and, curiously enough, is far better than if the currant wine is added to the grape wine after separate manufacture.

Another Report from the United States consul at Marseilles points out that the olive-oil trade of Southern France is being terribly injured by the wholesale adulteration of that article of commerce. For this purpose the oils of various seeds are used, especially cotton-seed oil, which is cheap, and which, moreover, has a palatable flavour. The admixture of this oil with true olive oil has been up to this time very difficult of detection. A way, however, has been discovered of detecting the adulterator in his nefarious work. This method depends upon the principle that oils when mixed with certain acids assume different shades of colour. Pure olive oil will when so located assume a certain tint of yellow, which can always be compared with a standard colour; and it becomes very much darker if it be adulterated, the colour deepening according to the amount of adulteration. To show the extent to which olive oil is now adulterated it is stated that more than two million gallons of cotton-seed oil come from the United States to Marseilles annually, and it is estimated that half of it is used for sophisticating olive oil. It is curious to find that a very large proportion of the oil so made finds its way back to the United States, notwithstanding a duty of thirty per cent. upon its importation.

It is pretty well known that many of our Railway Companies, in order to obviate any chance of competition by means of the canals which intercept the country, and which before the establishment of iron roads did such a thriving trade, have bought up those water-ways, so as to render them idle. In order to again throw these canals open, a Bill has been introduced into parliament which proposes to confer upon the local authorities power to acquire any canal when it is desirable in the public interest that a Railway Company should cease to have interest in it. The Company in such a case would be compelled to part with the canal at its actual value without any increase for compulsory sale.

A new method of studying the structure of timber has been brought before one of the American Scientific Societies. The system recommended is to employ frames of cardboard, each holding three samples of the wood to be studied or examined. This wood being in the form of a section as thin as it can possibly be cut, the three sections would exhibit the wood under three different aspects, one being transverse across the grain, and the other two cut in the direction best adapted to a study of the structure of the material. The system seems to us to be merely a variation of the common method of examining woods in section with the more powerful eye provided by the microscope.

A novel form of canal has been designed and patented by Mr Arthur Pickard of Leeds, and a working model of it has lately been exhibited in London. The object of the inventor is to do away with steam or any form of haulage by the rather

round-about process of putting the water in motion itself. This is brought about by dividing the canal into two by a central partition, and putting a screw propeller, worked by steam-power, at one end of the water-way. This screw will force the current in one direction, and cause it to return by the separated half of the canal. We fear this is one of those schemes which work very well on a small scale and in a model, but which are hardly practicable when applied to real work.

The recent salutary alterations in our patent laws have had the effect of encouraging inventors; and many useful articles and contrivances are now brought forward which in former days would perhaps never have been invented, or at any rate not made public. Among recent small things of this character we may note a Patent Drying Rack for household purposes, which has been invented by Mr T. G. Daw of Cheapside. This is essentially a domestic contrivance, and its homely duty is to dry plates, dishes, and glasses, and other utensils without wiping them. The rack consists of an upright ladder-like arrangement, fitted with shelves, having between them various-sized spaces. The top shelves have pegs upon which tumblers and other glasses, jugs, &c., can be placed in an inverted position after having been rinsed. The lower shelves are designed for plates and dishes. The contrivance occupies very small space, for over one hundred pieces of crockery and glass can be dried on a rack which takes up only one square foot of ground and is about five feet high. The drainage from these various articles is caught and carried to a reservoir, so that one article cannot drip into another below it.

Another appliance, also of a domestic character, is of more importance, because it aims not only in fulfilling an ordinary domestic want, but in obviating loss of life by fire. This is an improved Fire-guard, patented by G. W. Page of King's Lynn. It consists of a curtain of flexible wire-netting which rolls like a blind in front of the fireplace, and which when not in use rolls up in a space provided for it underneath the mantel-piece and is quite out of sight. The utility of this invention for protecting ladies and children from those lamentable accidents which have so often occurred is obvious, and the invention is likely to meet with very wide adoption by those who are careful to take advantage of such precautions against accidents.

We have recently had an opportunity of seeing in action a new electrical tramway, the first of its kind which has been established in Europe. This interesting installation is at Northfleet, near London, and it promises to be the pioneer of a system which will replace the use of horses for tramway-work. The line is about a mile in length. The cars go at good speed and up somewhat steep gradients with the greatest ease. The method employed is that known as the Electrical Series System, and will admit of several cars running together on one line at the same time without any chance of collision. The current is generated by a dynamo-machine at one end of the line, and is carried beneath the road to certain contact-pieces which lie in a conduit below one of the rails. Rubbing against these contacts is a kind of conducting bar, which projects from the vehicle through a communicating slot by the side

of the rail. By this means the current is conveyed to a dynamo carried beneath the car, which is geared to the wheels. The inauguration of the new system has attracted much attention.

GOOD AND BAD LUCK.

COINCIDENCES.

NOTHING is commoner than to hear talk of good luck and bad; lucky people and unlucky; lucky days and unlucky, with special reference to Friday, which seems to have got a terribly bad name indeed. Ninety-nine sailors out of a hundred count it unlucky to set sail on that day; and some, even captains who have weathered many a storm, refuse to do so. I was talking the other day to an old 'salt' at Brighton about this very question, and I did my best to get out of him what his views were, and what reason there could be for so strong and widespread a belief, or, as some call it, superstition.

'You,' said I, 'have been afloat pretty often; to my knowledge'—

'Forty years, next March, in all weathers,' interrupted the captain.

'Well, then, what's your own real opinion about Friday?'

'I can't say I like it at all myself,' he answered. 'I never knowed things turn out right that were launched on a Friday; though I've had to face them in my time; for it isn't every skipper or owner that will listen when the men growl about going to sea on the day after Thursday. "It's all a confounded pack o' nonsense," they say. All the same, it holds good among sailors, and will hold, too.—Ask any of 'em alongshore here what they think. They will tell you that the worst gale last November began on a Friday, when the life-boat was all but capsized—that the end of the new pier was washed away on a Friday—that Friday's catch of fish is always about the worst of the lot; and if the nets break away of a night with mackerel, it's sure to be coming home on a Friday.'

'Well,' said I, 'as for mere luck at sea, do you know that a year or two ago one of our great shipbuilders determined to show that you sailors were all in the wrong about this terrible day? He built a brig and named her *Friday*, laid down her lines on a Friday, finished her that day seven weeks, launched her a week later; her captain's name was "Friday," with thirteen hands aboard—the worst of all unlucky numbers—and on a Friday she set sail for her first trip!—That's a pretty good proof of what Friday's luck is!—Did you ever hear of that brig?'

'Well, to tell you the truth, sir, I have heard of that yarn before; but you've left out one thing, now. Did you ever hear what become of that there brig?'

'No,' said I; 'I don't know that; but of course'—

'No, no, sir; you don't know, and nobody else don't know. They said she would come home on a Friday; but she didn't come; and Jack Rogers, the old coastguard at Hove—as I heard tell the story—he swears she was never heard of again, captain or crew. And as for thirteen hands aboard, why, that one lubber over the baker's dozen would have been a regular Jonah; and a

Jonah's time he would have had of it, too, till the fishes got hold of him.—No offence, sir, I hope, at my speaking out so strong; but there's no mistake about Friday.—Good-night, sir.'

Yet, in spite of my old sailor's belief, some great and notable and good things have taken place on a Friday, which would have amazed him not a little if I had then seized the chance of telling them. For example: On Friday, 3d August 1492, Christopher Columbus set sail on his great voyage of discovery. On Friday, 12th October 1492, he first discovered land. On Friday, 4th January 1493, he sailed on his return voyage for Spain; and on Friday, 15th March 1493, he arrived in safety at Palos. Many other historic events of significance and of good-luck have occurred on Friday.

Yet Friday is regarded by many as a day of ill-luck; but for making it specially unlucky you must upset the salt. 'The falling of salt,' says my Lord Bacon, 'is an authentic presagement of ill-fortune, nor can every temper condemn it. Yet is it only an omen.' Nor is the origin of this belief far to seek. From the earliest times, salt, itself incorruptible, has always been regarded as more or less sacred; hence sprang its having a place in all rites of sacrifice and oblation. Thus it became a symbol of friendship, and, before any other service, was offered to the guest, in token of good-will on the part of the host. If, during this offering, it was accidentally upset, and, still worse, if intentionally on either side, evil in some shape was deemed a certain issue.

To turn now to such minor matters as mere luck in every-day life is to make a mighty step down to trifles. If a coin be spun into the air, it is obvious that the chances whether it come down head or tail uppermost must be equal. Yet, in spite of this, one special woman in a village shall be said to have great luck in the 'making' of butter, or one particular gardener to be most lucky in the grafting of roses or melons; that is to say, that Lucky Betty or Lucky Tom succeeds where scores of others would fail. Whereas, the truth is that success in either case is simply owing to greater skill or greater care in handling the churn or the pruning-knife, which the other bumpkins fail to exert. If *not* so, all comes back to the doctrine of chances; and any one given Hodge or Dolly may be as lucky as Tom or Betty.

Oh! say some village wiseacres, 'but fortune favours fools!' Yes, now and then it would seem so; perhaps because a fool trusts all to fortune, and sometimes succeeds where wiser men fail—mainly through ignorance of danger or obstacle—and so goes to work coolly in hazardous things; just as a blind man, having once learned the road, will walk calmly along the very edge of a cliff, where the owner of a pair of sharp eyes would be apt to grow dizzy and stumble. If a fool who leaves his doors unlocked escapes robbery, he is often called fortunate or lucky; whereas the prudent man who prevents the burglar's visit by wise precautions, enjoys no such credit, but has to be content with being more frequently lucky than the fool, because he puts himself more in the way of good fortune. Now and then, one meets with some poor forlorn wretch with whom everything seems to go wrong, and who, always in trouble, soon gets the nickname of 'Unlucky' Dick.

But, of far more curious and true interest than any matters of mere luck and chance, good fortune, and bad, are what, for want of a better name, we call Coincidences, into which there would seem to enter a new factor, not so easily defined. By way of illustration, I give a few instances which have fallen under my own personal observation. Thus: I meet with a stray word, say 'Toboggan,' just now in common use among us, and, as a matter of mere curiosity, wish to know its derivation. I consult every dictionary I can lay hands on, but in not one of them does the word appear. I ask right and left among the gay young people who are just now gone mad about the delights of Tobogganing; but not a soul can help me. I question two charming girl graduates fresh from the Honour list at Cambridge, one of them specially great in etymology, whom I beg to visit the British Museum in search of that odd Canadian word. I might as well have asked the man in the moon; and I give up 'Toboggan' as a hopeless mystery; and in a month's time have forgotten the whole affair. But one day I walk into the Free Library at the neighbouring county town, and take up a number of a local magazine, open it at random, and as the motto to an article on 'Aeme Skates,' I see these words: 'Toboggan, from *odabagan*, an Indian word for sled.'

Again, I have a brother whom I very seldom see, and who seldom leaves his headquarters, some three hundred miles away. I walk four miles through the woods to a small roadside station, on my way to Waterloo. The train is at the platform, but waits for the arrival of an excursion train from Bristol. In five minutes it comes rattling down the branch line: out pour a crowd of passengers to change carriages for London; and the first person I see hurrying along is an old friend whom I believed to be at Cannes. We journeyed up together to Waterloo, and almost the first thing she said to me was: 'How is your brother Jack? Do you ever see him?'

'Never,' I replied. 'He may be dead and buried, for all I know. I rarely go to London, and he still more rarely visits the great city; so that there is no chance of catching him during one of his flying visits.'

'I am sorry for that,' said Miranda. 'It's two years since I last saw him at your house, when you lived in town.'

When we got to Waterloo, there was some debate as to whether we should travel any farther together; but the end of it was that, as Miranda was bound for Regent Street, and I for Holborn, we would walk to Charing Cross by the suspension bridge. As we went down the steps at the other end of the bridge, a man with a carpet bag came rushing up to meet us, two steps at a time, and that man was my brother Jack!—amazed, and glad to see us, and we to see him. Five minutes later, we should have missed him.

'It's like a regular "House that Jack built,"' said I. 'If I hadn't walked to that special train at Woodend, I should not have met Miranda. Not meeting her, I should have taken a 'bus at Waterloo, and never gone over Hungerford Bridge.'

'If it had rained,' said she, 'we should not have agreed to walk together.'

'And if,' added Jack, 'I had not lost my way in coming from Euston, I should have been at my

lawyer's long before this.—And that reminds me, old fellow, it's exactly two years since I saw you. I came up on this very 15th of November in 1864, and slept at your house; and now we meet again on the 15th in this odd fashion.'

So, after a good talk, for I had completely forgotten the date of our last meeting, we parted.

Some ten or twelve years ago, I was in the habit of writing occasional articles for an old-fashioned newspaper called the *Daily Tearer*. While on my way to the office one fine summer morning, I chanced to pass the well-known book-stall of my old acquaintance, Larkins, and strolled into the shop for a chat. Mr Larkins was busy revising a catalogue; and on a table in front of him, half covered with books, lay a newspaper.

'Good-morning, sir,' said the bookseller; 'I'll be with you in two minutes.'

'No hurry,' replied I. 'You take in the *Tearer*, I see; I will have a look at it.'

Before I had read half a column, he joined me. 'If,' said he, 'you had come in three minutes earlier, you would have seen the man who wrote that curious article about rats.'

'Which curious article?' I inquired.

'Why, that very one now in your hand.'

'That is very odd,' said I. 'Who is the man, and how do you know that he wrote the paper on rats?'

'Well, sir,' replied Larkins, 'the gentleman is a stranger to me. But he came into the shop, bought a French grammar, and was just going out again, when he saw the *Tearer* lying open there. "Ah," says he, "do you take in that old gossip of a paper?"—"Yes; and a very good old paper it is too."—"Did you notice that little article on Rats?"—"I have just read it," I replied; "and a very good article it is."—"Well," says the stranger, "I am much obliged to you for the compliment; I don't often get praised; but, as the author of 'Rats,' I am bound to offer you my best thanks, and wish you a very good-morning." And with that, away he went. I never set eyes on him before, and I don't suppose that I ever shall do so again.'

'If you should ever chance to do so, Mr Larkins, tell him, with my compliments, that he went away with a lie in his mouth. He had no more to do with the "Rat" paper than Adam. I corrected the proof of it only two days ago, and the manuscript is now on my study table.'

After that, we had a long chat about coincidences in general, which I held to be common enough, though the one which had just occurred was singularly strange.

'I don't know much about their being common,' said Mr Larkins; 'but I can tell you of a far more curious instance. One day, a stranger came in and asked for a copy of Blair's *Sermons*, a well-known book, but quite out of fashion now. He looked at the only copy I had, bought it, and paid for it; and was about to go, when he suddenly stopped and said: "If you have no objection, I will leave the book with you until I happen to be in town again."—"By all means," said I; "as long as you please."

'Well, I kept that old Blair stowed away; but months passed, and I saw nothing of him. Then, as you know, it so fell out that I gave up my old premises at No. 190, and took these, and then

three months more passed. But not a sign of my friend the purchaser of Blair, whom, indeed, I had almost forgotten. At last, one evening, in came an old lady and asked for a copy of Blair's *Sermons*. "I have only one copy," said I, "and I fear that I cannot part with that one, for it was bought and paid for six months ago, though the owner has never called for it." But the old lady was very urgent with me; and so at last I gave way. The price was one shilling. My new customer handed me half a sovereign to pay for it, and I turned round to get change, when some one else suddenly entered, and I heard a sharp voice say: "A pretty dance you have led me, Mr Larkins. Here have I been hunting up and down the street for half an hour in search of my old friend Blair. I could have sworn that I bought it at No. 190.—I hope that the book is all safe."—"You are quite right about 190; and there is your copy of Blair tied up in paper as you left it six months ago.—This lady had just persuaded me to let her have it, and I was just turning to give her change, when in you walked and claimed your property."—"And I mean to have it too," said the old man in rather a peppery tone.—Of course, he *did* have it; and the lady had to wait for another copy.

'Well, Mr Larkins,' said I, 'that is even more curious than the adventure of the paper on rats.—Did you ever see either of your customers again?'

'Never, to this day.—But I haven't done with *Sermons* yet, if you care to hear another coincidence. A country schoolmaster somewhere down in Devonshire wrote to me for a volume of *Sermons to Boys*. I told him that it was out of print, but that a second-hand copy might no doubt be had. To this he agreed; and, of a friend lower down Booksellers' Row, I got him a copy, *uncut*, with his own handwriting on the fly-leaf! given by the very same schoolmaster to a former pupil, who had carried it off to London, and showed how highly he valued sermons by selling his prize at a bookstall.'

One more example and I have done. Miss M—— of Bristol was a great writer of letters. One morning she entrusted a certain special letter to her brother C——, just starting for the city. He, *en route*, meeting an elder brother G——, and wishing to get rid of the letter, entrusted it to him. G——, who possessed a memory as treacherous as a sieve, put it into an inner pocket of a greatcoat for special safety, and straightway utterly forgot its very existence. The writer of the letter, supposing it to have been posted, also forgot the whole affair. But many long months after, while repairing her brother's greatcoat, she suddenly came upon that inner pocket, dived into it, and there found her own letter, duly addressed and stamped. The discovery occurred on Christmas Day 1887; and when opened, the letter was found to be dated Christmas 1886. There it had lain *perdu* for a twelvemonth to the very day—though no doubt the coat had been used hundreds of times by its eccentric owner, without a thought of his past negligence.

Of course, it may be said of all such occurrences as this latter example of Coincidence, that they are but trifles and scarcely worthy of notice; nothing turns upon them, nothing ever happens

in consequence of their having come to pass. But for all that, it may be said, in reply, that for the most part life is made up of trifles, big and little, and that on some of these trifles events of singular interest or importance often chance to turn. Many a grievous misfortune, or splendid good fortune, has depended on the loss, or delivery, or discovery of a letter. Many a sudden and unexpected meeting of long-parted friends has caused joy or sorrow to a whole lifetime. Many a strange chapter of adventure has issued from the sojourn of an odd volume of sermons at a bookstall. Anyhow, the whole subject seems to be one not to be flung aside as unworthy of consideration.

Whether any other factor besides that of chance enters into the birth of Coincidences, and if so, what that factor may be, is a question which must be left to our readers' own consideration. Want of space forbids me to pursue it; and I must be content if I set them thinking on some of the coincidences which have occurred in their own personal experience.

My friend Boxer, to whom I once told one or two of the above coincidences, calmly shook his head, and then said: 'Well, I will add one case to your list, as curious as any you have mentioned. Last March I had a set of plans to finish for the office. I counted them up, and made just thirty-one of them. Now, it so happens that my birthday was on the 31st, and on that day, as I thought, I finished the last of them. While smoking my final pipe (not the thirty-first) that evening after my work was done, I said to myself: "How oddly things do happen! Here am I, thirty-one years old to-day, with thirty-one plans on the 31st day of the month." Then I looked in my daybook to see when I began them, and hoping that it was on January the 31st. But it wasn't; very nearly, though—February the 1st. Before tying the plans up, I counted them over again; this time there were only thirty—not one more could I make of them. Another glance at my daybook told me, too, that *yesterday* was my birthday! and that to-day was April the 1st, when wise men are sometimes made April fools.—That,' said Boxer spitefully, 'was very near being a remarkable Coincidence.'

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE CHIGNECTO SHIP RAILWAY.

THE inauguration of the Chignecto Marine Transport Railway Company, to give the undertaking its full title, is deserving of some notice, for it marks an epoch in engineering enterprise, as the first attempt to carry into actual practice a system of transporting vessels of large tonnage across isthmuses, which, though frequently mooted, discussed, and strongly advocated, has never as yet been further developed than favourable reports and carefully elaborated illustrations and designs. The fact, therefore, that work has actually been commenced on the first ship railway, and that ere long the transport of vessels between Tidnish and Amherst across the narrow isthmus that connects Nova Scotia with the mainland will be an accomplished fact, cannot fail to arouse the interest not merely of the members of the engineering profession but of the public itself.

Turning now to the theory of the scheme itself, we may briefly sum up its salient features for our readers. A ship railway is designed to answer all the purposes of a canal—namely, enabling vessels to pass from one sea to another without the expense of cutting a navigable channel, and avoiding the necessity of a large number of locks—a most expensive item in cost, when the variation of the times of the tides on either side of the isthmus presents the difficult problem of great differences of level in the two seas to be connected.

The essential arrangements for the carrying out of a ship railway will be readily understood. Docks are constructed at each terminus to accommodate the vessels; in this case, sufficient to hold at the same time six vessels of a thousand tons each with full cargo; powerful hydraulic lifts are provided for raising and lowering the vessels to the railway across the isthmus, seventeen miles in length. The vessels are carried on cradles running on four lines of rails, and are drawn by two locomotive engines working side by side.

Turning, now, to the geographical question in the case in point: the advantages of the new route will be readily perceived by glancing at the map of Canada. Vessels leaving the ports in the River and the Gulf of St Lawrence for the Bay of Fundy and the harbours along the eastern seaboard of the United States are at present compelled to pass round the northern point of Nova Scotia. By availing themselves of the new ship railway, a saving in distance of from five to seven hundred miles will be effected, in addition to escaping the risks of navigation outside Nova Scotia, and the enhanced marine insurance premiums charged for a notoriously bad piece of coasting. Moreover, vessels of lighter build can be employed in the service, being no longer required to face the open Atlantic Ocean. The new mode of transport will also be available when the Straits of Canso, which are frequented by smaller craft, are blocked with ice.

The Dominion of Canada has subsidised the undertaking; whilst the Municipal Council of the county of Cumberland, Nova Scotia, through which the line passes, has made a free grant of all land required. The engineers of the undertaking are Sir John Fowler, K.C.M.G., and Mr B. Baker, well known as the designers of the celebrated Forth Bridge, now rapidly approaching a successful completion.

CONCERNING A MARLBOROUGH RELIC AND 'THE CHEVELEY NOVELS.'

The Sunderland Sale is still within the memory of many of our readers. One of the lots sold on November 9, 1882, was the 'Presentation Copy of the Congratulatory Verses recited at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford (January 1, 1705), on the occasion of the victory of Blenheim, and given to the great Duke of Marlborough,' recounting the battle, and also the capture of Tallard, the taking of Gibraltar and Landau, &c. That a volume 'so closely associated with the origin of his wealth and honours should be sold, argues a cynical indifference to the ordinary sentiments of mankind which will surprise even a pessimist,' as a

correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* pointed out in that journal on May 3, 1883; and the then Marquis of Blandford endeavoured to recover the treasure from the purchaser; but he 'would not part.' This historical memento has now, however, found once more a resting-place in the family; for it has come into the possession of Mr H. G. CHURCHILL, who brought out and edited *The Cheveley Novels*, and who has been residing in Spain for some years.

IN AN OLD CHURCHYARD.

IN one of England's sweetest spots,
A little old gray church I found;
Around it lies—dear restful ground—
God's garden with its sacred plots.

With myriad arms the ivy holds
Its time-worn walls in close embrace;
So Memory sometimes keeps a face
Half-veiled in tender misty folds.

With sleepy twitter and with song
The tower, bird-haunted, is alive;
In leafy seas they dip and dive,
Those tiny warblers all day long.

Like sentinels grown hoar with age,
The crumbling headstones guard the graves
That softly swell—green voiceless waves,
That will not break though tempests rage.

'Concerning them that are asleep'
In this sweet hamlet of the dead,
In broken sentences I read
The record those old tablets keep;

Each told its tale, for hath not Grief
A voice whose echoes never die?
Adown the ages, Rachel's cry
Still rings o'er some God-garnered sheaf.

Mine eyes, ne'er prodigal of tears,
Did fill with such as seemed to rise
And drown the glory of the skies,
O'er those who 'd slept two hundred years.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE OLD HAILEYBURY COLLEGE.

A NEW Haileybury College, like a hermit crab, has taken possession of the shell of the old Haileybury. But the existence of new Haileybury numbers only thirty years. It was in 1858 that the old Haileybury College closed its gates, and ceased to send forth to India a specially trained band of young men to carry on the civil administration of the Indian empire. It is of the old Haileybury College that we now write. Almost all those who passed through Haileybury into the Indian Civil Service entertained an affectionate regard for their *alma mater*. From year to year a commemorative dinner is held in London by the retired Indian Civil servants, to which they invite the surviving professors of the College, as a pleasant renewal of the friendly feelings of old times.

It is unnecessary to ransack ancient records to show how the Chairman and Directors of the East India Company were prompt to recognise the expediency of establishing a special training college for the young men—then called writers—whom they sent out to carry on the Civil departments of government in India. Originally there was an institution at Hertford where handwriting, double entry, and book-keeping formed part of the curriculum of instruction. But when the Directors had built their own palatial College at Haileybury, they determined that the students should receive a more liberal education, in classical and modern literature, in mathematics, in political economy and law, and in the several oriental languages, which would be of practical use in India.

Haileybury College stands on the southern slope of a low range of hills, about two miles from Hertford. It is about the same distance from the little towns of Ware and Hoddesdon. It was almost surrounded by ancient woods, in which the nightingales were numerous. The soil was a cold clay, and there was but a scant supply of water. The site was isolated. Probably the directors of the East India Company thought it expedient to keep their young men as far as pos-

sible removed from the temptations of any large town.

The College was in the form of a large quadrangle, covering an area of about one hundred and fifty yards square. The south or ornamental front looked upon a broad raised terrace. The south front contained the Chapel, Library, and Dining-hall. The main-entrance gate and porter's lodge faced to the west; and on either side of them were the principal lecture-rooms, supplemented by a reading-room and billiard-room. The north and east buildings were devoted chiefly to the four sets of rooms in which the students lived. The Principal and several of the professors had their houses in the quadrangle, so as partly to divide the students' quarters. The College kitchen and buttery were in the south-east angle, convenient to the College Hall. The Hall served also periodically as the examination chamber.

The educational staff of the College had been carefully chosen. In 1842 Dr Le Bas, a sound scholar and an eloquent preacher, was Principal. Dr Jeremie, the Dean and classical lecturer, was charged with maintaining the discipline of the College, a duty for which his kindly and tender nature seriously unfitted him. Canon Heavyside, the chief mathematical lecturer, was always popular with the students, officially and socially. The law lecturer was Empson, the friend and son-in-law of Lord Jeffrey. The Rev. Richard Jones, the author of the well-known book on Rent, was Professor of Political Economy and History. Captain Schalch, a retired Indian officer, taught Hindustani. The Mirza Mahomed Ibraheem, a Persian gentleman, was Professor of Arabic and Persian; whilst Mr Johnson, a self-taught oriental scholar, equally familiar with Persian and Sanskrit, had the pleasure of introducing us to the mysteries of the Sanskrit tongue.

The students were about eighty in number. Every half-year the senior term of twenty men passed out into the Indian public service, and twenty new students were admitted into the College. We all wore caps and gowns, and were divided into four terms, or classes, with separate

lectures for each class. The young men were nominated by the Directors of the East India Company, chiefly from the upper middle class of society. Some of the students had been at Oxford or Cambridge. The public schools, such as Eton, Rugby, Winchester, and Charterhouse, sent their quota. But the majority of the young men passed the entrance examination into the College by undergoing a special preparation at certain professional crammers.

A day's life at Haileybury began with chapel at eight o'clock; and we were expected to get our breakfast finished in time for the first lecture at nine o'clock. During the first term this lecture was in classics. The next lecture was at ten o'clock in Sanskrit; and the third at eleven o'clock in law. The subjects varied according to the days of the week. Our public lectures were all over at twelve o'clock, and then we were left to our own devices. Some very hard-working men would read in their rooms the whole day, merely taking a short constitutional walk. Others went off to Hertford or Ware to spend the day. There were five-courts, and a cricket-field attached to the College, and many men found ample amusement there. Our boating was obtained under difficulties, for the river Lee was two miles off. There were always carts and other vehicles to be hired near College; and the landlord of the *Rye House Inn*, where our boats were kept, set up an old stagecoach, which used to wait at the College gate at twelve o'clock for the special conveyance of the members of the Boat Club. When the boating-men were at the *Rye House* they usually remained to dine there; but if they wished to return for dinner in the College Hall, they had to be back by six o'clock.

A substantial dinner was provided in Hall. The students sat at separate tables according to their terms. The Principal and professors of the College dined at high table in the Hall at the same time as the students. After dinner we adjourned to our rooms for wine-parties, as we were allowed to draw a small quantity of wine—a bottle a week—from the College cellars—which was of course supplemented from our own contraband private stores. There was evening chapel, by way of a roll-call, at eight P.M., and then we were expected to devote ourselves to private study. In the set to which I belonged our study took the form of loo, and we played loo almost every evening, with intervals for refreshment, till twelve o'clock, when a College watchman, or the marshal, warned us that we must retire, all lights being then put out.

The discipline of the College was not over-strict; but there were fixed hours for 'gates'; and if any student returned to College after gate-hours, the time at which he passed through the porter's lodge was reported to the Dean. This regulation led to the use of certain unauthorised entrances into College; and although all the external windows on the ground-floor rooms were

secured with strong iron bars, some of us knew where a removable bar was to be found in case of necessity. Even the high iron terrace gates, surmounted by *chevaux-de-frise*, were occasionally scaled, when an accomplice inside the College could provide a blanket or a saddle to cover the revolving spikes.

The relations between the students and the professors were generally good. Some of the lectures were not very difficult, and the professors did their best to make even the difficult subjects as pleasant as might be. Some men had a great antipathy to the oriental languages, and could not induce themselves to learn them. There was one young man of my term, to whom I will give the name of Burton, who really gave himself more trouble about not learning Sanskrit and Persian than if he had quietly settled down to the work. He was a lad of good ability, and had a fair reputation as a classical scholar. But he conceived an aversion to the Sanskrit language; and the appeals of the amiable professor were addressed to him in vain. But whilst Burton took his peculiar mode of not learning Sanskrit, he was equally perverse in his hatred of the study of Persian.

The Persian professor, the Mirza Mahomed Ibraheem, soon took a dislike to Burton, whose conduct at lecture was, to say the least, frivolous; and a hearty pluck was anticipated for Burton at the final examination. But Burton disappointed the professor. With the help of a friend, he learnt two out of the four dialogues by heart, and could repeat them fluently, to the astonishment of those who did not understand his character. When the examiner, Professor Wilson, arrived from London, and the term was arranged before him, he naturally began with the student at the head of the term, who performed fluently. Burton meanwhile began to attract attention by making a noise and laughing, and the Mirza at once fell into the trap.—'Ah! Mr Wilson,' said he, 'perhaps you will next take Mr Burton and put him out of his misery, as he wants to be plucked.' So Professor Wilson called up Burton, who, professing to read from his book, repeated and translated a part of the dialogue which he had learnt by heart. 'Thank you, sir,' said Professor Wilson; 'you have done very well; and Mirza ought not to have tried to prejudice me against you.' The Mirza's indignation may be imagined.

We also had to learn the Hindustani language, of which Captain Schalech was the professor. To the best of my recollection it presented no great difficulties; but in my term we paid little attention to it, and only learnt enough to get a pass. The fact was that in our term there was one young man who had been born in India, where he had acquired Hindustani as a child, and his parents had carefully kept up his knowledge of both the spoken and written language. Poor Charles Manson! He was very good-looking, and a great favourite, and no one grudged him

his prizes. He was one of the earliest victims of the Indian Mutiny, and his brilliant career was thus sadly closed. At Haileybury, he and the professor did most of the lecture between them. On one occasion, the professor desired the class to learn some extra chapters of Hindustani, beyond the usual college work, when the class unanimously refused. This was the beginning of a great College row, which lasted for several days; and though the students had very little cause to be proud of their grave misconduct, it can hardly be said that the College authorities showed sufficient wisdom or discretion in dealing with the affair.

When Captain Schaleh had lodged his complaint with the Principal, the latter took counsel with his other colleagues, and very soon a messenger arrived summoning some of the heads of the offending term to appear before the Principal. When these young men appeared, they were informed of the charge against them and requested to apologise. They advisedly pleaded that they had no authority from the rest of their fellows to offer an apology, and they suggested that all the members of the term should be summoned to the presence-chamber. To this the authorities weakly consented, and it was settled that the whole term should appear before the Principal the next day at twelve. This being done, the kindly old gentleman was proceeding to lecture them, when he was interrupted by a request that the Professor of Hindustani should be confronted with them. When Captain Schaleh arrived, one of the leading students abruptly asked him to state what information he had given to the Principal. 'I told him,' said Captain Schaleh, 'that you declined to continue the lecture, and left the room tumultuously.'—'Did you not tell us to leave the room?' asked the student.—'No, sir,' said Captain Schaleh; but then recollecting himself, he said: 'Perhaps I may have told you to leave the room, but of course I did not mean it.'—'There, sir!' shouted the student to the Principal, who was slightly deaf; 'Captain Schaleh admits that he told us to leave the room; and we think that he is bound to apologise to us, rather than that we should apologise to him.' Of course Captain Schaleh scorned the idea of apologising; and the Principal, who was not prepared for this turn of affairs, determined to consult his colleagues, and he requested us to retire.

Unluckily, quite independent of this affair, it chanced that a very popular student had been sentenced to rustication that very day. His offences were merely the offences of idleness, such as non-attendance at chapel and lectures, and similar breaches of discipline. When a student was rusticated, it was the custom of the College authorities to send him off in a yellow postchaise and pair in charge of the College marshal. The other students usually assembled at the porter's lodge to bid adieu to their departing brother. On this occasion, when the postchaise came to the door, the postboy was surprised to find his traces unhitched and the postchaise going off towards the ditch; but the College servants came to the rescue, and our friend B—— was presently driven off up the avenue amongst the cheers of his fellow-students. The Dean came out, and in his usual gentle and pathetic manner, begged the students to go to

their rooms; and peace was temporarily restored. But the wrath of the young men was now turned upon the unfortunate Dean, who had been the author of the sentence of rustication on their late comrade, and a riot and breaking of windows followed.

It is hardly possible after so many years to remember all the details of the row. Lectures were suspended; and from time to time students were summoned before the dons, sometimes singly, sometimes in twos and threes, and they were questioned with a view to make them confess who were the principal delinquents. Some of the favourite professors, such as Heaviside and Jones, sent for several of us to their private houses and talked most kindly to us about our folly. They knew pretty well who the leaders in the row or rebellion were, and they were chiefly men of the term to which I belonged. Several of the worst among us were invited to go to the bursar's office, and there we met with a most unexpected offer of terms. He said that he was authorised to advance five pounds (this money was duly charged in our College bills, to the disgust of certain parents and guardians) to each of us, if we would agree to withdraw ourselves from the College until we had had time for reflection and repentance. We cheerfully accepted the offer, and six or seven of us adjourned to Long's Hotel in Bond Street, where we lived a gay and idle life as long as our ready-money lasted. Then, as the dons had expected, we sued for permission to return to College, and promised to misbehave no more if our conduct was condoned; and we faithfully kept our promise.

It is more pleasant to turn to the recollection of some of those days known as the 'Dis' days, when the Chairman of the East India Company and a number of the Directors came down to Haileybury to hear the results of the half-yearly examination, and to present the prizes to the students who had won them. Certainly the prizes were very liberal. For the men of the term which was completing its College career there were gold medals for every subject; and there were handsome book prizes for the other terms. It sometimes happened that the young man at the head of his term was so superior to his fellows that he would carry off almost every prize, and he could hardly stagger away under his load of prize books. In the term to which I belonged we had no very severe competition for the prizes, but they were settled by a sort of understanding amongst ourselves. Thus, one of us took the Persian and Hindustani medals without a rival; another man appropriated the Classical and Sanskrit medals; a third man was *facile princeps* in Mathematics and Law. History was considered an open subject, and as it gave little trouble, no one monopolised it. It was the custom for the winning students to read out their prize exercises in Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindustani; and it was vaguely supposed that the Chairman and some of the Directors could understand them; but of this I have much doubt. Finally, the Chairman of the Court of Directors addressed the assembled company; and after congratulating the Principal and professors on the meritorious performances of the students, the latter received a valuable exhortation as to their future conduct and their

intercourse with the people of India; whilst they were admonished to follow the bright examples of the many great and good men who had gone forth from Haileybury before them.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER XIX.

TOBIAS had intrenched himself in his bedroom, and had rammed against the door the disreputable old trunk in which he carried about his belongings. It was a feeble sanctuary, for at any moment Madame might rail at him from without, and her voice was only a trifle less terrible to the detected sinner than her presence. The wicked old man had had no rum that morning, and to be without rum of a morning was to be the mournfullest sport of destiny. Under such conditions Tobias knew himself liable to mix the false and the true. Familiar things took lurid shapes. The harmless poker would assume a threatening curl upon a sudden, and display the liveliest powers of motion. Old acquaintances, who had been dead for many years, and whose bodily presence was on that account at least improbable, held fugitive interviews with him. He had a general knowledge that his apprehension of outward things was tintured with error; but he was powerless to resolve his surroundings to their true elements. A little rum would have cleared everything; but it was Sunday morning, and there was no hope for him until an hour after mid-day.

Whilst he sat meekly enduring a hundred shameful discomforts, he heard Snelling's loud summons at the door of the house, and shortly afterwards his big voice humming and booming in the hall. Now, he thought, Madame would have her hands full; and now, if ever, there was a chance to steal away. He tugged the disreputable old trunk from its place by the door, and was horrified to see it rise on a pair of shadowy hind-legs and to hear it bark at him. It took him a minute or two to recover from the effects of this dreadful phenomenon, and even when he had fairly done so, he walked on tiptoe round it, fearful of awaking new demonstrations. He made for the door, keeping a timorous eye upon the demoniac portmanteau. He had already turned the handle, when he awoke to the fact that he had forgotten his hat. The flaccid thing drooped at him with a high-shouldered leer from the mantel-piece. He was nine-tenths afraid of it, badge and emblem of respectability as he knew it; and to get at it he had to pass the trunk of diabolic surprises. He stepped gingerly, sweating and trembling, and anticipatory of horrible change. Nothing happened. He was safely outside the door, with the venerable relic round his brows. There was something horribly suggestive in the smooth curve of the banisters, and he was uncertain as to what might happen next. But Madam's voice was pealing through the house, and acted on him like a tonic. He slipped through the front doorway, closed the door with a nervous click behind him, and came upon the street.

For a while he potted about aimlessly, but by-and-by, discovering that his unconscious footsteps had led him in the direction of the railway station, he began to think that he had a chance of encountering Mr Snelling there, and of at least making good his expenses of the day before. His thoughts were humble, and soared no higher than that. Isaiah's discovery of his scheme had pricked the inflated, exaggerated hope of Saturday. The fairy realms of Moses & Co. were closed to him, and those smiling, shining rows of barmaids who were to have dram-drinks from him on the morrow had melted into air. The station doors were closed, and he lingered outside the building, furtively smoking a dirty clay, which he hid on the approach of any person of respectable exterior. If Tobias had only known it, he had not been cut out by nature for the shabby old sinner he was. He had miserably misbehaved himself all his life long; but he had so ardent an esteem for the respectable, that the game he played never paid for the candle. The way of transgressors is always hard. There is scarcely a fragment of real truth anywhere for which you cannot find a corollary everywhere. It is as true in morals as it is in business that lazy people take the most pains.

The nervous fingers of poor Tobias went fumbling by nature in one direction or another at most moments. He was one of those men who at any moment of mental emptiness explore empty pockets, not in hope of finding anything, but in shambling excuse for vacant idleness. His hands went prowling now about his shabby old coat-tails, his gray-lipped trousers' pockets, and the dog's-eared pouches of his waistcoat. In the course of these purposeless excursions, his shaking fingers lighted on Snelling's cheque. He drew it out and looked at it with alcoholic tears, as a pilgrim might look at a cancelled passport to the promised land. So little a time ago, and it had meant so much. He remembered the weary way between Castle-Barfield and Beacon-Hargate, and the return journey, still drearier and more comfortless. There was an impersonal pity in his thoughts, as if it were another, and not himself, who had trodden that toilsome road.

Time went uncertainly with Tobias, and he was not sure how long he had wandered about there when the doors of the station were thrown open by a rosy-cheeked, corduroyed porter, who whistled a popular revival hymn tune. A minute later, Snelling broke in sight, walking erect, with his shoulders a little more squared, and his head a little more thrown back than usual. There was something so stern and resolute in his aspect that Tobias would have feared to accost him; but, to his amazement, though hardly to his relief, Snelling bore straight down upon him.

'You're here, are you?' he said. He was not original in greeting, and had offered that affirmative query to Isaiah only a little while before. It was a formula which he employed with people much below him in social rank, and marked at once and decisively their position and his own.

Mr Orme touched the flaccid brim of the silk hat, and made a delicate show of raising it. 'I had not expected, sir,' he said, 'the honour of an encounter; but if I might enjoy the privilege of a word or two, sir.'

'Say what you've got to say, my man,' said Snelling, not displeased by Mr Orme's extreme humility.

'Thank you, sir,' said Tobias. 'I desire to remark, sir, that it was not my fault if I was discovered yesterday by Mr Winter in the performance of my duty.'

Mr Snelling had set himself a part to play, and was not subtle enough to play it by halves. He had adopted the genial rôle, and geniality was only tempered and softened by the reflection that he had been misunderstood and ill-used. He was blusteringly amiable, therefore, in his manner, but the bluster was a trifle chastened.

'Say out what you've got to say, my good fellow. Speak up! There's no need to be afraid of me.'

He still carried the riding-whip with which he had set out that morning, and having slapped his booted leg with it, stowed it under his left armpit with its silver-gilt head projecting. Mr Orme's attitude and expression displayed a full cognisance of Snelling's splendours of demeanour. The little fat abject man drew the cheque from his dog's-eared waistcoat pocket.

'In respect to this, sir?' he said feebly.

'Keep it,' said Snelling; and Tobias, in the whirl of glad excitement, only half heard the words which followed: 'I'm a man as pays a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. You did your dooty, and I make no doubt we shall come up with the lads in a day or two. I shall set my lawyer to work with that view; and if they're contoomelious, they'll have to suffer for it, as I've told 'em. In the meantime, if you pick up anything as may be of service, you've got my address, and you can drop me a line.—I'm a man,' said Mr Snelling, somewhat carried away by his new conception of himself, 'as never neglects to repay a service. You act square by me, my man, and I shan't forget you.'

'Thank you, sir,' said Mr Orme, stowing the cheque away in secret haste, lest the big man should suddenly veer from his intention. 'You may rely upon my humble services.'

Snelling bade him a majestical good-morning and walked into the station. He felt generous and self-approving, and saw that his action was on a par with his best opinions of himself. But slow and dull as he was, he saw the necessity of a bolder strategy than he had yet discovered. Somehow or other, Isaiah had lighted upon the truth about him; and let him scout the notion as he might, and let him bury his own vile purpose in as deep and dark a recess as he could find, he had to own a danger. The crime looked natural—as it could only look to one to whom it had been possible. Isaiah's story was grounded on probability, and if it were spread abroad, his neighbours might believe it. If young John Vale came back into his charge, there was nothing possible but the kindest and most fatherly treatment for him. He should have it, or at least he should seem to have it. But—

In the meantime he had to disarm suspicion. He must act, and act decisively, before Isaiah could get back with his story. In Snelling's dull, vulgar, egotistic mind, the thoughts of the whole world pointed in his direction. Nobody is so careful of public opinion as a certain sort of

egotist, for his self-opinion puts him on a fancied pinnacle where all eyes behold him.

Now, how to trick Isaiah? How best to be beforehand with him? The theory of a discharged servant's spite would help him somewhat; but looking at it, he thought it wanting in strength. He recalled suddenly Isaiah's mention of Macfarlane. Whatever real ill usage had befallen the boy had happened to him at Macfarlane's hands. He would repudiate his own orders. He saw an opportunity and a way of doing this at once. The idea fired him, and his sluggish brain moved more rapidly than common. He matured his plan as the local train bore him idly homewards, and before he had reached Castle-Barfield, he was ripe with it, and eager to put it into practice.

Macfarlane had been a Presbyterian in his Scottish youth, and when he had migrated southwards, had made a spiritual resting-place for himself amongst the Congregationalists. He brought a sort of gloomy fervour to the church he joined, and did a good deal of honest hard work in its Sunday school. After years of probation, he had been elected superintendent. Snelling knew that at the time of his arrival scholars and teachers would be gathered together for their afternoon's duties. He was bent upon publicity, and could nowhere secure it so swiftly as by bearding Macfarlane among his subordinates there.

The superintendent was in conference with the mild old minister, and perhaps a dozen of the elders of his staff, when Snelling walked, unannounced, into the room in which they sat. He himself was known as a church-goer, not particularly regular, but prejudiced enough against intrusive outer creeds, and his presence there was a little startling. Macfarlane bustled to him and shook hands.

'We are seriously engaged, Mr Snelling,' he said, pressing him a little backward, as if he would lead him from the room.

'I venter to think,' returned Mr Snelling, 'that you can't be engaged too serious to spare a minute to clear a fellow-townsmen's character.—There's a shameful story got up agen me, gentlemen,' he added, raising his voice and looking round him, 'and so far as I can gather, Mr Macfarlane is mixed up with it.'

'Really, sir,' the minister protested, 'this is not the place or the time.'

'I know no better,' cried Snelling; 'I know no other. I'll have my case tried here and now.' There was a weight and force about him which made themselves acknowledged. The deep deliberate tones and solid presence were answerable for something, but the overbearing will did more.

The parson drew his watch from his fob and looked about him irresolutely. 'The opening exercises of the school should begin,' he said, 'in five minutes' time from now.'

'Less than five minutes' time will serve my turn,' said Snelling. 'The matter's as serious to your superintendent as it is to me. No company of honest men should lose a minute in looking into it.—I'm no hand at a speech, gentlemen,' he continued, 'but I can tell a plain story.'

He stood with his broad-brimmed glossy hat in his left hand and his riding-whip in his right, and now and then emphasised his tale by a motion of one or the other. He could not have

found anywhere a stauncher representative for that figure of high honour he pictured in his mind.

'Most of you know that when my cousin, John Vale, died, he left me his sole exekiter and the guardian of his child. The b'y had had a blow upon the head, and went soft and stupid. Mr Macfarlane had the schooling of him; and the b'y, stimulated to the rash act by a young rend-all of the name of Gregg, run away from school. The story they was told to tell was that Mr Macfarlane had beat the lad often, like a savage and without a cause. They was set on furthermore to say that this was done in obedience to my orders.—The whole wicked story comes to this, that I, Robert Snelling, plotted with you, Alexander Macfarlane, to drive the soft lad softer, so that his property might never come into his hands, but stop in mine. Now, I ask you, face to face, Macfarlane, and I call on you to answer like a honest man—Is theer a word of truth in that?'

'Not a word!' gasped Macfarlane—'not a single word.'

'You hear, gentlemen,' said Snelling. 'This is no light thing, gentlemen. If you'll turn it over in your minds, you'll be hard put to it to think of a wickedder charge to bring against two respectable men. I've sacked the fellow as trumped-up the story, and I can do no more. I look for'ard to having the lad home again in a day or two, and my conduct'll prove what truth there is in the tale.—Unfortunately, gentlemen,' he pursued with a tone and manner of mournful allowance, 'our friend Macfarlane's hand is known to be a bit heavy on the youth he deals with.—Not a word agen our friend Macfarlane, gentlemen—not a word. His severity is always meant well; but for once it seems to have had a bad effect. It has lent colour, gentlemen, to a tale which every right-minded man will call owdacious.'

If at this time there were any protest against the rule of Father Stick at all, there was certainly no more than enough life in it to stir the zeal of his defenders. If Macfarlane had flogged a slow and stupid pupil, what other stimulant had ever been discovered for a dull intellect? Your dull ass will not mend his pace for beating; but your dull boy may at least be made to serve as a beacon of terror and warning to boys not dull. The wisdom of Castle-Barfield's forefathers had found no better uses for dull boys at school, and the modern men were not disposed to be newfangled. Snelling's protest looked a little unnecessary to most of them.

'A heinous charge, Mr Snelling,' said the minister—'a most heinous charge, and I make bold to say a most unfounded one. Your own known character refutes it, sir.—As for our friend Macfarlane, he is safe in our judgment of him. We have known him too long to change our opinion at the bidding of any scandal-monger.'

'I had a grave charge put upon me, sir,' said Snelling with becoming dignity, 'when the b'y's father died. It was a sore blow to me when the b'y run away from Mr Macfarlane's school. I felt that I could do no other than put my heel on the snake's head here, amongst gentlemen, some of which has known me from my b'yhood's hour. I am cheered by your confidence, gentlemen, and I shall take no further notice of the

story. I could wish, not as our friend Macfarlane had been less severe, but as the boy's temper might have permitted him so to be.—Good-after-noon, gentlemen.—Your hand, sir'—to Macfarlane—'I will not believe for a moment as it is unworthy to rest within my own.'

As he walked back to the inn where he had left the mare, and as he sat there over a somewhat comfortless mid-day meal, to which an appetite two hours deferred compelled him to do more than average justice, he surveyed the scene in memory and approved his own conduct of it warmly. Whatever blame there might seem to be in the matter, he had shifted adroitly to Macfarlane's shoulders, and in the very magnanimity of his forgiveness had strengthened his own case.

In a little while he doubted nothing but that young John would once more be under his guardianship. There would be watchful eyes upon him now, and evil tongues to distort his acts, if anyhow they should be capable of distortion. The day of severity was over, and his first crude and pitiless plan had gone to pieces.

None the less his purpose held. The essence of the land had grown into his blood. He had no scheme ready, nothing but one dark and vague determination. But if John Vale grew up to stand between Robert Snelling and the acres he had set his heart on, it would be the worse for him.

THE CONFUSION OF PROPER NAMES.

It is often claimed for the Prince of Wales that he has an extraordinary memory for names and faces. This may seem a trifling matter, until one reflects how rare such an accomplishment is, and how very desirable it is that a public personage should remember almost everybody—everybody, that is, of importance, and, indeed, a great many of those who are of no importance, but whom it is nevertheless unwise to offend. To remember the correct Christian and surname of a tolerably large circle of acquaintances is a difficult matter; to spell them *all* correctly, and to avoid confounding, for instance, Mr Smith with Mr Smythe, is almost impossible. Unless one is very careful indeed, Mr Browne's name will sometimes pass without the final 'e,' and then the fat is in the fire with a vengeance. A story told of Moore illustrates how names may be confounded. When in Paris, the poet observed an acquaintance talking to two ladies. Noticing that one of the ladies kept looking in his direction, he asked his acquaintance, when he rejoined him, what was the nature of their conversation, 'because,' said Moore, 'I know you were talking about me.'—'Well,' said the friend, 'the lady observed that she was delighted to have had the pleasure of seeing so famous a personage.'—'Indeed!' returned the gratified poet; 'anything more?'—'Yes,' continued the other; 'she said she was the more pleased because she had herself taken in your celebrated *Almanac* for the last five or six years!'

There is scarcely anything which annoys a man more than to see his name misspelt in a newspaper; and a wrong initial is almost equally exasperating. Thus it is that a good sub-editor who knows the name of almost everybody in the

district in which his newspaper circulates, is a treasure indeed, as all newspaper proprietors know. Such a man is careful that J shall not be confounded with I, Edmund with Edward, James with John, and so on; and this knowledge can only be acquired after years of observation, and even then only by those who have a retentive memory. When there are in a town several persons with the same Christian and the same surname there is a still greater chance of confusion. In a small manufacturing town in Lancashire there live three gentlemen of exactly the same name, and whenever one of these is mentioned in print, the address has to be given in parentheses. A coincidence of this kind occasionally gives rise to some inconvenience, as was shown a short time ago in a town in Wales. Several magistrates had been appointed; and when the necessary documents arrived, a funny discussion took place in the town council as to *who* was really appointed. There were, it seems, no fewer than five prominent men in the town bearing the same name, and each of these was eligible for office. It therefore took a little time to decide which of them was the new magistrate.

Leitch the painter was called 'Leitch with the itch,' to distinguish him from Leech the *Punch* artist; and an arrangement of this kind would be advantageous in many cases. Not many years ago, the London street *gamins*—according to *Punch*—were wont to discriminate between H. J. Byron and Lord Byron by referring to the former as 'im' as wrote *Our Boys*. Every student must have been slightly puzzled at some period of his career in discriminating between father and son, and this task is still more difficult when both have devoted themselves to, and succeeded in, the same art, science, or branch of literature. A good story, with a slightly apocryphal ring, is told of George Colman the younger. Once, after deep meditation, he asked Theodore Hook his age. Hook replied that he had just reached his majority; whereupon Colman muttered: 'Strange! very strange! Extraordinary precocity of genius!' Then he said aloud: 'Twenty-one!—Ah, very good! But, sir, pray tell me how on earth you managed to write that terribly long Roman History?' That Colman had never heard of Dean Hook is scarcely credible; but the mistake of confounding persons who were or still are in the same 'line of business' is made every day by the 'general reader.'

If hereditary genius were more common, the confusion of names would be much greater. Parents generally call the first-born after one or other of its more immediate predecessors, and when these are exhausted, after the aunts and uncles, &c. on either side. Thus, it frequently happens that a certain Christian name runs in a family for generations. Great men, too, seriously affect the variety of Christian names in their own and succeeding generations. Despite Juliet's assertion to the contrary, many persons evidently believe there is something in a name; just as Mr Shandy maintained that the misfortunes of the hero of Sterne's remarkable work were due to the mistake of Yorick in rashly christening the boy Tristram, and not Trismegistus. For some time after the Conquest the name of William was very popular; and a lady who well remembers the jubilee of George III., says that in the west of England

most of the children born that year were christened George or Charlotte Jubilee. At one baptism, the lady adds, after several girls were named Charlotte Jubilee, on a boy being presented the old clerk shouted 'George Jubilo!' thinking the other termination feminine. It will be fresh in the recollection of many that during the Queen's jubilee year many children had conferred upon them the name of Jubilee; but an enthusiastic American went still further, and named his child, which was born on the 19th of June 1887, Victoria Jubilee! If this child should reach maturity, one cannot easily calculate what pondering and vexation of spirit this name will cause to some of her correspondents, especially if her autograph is as illegible as autographs usually are. Touching the general practice of bestowing Christian names on children, Camden (*Remains*, 1605) notes a rather curious fact. 'Two Christian names,' he says, 'are rare in England, and I only remember His Majesty and the Prince with more.' It would be interesting to know when the custom of almost invariably giving two Christian names originated.

The old clerk who was so particular about the proper termination was not so very far wrong in his sentiments, after all. The confusion of proper names is quite perplexing enough when female children are christened by names which are usually bestowed on the sterner portion of mankind; but the confusion is greatly enhanced when males are made to bear purely feminine appellations. Maria, for instance, was borne by Daubenton the naturalist, Jacquard of the loom, and Weber the composer of *Der Freischütz*. History affords other examples in the cases of Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France; Anne Hilarion Tourville, the great admiral; or Anne Louis Girodet, the celebrated painter. This mixing up of names is not very general, otherwise the decision of a learned Chief-justice in a recent case, that because a certain person was named Elizabeth was not legal proof that she was a woman, would have been more intelligible to the jury. What the twelve good men and true, or, indeed, any equal number of men, would have thought of such a name as 'George Anne Bellamy,' supposing that they had never heard of that popular actress of the last century, it is difficult to say. These designations were conferred on this lady by a parish clerk, instead of Georgiana; but George Anne she was christened, and George Anne she always called herself.

Themistocles is reported to have been able to call by name every one of the twenty thousand dwellers in Athens; but with the majority of persons this is a very weak point. Everybody knows the familiar story of a young lady who had forgotten a gentleman's name, and who sought to obtain it by a little dissembling. 'I beg your pardon,' she said, 'but how do you spell your name?' 'S-m-i-t-h!' he replied, with some surprise, to the momentary discomfiture of the questioner. But she quickly recovered herself, and with great presence of mind said: 'Thank you. A great many people of your name spell it Smythe, you know, and this was my reason for putting the question.' Another good plan was recently adopted with success by Ellen Terry, who being under some obligation to a newspaper man, offered to introduce him to Mr Irving; but unfortunately, when an opportunity for doing so

presented itself, she had quite forgotten his name. She felt it would be an ill compliment to tell him this, and so, with ready wit, she resorted to a little stratagem. 'Do you know,' she said, 'I've made a wager with Mr Irving, and you can decide it. He says you spell your name one way; I say another. Write it for me.' Unaware of the trick which was being played upon him, the gentleman wrote his name and handed it to the actress. She glanced at it hastily, laughed gaily, and said: 'I've won the bet.' Very few persons could dissemble cleverly enough to get over the difficulty in this way. Still, an artifice of some kind has frequently to be resorted to by many in order to obtain the desired information without hurting the feelings of an acquaintance by confessing that his name has slipped their memory.

OGILVIE WHITTLECHURCH.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'THERE will be no half-holiday this afternoon.'

It was Dr Layton of Olswick Grammar-school who spoke. His audience consisted of the ushers and pupils of that establishment.

The announcement was not altogether unexpected. In fact, two young gentlemen were already secretly congratulating themselves on having got off so easily. But their hopes were destined to be dashed to the ground—the doctor has not finished. How much does he know?

'I said, young gentlemen,' he continued, 'that there would be no half-holiday; but I speak with a reservation. If I can possibly avoid it, it is not my plan to punish the whole school for the fault of a few of its members. I call on those boys who robbed Mr Hodge's orchard yesterday to give me their names. Unless I am greatly mistaken, they will do so. Will those boys stand up?'

Amidst a breathless silence, two lads stood up in their places.

'Is there no one else?' asked the doctor.

Then every one looked at every one else; the big boys began to look very fierce, and the small ones to look very red.

'I have reason to know that there is another boy who ought to be standing up. I will give him a minute to do so.' The doctor took out his watch. What an age that sixty seconds seemed! 'Ogilvie Whittlechurch, stand up.'

The boy addressed was a slender delicate little fellow in the first form, but with an open and intelligent face, not at all the face of a sneak. Scarcely seeming to take in what was happening, he obeyed; and then, seeing the gaze of the whole school concentrated on himself, burst into tears.

'I am sorry,' said the doctor sternly, 'very sorry to find that there is a boy in my school who can descend to a lie—to find a boy who is mean enough to see his companions punished while he himself goes free. The school may dismiss now, and leave their books out. There will be no half-holiday; we will resume work at three o'clock.—Parkins, Rimington, and Whittlechurch, go to my study.'

Fifty boys do not allow themselves to be robbed of an afternoon's cricket without some retaliation;

and many were the threats indulged in of 'bed-room lickings' and 'monitor thrashings' to be afterwards administered to the unhappy Whittlechurch. Besides, to do them justice, English schoolboys have a strong sense of honour; and if a master will but show by his conduct that he appreciates and trusts in this sense, public opinion is always against a boy who takes advantage of him.

There had been a paper-chase the day before, and the hares on their return journey had passed Hodge's orchard with the hounds close on their heels. Of course, at this, the most exciting part of the whole chase, none of the bigger boys, nor the good runners among the smaller ones, would have turned aside for all the orchards in the county. But the three unfortunates who were interviewing the doctor were known to have straggled early in the day, and nothing was more likely than that they had yielded to the temptation of lightening some of the overladen apple trees of their golden burden, more especially as Farmer Hodge was the avowed enemy of the school, and was said to have sworn to make the next boy he caught acquainted with his cart-whip. But how the doctor had 'bowled out' Whittlechurch, no one could imagine.

Presently, the school-bell rang, and all trooped in again and took their places as before. Parkins and Rimington were already in theirs, looking very sore and uncomfortable; but Whittlechurch was not in the room. When every one was seated, the doctor tapped his desk for silence, and proceeded to address the school: 'Whittlechurch is expelled. He persisted in denying his guilt; and as I have often told you that I will not be responsible for the charge of a liar, I had no course but to send him back to his father. That he was guilty, there can be no doubt. When Mr Hodge's complaint reached me yesterday afternoon, I walked over to his farm. We went into the orchard, and there I saw his full name, "Ogilvie Whittlechurch," cut on an apple tree. The work was quite recent; it could not have been done more than a couple of hours at most; and in the face of this evidence he still refused to admit that he had been in the orchard.—Let this be a warning to you, young gentlemen. Never be tempted to tell a lie. If you do, you will most assuredly be obliged to tell a score more to substantiate it. But were you to tell a thousand, the end will be always the same—detection.'

While the fifty or so young gentlemen at the Olswick Grammar-school were poring over their books in the worst of tempers, and looking wistfully out of the windows at the cricket pitch, which now appeared doubly green and smooth—while, in short, these youthful aristocrats were extremely miserable, some twenty little paupers, inmates of the Olswick Union, were in the very wildest of high spirits. 'The board' had just concluded its annual inspection, also its annual luncheon, and its annual cigars—the last two forming, by the way, a very considerable item in the annual bill chargeable to the ratepayers—and everything having gone smoothly, the chairman had requested the master of the workhouse to allow the old paupers a ration of tobacco and to give the children a half-holiday.

'Ooray! ooray! Chuck'er up!' shouted one little ragamuffin.—'Oo's a-goin' to play tipeat?'

cried another.—'Where's Oggy Whittlechurch with them happles?' yelled a third.

'Sh-sh, yer softy! D'yer want to git 'im nabbed? Oggy's took the happles over to the meadow. You come along a-me, and we'll 'ave a blow-out.' So saying, the last two speakers separated from their companions, and running round behind the workhouse, cautiously crossed the garden. This brought them to a stone wall, over which they clambered. They were now in the meadow, and here, sure enough, sitting close to the wall, they found another little fellow waiting for them.

'Ave you got 'em, Oggy?'—'Ave you got the happles?' they both asked at once in an eager whisper.

'Ave I got 'em!' replied the other contemptuously. 'D'yer think I've left 'em behind?' And producing a piece of sacking tied up in a bundle, he proceeded to undo the knot, thus allowing to roll out a store of fine ripe red-cheeked apples.

'O blimy! ain't they prime?'

'Ere's one for you, Bill; 'ere's one for Charlie Miller; and 'ere's one for me. 'Ere's two for you, 'ere's two for Ch—— Douse it, and cut! Can't yer see the Squire comin'? My! ain't 'e runnin'!'

The two lads who had just come were over the wall again before he had finished speaking. But the one who had been distributing the apples stayed for a moment to tie up the bundle; then, just as he was about to follow them, he suddenly saw the Squire trip up and fall heavily to the ground; and at the same time realised what he had not noticed before, namely, that the gentleman was not pursuing himself and his companions, but was trying to escape from an infuriated bull, which now made its appearance through a gap at the other end of the field, rushing madly, head down, straight for where he lay. What impulse prompted him he never knew. Had he waited but a fraction of a second to think, he would most probably have followed his companions. But he did not think. He ran as hard as he could go to where the gentleman was lying—the bull was now within six yards—picked up a stone, and threw it at the animal with all his force. It hit the latter between the eyes. The effect was instantaneous. The bull stopped short, tossed his head, half-turned round, and then catching sight of some blankets hung up to dry, which were fluttering in a cottage garden near by, made off in that direction at the top of his speed.

Meanwhile, the Squire, who had twisted his ankle, had with some difficulty got up; and leaning partly on the boy and partly on his stick, hobbled to the gate. 'What is your name, my little man?' he asked.

'Ogilvie Whittlechurch, sir.'

'Queer name that for a pauper,' he muttered. —'Well, Ogilvie Whittlechurch, run back to the workhouse and tell the master that I want to speak to him.—Do you understand? Tell him that Colonel Forward wishes to speak to him.'

'Oh, p-p-lease, sir, we wasn't doing no 'arm. Leastways, the other two wasn't. You'll only tell 'im of me, sir? Will yer?'

'What do you mean, my lad? I don't understand.'

'Ain't yer goin' to tell 'im to whack us for

comin' in the meadow? But you'll only tell 'im of me? Will yer, sir?'

'Oh, I see.—All right, my boy, I won't say anything about the others. Now, off you run, and fetch the master.—By Heaven!' muttered the colonel as he stretched out his leg, which was rather painful, 'but I like that youngster extremely.'

For a few moments he remained thinking; then, half-aloud, he muttered: 'Why shouldn't I? I'm an old bachelor, and likely to remain one. When I die there is no one to carry on my name. Yet I suppose that this is the kind of step that one ought to think over before taking. But then I don't fancy that the boy thought much when he saved my life just now. I wonder who he is. I don't ever remember having heard the name before; but it certainly does not sound a plebeian one.—However, here comes the master, and I'll find out.—Ah, Mr Saunders, I want to ask you about that youngster, Ogilvie Whittlechurch. Who is he, and what is he?'

'Oh, the young scoundrel, sir; he told me that you caught him in your field; but I'll take good care that he doesn't do it again. He's the most mischievous boy in the 'ouse, sir. But he's not altogether a bad lot—he always speaks the truth.'

'Humph! Always speaks the truth, and thinks of his companions before himself, besides being as plucky a youngster as one could wish to see. Why, the boy must have been born a gentleman! Colonel Forward was evidently a bigoted aristocrat. 'Never mind the trespassing, Mr Saunders. I take an interest in the lad, and want to know who he is. How did he come to the workhouse?'

'We have never been able to find out who he is, sir. He was found one morning in the garden, wrapped up in a shawl. It was just after I came here; I remember it perfectly. He couldn't have been there very long, because the shawl was hardly damp, and the dew had been very heavy. But we never knew who put him there.'

'How was he dressed? Were his clothes good?'

'Not very good, sir; but quite clean. The matron has them now. But there was no mark on them, sir, nothing at all; only "Ogilvie Whittlechurch" written on a piece of paper and pinned on to his frock, as you might label a parcel.'

'And is that all you know about him?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Mr Saunders'—

'Yes, sir.'

'That boy has just saved my life at the risk of his own, and I intend to adopt him as my son. Inform the guardians, please, and let me know their answer.'

'Wh—wh—what! sir?'

'I say that I wish to adopt Ogilvie Whittlechurch. Surely that is plain enough. Now, if you will kindly lend me your arm as far as my house—thanks.'

Colonel Forward had acted, as we have seen, quite on the spur of the moment; and it was not until he came to think the matter over calmly, while smoking his after-dinner cigar, that he fully realised the magnitude of the step, and the great responsibility which he was about to incur. At

best, it would be a hazardous experiment. However, having undertaken it, he would spare no pains to make it a success. And he determined that it should be through no fault of his if Ogilvie Forward—for so he intended to name him—turned out anything other than an honourable English gentleman. He did not care much for the neighbourhood, and had long meditated selling his present residence. Now, it was clearly his duty to do so at once, as it would never do to bring the boy up within a stone's throw of his old companions. This point settled in his own mind, he sat down and wrote the necessary instructions to his solicitors, smoked another cigar, and went to bed.

Ten years have elapsed—years which have passed happily both for Colonel Forward and his adopted son. At nine a boy's ideas are unformed; his mind, is so to speak, pliable, and he is ready to take in new impressions. So that, when, after a few years passed with his kind protector, Ogilvie was sent to Eton—if we except perhaps a sound healthy constitution and good physical development—not a trace remained of his early workhouse training. As for the colonel, he has learned to love him more and more each year, and now blesses the impulse which prompted him thus to secure himself the solace and happiness of a son's society, and saved him in all probability from that terrible affliction, a joyless old age. His worldly fortune, it is true, is now considerably less than it was. The reason—speculation, in which, like many other retired officers of comfortable means who feel keenly the want of occupation, he had been tempted to engage. However, he still had enough to live on; but, for his son's sake, he regretted that it was not more.

From Eton, Ogilvie passed into Woolwich, and from Woolwich he was gazetted lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. His detachment was stationed at Leith, where they were employed renewing the submarine defences of that port. When the main part of the work had been completed, several of the officers, Ogilvie among the number, sent in their applications for leave, which were approved in due course. His plans were to devote a week to a short walking-tour in the neighbourhood, which he had hardly as yet had time to see at all; and then to spend the rest of his leave with his father. Accordingly, one fine June morning, stick in hand and knapsack on back, he started on his travels. It was quite early, and, except for a few workmen, the streets were practically deserted. There were also a few sailors hanging about the dockyard gates. One of these latter, who had been sitting on a bundle against the wall, got up as he passed and followed him. Looking round a few minutes afterwards, he noticed that the man was still behind him. 'I wonder if that man can be following me for any reason?' he thought; and then smiling at the idea that he was getting as fidgety as an old maiden lady, he dismissed the subject from his thoughts.

It was a delightful morning, bright and exhilarating; and under the combined influences of the freshness of the weather and his own light heart, he stepped out briskly. When clear of the town,

he stopped for a minute to readjust the straps of his knapsack, and, while doing so, had leisure to inspect the sailor, who was a few paces off. His appearance was certainly not in his favour. He was about middle height, solidly built, with a short thick neck, and bullet head surmounted by a fur cap. His face, which was adorned by a scrubby black beard and moustache, indicated both cunning and ferocity. His bundle and a pair of big sea-boots, as well as an indescribable something about his walk and carriage, showed him to be a sailor. But had it not been for these, one would have felt more inclined to put him down as a professional burglar than anything else.

What, then, was Ogilvie's astonishment when, just as he was putting on his knapsack again, the individual we have described walked coolly up to him and thus accosted him: 'And so you're Captiving Forward.'

To the best of his knowledge, the man was an utter stranger; and he was so taken aback with his impertinence, that for a second or two he continued to take stock of him before answering. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I am Mr Forward.'

'And you don't remember me?'

'No.'

'What! you don't remember your old pal, Charlie Miller—and we used to be that fond of each other, too, we used. Now, try to think, captiving; sure-ly, you must remember Charlie.' Having said this in a mocking tone, the man remained looking at Ogilvie, his face formed into a half-sneer, half-grin, which had the effect of making him look absolutely hideous.

Suddenly a light broke on Ogilvie; it all came back to his memory now, the old days at Olswick, and the little paupers, his companions. He did remember him. With an inward shudder, he had to acknowledge to himself that this person had once been his friend. Naturally kind-hearted, he would, under ordinary circumstances, have been only too glad to do a good turn to one of his old associates, notwithstanding that their present paths of life were, and necessarily must be, on levels so very different. But suddenly confronted with him like this, he felt towards him a repugnance which he could not overcome. He made, moreover, a shrewd guess that it was not alone for the pleasure of greeting an old acquaintance that Miller had tracked him down; and events showed that he was right.

'Now that you remind me,' he continued, 'I do remember you. You were one of my play-mates before Colonel Forward adopted me. How did you find out where I was?—and what can I do for you?'

'Ah! now you're beginning to speak. You were only talking before.—Never mind how I found you out—that don't matter. As for what I want—well, what d'yer think I want? Not money—Oh no! 'Tisn't likely. What I wants is L, and S, and D; but chiefly L, and that with a fifty after it; that's what I want.'

'Fifty pounds!' said Ogilvie. 'I cannot give you as much as that—certainly not now. But why do you want it?'

'Well, captiving, you see, I was always very fond of yer; and hearing that the other young tot's down yonder at the barracks didn't know as 'ow you'd ever been anything different from what

you are—and you bein' in course too modest to tell—I thought, d'yer see, as I'd be doin' you a good turn by lettin' 'em know the 'ole story. They'd respect you, so I thought—you 'avin' made your way so wonderful—it commands respect, that does. But this morning I thought—I was thinking of yer all this morning—afere you was up, I was thinking of yer—I thought this: Oggy weren't never a boaster, and p'raps 'e'd rather I didn't say nothing after all. So, when you come out of the barracks, captin', I says to myself: "Well, I'll just ask 'im myself," I says; "and if 'e tells me to clap a stopper on my jaw-tackle—well, p'raps 'e'll come down 'an'some."

'So!' thought Ogilvie, after listening to the above speech, which was delivered in a sarcastic tone, showing that the speaker imagined that he had him completely at his mercy, 'this is nothing more or less than a deliberate attempt to extort blackmail.'

Now, although his brother-officers believed him to be Colonel Forward's son, he was sufficiently popular in the mess not to mind the true facts of the case coming to light. At the same time, however, he did not like the idea of this man appearing at the barracks in his absence with a sensational story which would most likely be adorned with numerous embellishments of his own. Of course, no one in the mess would listen to him; but that most probably would only have the effect of making him retail it in the canteen, which would be worse. Take it which way he would, it was a nuisance; and unless he chose to return at once, and so spoil his walking-tour, which he had no intention of doing, it could not be helped.

'Not only will I not give you fifty pounds,' he answered, 'but I will not give you fifty shillings. What you propose to do can cause me nothing more than a little temporary inconvenience; so please consider yourself free to go and do it as soon as ever you please. If you have nothing more to say to me, I will go on with my walk.'

The other's face fell visibly. This was not at all what he had bargained for. 'What! you don't mind them young toffs knowing you was brought up in the Union along a-me?' Then suddenly changing his tone, he continued: 'But there! you knew Charlie Miller wasn't a-goin' to play a low-down game like that, didn't yer? Why, bless yer, Oggy, I was only larkin'. And to think you been and seen through it—and me thinkin' I was a-goin' to give you such a fright too. But, captin', if you 'ave got a thick-un or two to spare, I'm dead-broke—I'm really—been bousing up my jib all last week, and ain't got a dollar left. I want to get a ship at Glasgow, and by what I can see, I'll 'ave to tramp it.'

Many people would have been equally deaf to this second appeal; but Ogilvie, although fully alive to its insincerity, could not help giving the fellow a sovereign. After all, but for a strange turn of the wheel of fortune he would very likely have been his friend to this very day, and been instrumental in keeping him straight. 'Look here, Miller,' he said, 'I have not forgotten that we were boys together; but circumstances have altered our positions, and we can have nothing in common now. Here is a sovereign. I hope

you will find a good ship at Glasgow; and let me advise you for the future to stick to your business, and not run about the country trying to frighten people into giving you money. It doesn't pay.—Now, good-bye.' And turning on his heel, Ogilvie walked off in the direction of Queensferry.

For a few moments the other remained watching him in silence; but finding that he did not even look behind, he turned and commenced to retrace his steps towards Leith. 'Blarst 'im!' he muttered. 'I thought 'e'd be worth a mint o' money to me. But I won't blow on 'im—'twouldn't be no good. Besides, a secret's a secret, and maybe it'll be worth something yet.'

WIRE-DRAWING.

THE business of wire-drawing consists in reducing the metal from the state in which it is technically called 'rods' to the finished wire. The 'rods' are the metal which has been rolled hot, and reduced from a square to a round shape, and are generally about a quarter of an inch in diameter; and this manufacture of rods is a separate and distinct business from wire-drawing. The wire is drawn cold through steel plates in which a hole is punched, and the process of reducing the size is done gradually, that is to say the wire is passed through a succession of holes, thus gradually decreasing its size. A wire-drawing bench consists of a long table or bench, on which are placed a succession of cylinders, which are made to revolve by means of wheels placed underneath the bench. The wire to be operated on is put in a coil on 'swifts,' which are placed upon the floor in front of the bench; and these swifts consist of an upright frame of stout bars arranged in the form of a truncated cone, which revolves as the wire is drawn on to the block, the plate which is to reduce the size being placed between the 'swift' and the 'block.'

It is obvious that the wire cannot be pulled through the plate by means of the revolving block until the wire has become attached to the block; and as the point-end of the wire has to be first passed through the hole in the plate before it goes on to the block, some means must be provided for drawing the point-end of the wire through the plate to a sufficient length for attachment to the block; and this is provided for by a bar with a pair of pincers at the end of it, with a couple of links attached to the end of the pincers—to the ends which are held in the hand in the case of an ordinary pair of pincers—and these links are joined to a single ring at the end of the bar, so that when the other end of the bar is pulled, the jaws of the pincers come together and grip the piece of the wire which is first threaded through the hole in the plate. But the force necessary to draw the first yard or so through the plate, to give length enough to attach to the revolving block, would be very considerable, and this power is applied by a simple arrangement. At the bottom of the upright block is a cam, constantly going round horizontally with the block; but this cam in its sweep catches the end of the bar to which the pincers are attached at the opposite extremity, and this causes the

pincers to pull round in the direction in which the block is going, dragging the wire through the plate till there is length enough to attach to the revolving block, when, by putting the foot on a treadle, the block is brought down so that the cam is under the level of the table, and the pincers lie idle until they are again required. The wire now goes on winding round the block, and is wound off the swift, which is on the floor, and through the drawing-plate, until all the supply from the swift is exhausted.

The metal on the block is now 'drawn-wire,' and the process is repeated by running the wire through a smaller hole, and so on until it reaches the required size.

The wire, however, becomes harder with each hole it goes through, and it will ultimately become so brittle that it would break like glass unless it is softened. The coils are therefore taken away from the drawing-bench and are placed in an annealing furnace or pot, where they are subjected to a considerable heat, for a longer or shorter time according to the degree of softness required. This annealing causes a 'scale' to appear on the wire, and this must be removed before the wire can be again drawn. The rings are therefore taken to a bath, consisting of what is termed 'salts,' that is, an acid solution, which removes the scale and leaves it in the bath. The wire after being left as long as is necessary in the solution, is taken out and washed, and then dipped in a trough containing a paste of slaked lime. Then the rings are put into an oven and baked until the lime forms a dry coating on the wire, which is now ready for re-drawing.

Even with this coating the wire cannot be passed through the plates without soap or grease being applied to it before it passes into the plate. Some classes of wire are also subjected to a tempering process, which all wire-drawers keep secret as far as they can, and this process adds greatly to the strength and toughness of the metal.

A soft metal which has been annealed is exceedingly tough and is difficult to break by bending; but in this condition it is of low breaking strain, that is to say it will only resist a comparatively small strain under direct pull; but when it is drawn through the plate the strength is increased and the toughness reduced, so that the object to be attained in wire-drawing is to combine the greatest amount of toughness with the required breaking strain.

The breaking strain of steel wire varies from forty-five tons per square inch to one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty tons; and the skill of the wire-drawer aims at producing that quality of wire which shall best attain the special characteristics required and at the least cost. The keen competition which now exists in this, as in almost every branch of industry, has unfortunately resulted in such a cheapening of the wire as to render it impossible to produce the best article at the lowest market prices in each class of material, because, unless a good metal is commenced with in the rods, it is impossible for the wire-drawer to produce a finished article of first-rate quality, although the very best skill may be put into the work; but if his object is to make the cheapest possible article from the material at his command, he may so reduce the labour expended on his metal as to considerably cheapen his production, but at

the expense of the enduring quality of his finished article.

Of late years the use of iron has been to a very great extent superseded by steel of low qualities, because a cheap steel can be produced at less money than good iron; but this cheapening is not attained without in many cases a loss of working quality. On the other hand, some of the results now obtained could never have been achieved by the use of iron, as, for example, where great strength is required combined with lightness in the article into which the wire is worked.

The purposes for which wire is used are extremely numerous. Perhaps the largest quantity is consumed for telegraph-work, for land lines and for submarine cables. Much is also wanted for wire-ropes, which have almost superseded hemp-ropes for colliery and engineering purposes. Then, again, there is spring-wire for beds and upholsterers' work. In this case the wire should be 'coppered,' to prevent its rusting, and this is done by drawing it through a solution of sulphate of copper, which leaves a thin film on the iron after it has passed through the draw-plate. Wire for fencing and for galvanised netting is a very considerable item.

Needle and pin wire-making is also a considerable manufacture. Square and 'paragon' wire for umbrellas also occupies a great many hands. Copper and brass wire-drawing forms an industry quite distinct from the manufacture of steel and iron wire, and the same firms do not usually produce both classes of metal.

The men engaged in wire-drawing are usually paid by the 'piece,' that is to say, they get so much per hundredweight for the quantity they draw, and they have thus a direct interest in preventing waste occasioned by breaking the wire in passing through the plate, and the men acquire considerable skill from long practice. They do not all do the same kind of work; some men, for example, are specially skilled in the production of 'fine' wire, that is, wire of small diameter; but notwithstanding all the care which may be exercised, there is a good deal of waste by the wire breaking into short lengths when it is reduced to very small sizes.

There are also men who are specially skilled in drawing 'shaped' wire; that is to say, wire of shapes other than round, as, for example, square, oval, half-round, and other special forms required for particular purposes.

The wages paid to the men here are higher than on the Continent, and consequently the foreign maker can produce a wire for less money than we can in England; and owing to the facilities given by the foreign railways, a foreign maker often incurs less carriage for delivery in England than is expended in the railway rate from one part of England to another. The Englishman beats the foreigner in the quality, and consequently wire is exported from here, notwithstanding the dearer wages and heavy carriage; but the quality of many makes of wire is being reduced, owing to the consumers of the finished article into which the wire is made seeking to buy at less and less first cost, generally thereby ensuring to the user an increased cost in the long run. This would seem to be a very short-sighted policy, for the user seems to forget that the maker cannot continue to give twenty-five shillings-worth

of goods for twenty shillings; and in these days of over-production, the wire-drawer has first to reduce his prices as low as he can without deteriorating the quality, and then, if his customer still wants lower prices, he has to take it off his cost of the raw material, with the inevitable result of reduced quality, although the article may be sold by the same name as formerly. It is also certain that a wire-drawer who knows all about the material he is dealing with can select his metal so as to give the results he requires; but he cannot make a good sound wire from an inferior metal, however well he may do the work which by the division of labour has fallen to his share.

GHOST CUT GHOST.

THAT cold-blooded demon which we call Science is killing romance from amongst us. Years ago everybody believed in the wonders of the invisible world, and ghosts were among the regular inhabitants of every rural district. Now, we are so seldom suffered to see or hear of a ghost, that a visitation has the effect of novelty. So far as we know, the story of one ghost outwitting another is absolutely unique. The story which we purpose to tell is of this character. We tell it as it was told to us by the most noted detective in the Western States of America.

You may imagine (said Nathan Dodge) that during my career as a detective I have had some singular jobs given me to work on. There was one little piece of business which I always look back upon with a good deal of professional pride, although the ending was a very sad one. It was a case of diamond cut diamond—ghost cut ghost, I call it—and it took up my time for the better part of six months.

About ten miles outside the limits of San Francisco—I'm speaking of about twenty years ago—stood a large farmhouse. This house had been vacant for three years before I saw it. The original owner had been murdered there, and the house and farm had passed into the hands of his brother, who was a New York gentleman. At that time, gold-mining was the staple industry of California, and San Francisco especially was under the spell of the gold fever. Little attention was paid to developing the agricultural wealth of the soil, which now promises to be so vast as to rival that of the gold-beds. So the New Yorker, being unable to find a tenant for the house and farm which had passed into his hands, left them to take care of themselves. Now, a wooden house left to take care of itself is in a very bad way, and though for a time the house was not altogether without tenants, they were not such as took upon themselves any responsibility for the necessary repairs. Parties of two or three miners occasionally stopped at the house all night: these were its only tenants. But by-and-by it was deserted by even those chance visitants; for it began to get about that the house was haunted. The panic caused by this report was such that for love or money you couldn't have hired a carpenter to enter it even in the daytime. Of course I'd heard of the haunted house; but as detectives are never called upon to arrest ghosts, I felt no particular curiosity about it.

One morning our chief put into my hands a case against an absconding secretary named Coffin. Coffin was the secretary of the White Mountain Mining Company. All the funds had been under his control, and he had got away with some ten thousand dollars belonging to the shareholders. My business was to find him.

It is always a very good plan to begin at the beginning. So the day I received my orders, I went to the Company's office and overhauled everything. The only thing that I could find was a railroad ticket for New York. I went to the depot, and found that it had been issued to the defaulter the day before he absconded. Apparently, it had been left behind by mistake, and I did think of taking the next train to New York. But it occurred to me that if he had been going to New York he would have gone under another name, and would not have left behind so obvious a clue as to his whereabouts.

A visit to his landlady convinced me that New York was the place he hadn't gone to. He'd gone away without his trunks or clothes. The only things that were missing were a suit of clothes, a stout pair of boots, one or two clean shirts, some collars, a wide-awake hat, and a black valise. He had left the town at night. No one had witnessed his departure. Here was a good chance for a detective to work by the inductive process—from small beginnings to work on and on from clue to clue until he bagged his man.

The only thing that I could do was to work all the roads leading out of the town. After about a week at this, I found a farm-hand who had seen a foot-passenger resembling my man the morning after he absconded. I followed this trail, and soon became positive that I was on the right track. Coffin was a shrewd fellow. He had planned the embezzlement and escape carefully, and had made elaborate preparations for playing what we call the 'chameleon game,' that is, for changing his clothing, headgear, and face at every stage. To this end he had possessed himself of a change or two of clothing, a stock of hats, and any quantity of whiskers; and he rung the changes on these pretty frequently.

The black bag was the only thing that I had to rely upon as a pointer. Fortunately, a man on tramp with a black bag was not in those days a common sight; and I had less difficulty in following Coffin's trail than might be supposed. The first time I heard of him he was a smooth-faced gentleman dressed in shabby black, looking for all the world like a broken-down gambler going to retrieve his fortunes in some mining camp. The next he was a middle-aged doctor with a flowing beard and heavy moustache. Later on, he was playing the rôle of a Company promoter, offering to buy up mining claims on behalf of an English syndicate. He was then attired in a check suit, a light hat, and side whiskers. At this stage I obtained positive proof that I was following the right man.

Entering a drinking saloon I saw upon the shelf a photograph of Coffin. The edges were slightly charred. It had evidently been burnt. I told the landlord that the owner of that face was a particular friend of mine, and asked him how the photograph came into his possession. He told me that his hired boy of colour had picked it out of some burnt papers which had been left

in the room of one of his guests; that the boy—not understanding what it was—had brought it to him, and that he was displaying it in case the owner returned and wished to claim it. Was it like his guest? Not in the least.

I went into one of the outhouses to look for the coloured boy, and found him sitting on a log singing:

Blow dat horn agin;
Bredren, friends, companions dear,
Blow dat horn agin.

I made a dollar the avenue to that boy's confidence, and quite unwittingly he gave me the information for which I was seeking. The bright fastening of the bag had aroused his curiosity. One day, in its owner's absence, whilst he was playing with the lock, the bag flew open, revealing 'dead men's whiskers.' The sight disconcerted him. He felt, as he expressed it, 'in a hurry all over;' and whilst he stood over the bag, its owner returned, and rewarded him with a vicious kick.

After that I thought I should have no difficulty in laying my hand on Coffin. My calculations deceived me. I found that he was 'doubling,' and traced him almost as far as the suburbs of San Francisco. There I lost all trace of him as completely as if the earth had swallowed him up.

Months afterwards, feeling vexed and disappointed, I dropped into a saloon at the outskirts of the town to get a 'liquor.' I had had as pretty a dance after Coffin as any man need want; but the interest of the game supported me, and I was determined not to give it up. There were three or four miners in the bar, and one of them was evidently greatly excited. His companions seemed to be ridiculing him, and he was getting what we call 'ugly.' I made my way towards the little knot of talkers, and overheard the following conversation.

'So, you didn't think much of your lodgings in the haunted house, Bill?'

'No, I didn't—no two ways about it.'

'What did you hear?'

'Twasn't what I heard—'twas what I saw.'

'What did you see, then?'

'Why, the doors openin' and shuttin' without anybody touchin' 'em.'

'Nonsense, man!'

'Nonsense be blown! I tell you they did. And when I drew my six-shooter and fired half a dozen shots clean through the door—makin' the alfiredest row you ever heard—the door kep' openin' and shuttin' and playin' tunes. I felt like a gone sucker, you bet. My heart began to bump so under my jacket that it's a wonder it didn't knock a button off. I wouldn't go there agin for all the money in the State. But if anybody here thinks I'm a coward, he's only got to say so.'

It suddenly occurred to me that I had located Coffin—that he was the ghost in the haunted house. A vague suspicion of this sort had, it is true, flitted through my mind before; but now, without being able to explain why, I felt assured that, however impossible it might seem, Coffin was the ghost in the haunted house. Beyond the facts that the fame of the haunted house was widespread, and that everybody knew

of its existence, there was nothing to support my theory except the maxim of the most famous of all detectives—a maxim destined to assure his after-fame: 'Always suspect that which seems probable; and begin by believing what appears incredible.'

I determined to call in the aid of another detective and visit the place next night. I chose for my companion George Webber, one of the most esteemed members of the force, a man who had proved his worth. Webber was a man of imperturbable calmness, and with great confidence in himself. He would have laid his hand upon the most dangerous criminal as tranquilly as if he had been accosting a friend.

The haunted farmhouse was situated about a hundred yards from the roadway. What once had been a garden was now a veritable jungle, given up to weeds and bushes. Fortunately, although it was ten o'clock, the night was clear. Innumerable stars lit up the flinty sky. There was no light in the house; no sign of its being inhabited. The windows of the ground-floor were broken, and some of the doors were open. We entered at the rear. A place of more sinister aspect I never saw. The plastering had crumbled from the walls; the flooring was rotten; the ceiling looked as though it might fall at any time, the rafters being bent as if they supported a heavy weight.

The sitting-room where 'Bill' had taken up his quarters a few nights previously contained a rough table and a few stools, which had been overturned. I could see that the door which led from it to the staircase had been riddled by bullets. There was a doorway in the passage, but the door was gone. The door which led into the parlour opened noiselessly. Our lanterns revealed the fact that the tables, glass, and chairs had been overturned, thrown in every direction, trodden upon, shivered into fragments. Everything denoted that this room had been the scene of a terrible struggle.

The keyhole of the door which led into the cellar was sewn up with cobwebs. The cellar itself was full of dust and debris. Each of us had a lantern, and each inspected for himself. Running along the side-wall, I detected a wire, and following this I found that it disappeared in an old barrel. Without disturbing the wire, I removed the head of the barrel, and found that the wire was attached to an old saucepan lid. A thorough examination revealed nothing further; so we returned to the sitting-room. I did not tell my companion what I had seen, and he had discovered nothing. We did not go up-stairs, because we thought it would be prudent to postpone further explorations until the next day. Meantime, we darkened our lanterns and deposited them in a corner. The room was semi-dark. Our eyes and ears were on the alert; but the house was as still as a tomb; we saw nothing, and heard no sound.

I had merely told my companion that I expected to make an important discovery. Of its nature he knew nothing.

We waited in the most acute degree of expectation and attention until nearly midnight. All of a sudden I heard faint notes of music, which lasted for a few minutes. By-and-by the music was accompanied by a voice. The sounds were

as fine and soft as the voice of a child. I was satisfied that the music was the work of human hands and the voice a human voice; but I was considerably startled. My companion looked very pale, and strove to rise from the place where he sat. I put my hand on his arm to prevent him. It was scarcely necessary, for he could barely muster strength to whisper, 'Let's get.' The music was trailing away into feebleness, when the staircase door began to open and shut. I felt sure that the wire which I had seen downstairs had something to do with this. I made a great effort to rise. To my astonishment, I could not move a limb. I could only bend forward and gasp. A power which I could not resist made me motionless and speechless. Yet all the time I was burning to 'go' for that door, but I hadn't physical capacity to do so.

My companion recovered first, and seizing both lanterns, dashed from the house and made for the roadway. I jumped to my feet and followed my companion. As I did so, I heard a tunk, tunk, tunk! down in the cellar.

I found my mate in the highway, his face as white as a sheet.

'What in thunder ails you, man?' I asked, feeling that the most creditable way of drawing my companion's attention from my condition was to heighten the absurdity of his.

'The ghost!' he gasped. 'I wouldn't go back to that house to save my life.'

There was nothing for it but to tell Webber what I'd seen and what I suspected. As I have said, my fellow-detective was as brave a man as ever took up a trail; and when I told him what I had seen, he became perfectly self-possessed. We spent the remainder of the night in laying our plans. In the early morning he rode back to San Francisco to get the necessary apparatus for carrying them out. I remained to 'shadow' the house.

Just as it was getting dusk, my companion returned, and we re-entered the house from the rear, noiselessly and with great caution. Removing my shoes, I made my way up-stairs, where I fancied I detected a slight noise overhead. There was no sign of this room having been inhabited. The old place was two stories high, with a garret at the top. The garret was evidently reached by a ladder, though none was visible. I surmised that the ghost was in this garret, and that any one showing his head above the scuttle would get it rapped, even if he didn't get shot. There was a large cupboard facing the entrance to the garret, and in the door of it I bored—on a level with my eyes—a few small holes with a gimlet which I happened to have in my pocket-knife, first drawing it through my hair, to prevent its making the slightest noise. My plan was to play the ghost for the benefit of the occupant of the garret—ghost or no ghost. For this purpose Webber had brought with him an old fiddle. I removed all the strings except one, told my companion to allow me time to secrete myself above, and then to make a noise on that one string, accompanying it with a few groans and other muffled noises.

I hadn't been hid many minutes before I heard the darnedest row from below. It wasn't like anything earthly. At first it seemed like one shrieking in pain, then it sounded like bellige-

rent cats, and then it died away in a few complaining sighs. It was so weird that, although I knew very well that my mate was causing it, I couldn't help feeling a bit queer. Pretty soon I heard a movement overhead: the scuttle-top was being removed. Next a ladder was thrust down the scuttle. To help Webber to keep up the entertainment, I gave a few groans inside the cupboard. That brought a man down the ladder. He'd no sooner reached the foot of it than I collared him. It was Coffin.

The moment I touched him he sank down on the floor like—like an empty sack. He seemed as if he hadn't got a bone in his body: he was as limp as a jelly-fish. Whilst I got him out into the open air, Webber searched the garret, and found all the missing dollars, bonds, &c.

We hurried Coffin back to San Francisco, intending to lock him up. He was still unconscious, and we were obliged to summon a doctor. Poor fellow! he never got over it. When he came out of his swoon, he was mad, and had to spend the rest of his days in an asylum. That's the effect it has, sir, when a man really believes he has come in contact with the supernatural, as Coffin did.

RECENT SALES OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

Most middle-aged people will remember the craze for collecting used postage stamps which about the year 1861 seemed to possess every grade of society; but perhaps few are aware how, after the mania subsided, a select few still continued the pursuit, and developed what had been the wild fancy of a moment into the science of Philately. That the collecting of postage stamps deserves the name of science will be denied by many. Yet, if careful and minute observation, research, dexterity, taste, judgment, and patience are sufficient to lift a pursuit from a hobby to a science, then assuredly Philately is a science. Eminent lawyers, physicians, men of letters, and even statesmen are now numbered among enthusiastic stamp collectors; and there are three collections in existence—that of Mr T. K. Tapling, M.P., Herr von Ferrary, and Baron Arthur de Rothschild, which are worth in the aggregate more than one hundred thousand pounds. This latter fact will ensure the respect of many persons who would deny it to any pursuit in which considerable sums of money were not involved.

Postage-stamp collecting of necessity lacks age, as the first postage stamp was issued in 1840, and of course it was impossible to collect what did not exist. England had the honour of issuing the first stamp, which was in value one penny, and in colour black. These stamps are still common; a used specimen can be purchased of any dealer for a penny, and an unused one for a shilling. Mr Martin Wears, who has devoted some attention to the history of stamps and stamp-collecting, is of opinion that the mania, as it was then called, began soon after the issue of postage stamps. *Punch* even thought it necessary to ridicule those who devoted themselves to the pursuit. But ridicule seems to have utterly failed in arresting the progress of the new hobby, which by fits and starts continued to enlist

new admirers until 1861, when the fashion received a marked impetus, or, to use an expressive Americanism, the big 'Stamp Boom' took place. After the general excitement had subsided, those who remained in the depleted ranks of collectors set to work to study the subject in a scientific manner; and it was then that attention was paid to the many varieties of paper, perforation, watermark, printing, and colour which stamps present. Many of these varieties are very minute; and the presence or absence of a watermark, the difference between stamps imperforated, rouletted, *percé en scie*, *percé en serpentine*, &c., often makes the difference of several shillings and sometimes of several pounds in the value of stamps.

Almost every description of paper known has been used at one time or another to print stamps, and minor varieties are infinite in printing and colour. To give one example: the familiar penny red stamp which was in use in England from 1864 to 1880 boasts one hundred and fifty distinct though minor varieties. It will be seen by this that to have a good knowledge of stamps requires some application, and to those who have a fancy for the pursuit it affords boundless occupation and amusement. In the year 1872 was held the first public sale of stamps by auction. The well-known firm of Messrs Sotheby, Wilkinson, & Hodge conducted the sale; and the rooms where some of the finest collections of books and coins in the world had been dispersed, opened their doors to the despised postage stamp. Some of the prices realised were very good for the time, although the value of really rare stamps now makes them appear extremely small. In quoting the few lots which follow, the probable sum which the same stamp would now realise may prove interesting:

Lots 15, 16, 17, and 18, eight stamps of St Louis, being every known variety, all very rare, brought £19, 12s. (These would now be worth considerably more than £100.)—Lot 49, Jefferson Market Post-office, pink, unique (this is a local stamp of the United States), £5.—Lot 109 (another unique local) fetched £7, 15s.—Lot 124, Bolivia 5 c., violet, £1, 3s. (Now worth about the same.)—Lot 125, Bolivia 10 c., brown, 17s. (It is curious that in the recent sale of postage stamps, Nov. 24, 1888, a similar stamp realised exactly the same money.)—Lot 147, Mexico 1867, thin paper, set of four stamps, £1, 9s. (These would now be worth only 4s.)—Lot 156, set of four New South Wales, view of Sydney, unused, £3, 3s. (Now worth £10.)—Lot 159, Sandwich Isles, first issue, 13 cents, very fine specimen, £6, 10s. (Now worth about £65.)

The sale, however, was considered a very satisfactory one at the time; and it is strange that—as far as we are aware—the next sale should have taken place only after such an exceedingly long interval as sixteen years. Still, we are unable to trace one between 1872 and 1888 in England, although New York has long had periodical auctions, and one gentleman recently held his seventeenth consecutive sale. The recent sale was arranged by Mr Douglas Garth, Secretary to the London Philatelic Society, who, in the interest of collectors, very kindly undertook a work which must have given him a great deal of trouble. His hope, however, that this first sale—for the one of 1872 has passed into history—would prove

the forerunner of a long series, seems likely to be realised, as the auctioneer, Mr Thomas Bull, has since held several. Three hundred and ten lots were sold on November 24, 1888, and the prices show that there is still plenty of money among stamp collectors. Lot 18, an envelope stamp of Mauritius, 1s., yellow, very rare, but cut round, and therefore virtually spoilt, £3, 15s.—Lot 48, Afghan, 1871 issue, 8 annas, unused, £6.—Lot 76, Brazil, 1844 issue, 600 reis, £1, 10s.—Lot 77, British Columbia, 1869, 10 cents, very rare, £1, 3s.—Lot 83, British Guiana, 1850, 12 cents, £5.—Lot 84, British Guiana, better specimen, £5, 10s.—Lot 94, Bulgaria, 1886 issue, error of colour, 5 stot, rose, £2, 5s.—Lot 103, Cape of Good Hope, 1861, error of colour, torn and mended, £15.—Lot 137, Great Britain, 1840, 1d., black, with V.R. in corners, an official stamp, never issued to the public, £5, 15s.—Lot 186, Mauritius, 1848 issue, pair of 1d. stamps, £4, 5s.—Lot 205, New Brunswick, 1857, 1s., very fine, £5.—Lot 297, Trinidad local stamp, 1847, £13, 13s.—Lot 298, Tuscany, 1860, 3 lire, yellow, £12, 12s.

When we find men remarkable for capacity in law, in physic, and in business giving fifteen pounds for a piece of soiled and torn paper, it seems probable there must be more in stamp-collecting than a cursory glance would lead one to believe. Before concluding, it may be well to remark that all the prices quoted above are for stamps of exceptional rarity, and that common stamps are of little value. A collection of one thousand different stamps in good condition can be purchased for one pound.

SWALLOWS.

THE swallows fly high, the swallows fly low,
And summer winds come, and summer days go;
They are building nests 'neath the cottage eaves;
They dream not of autumn or fading leaves.
The soft showers are falling, the west winds blow,
The swallows fly high, the swallows fly low.

But summer is passing, and golden sheaves
Are whispering of winter and withered leaves;
The woodlands are ringing the whole day long;
The swallows are singing their farewell song;
They sing of a land where they long to be,
Of endless summers far over the sea.

O sunshine! O swallows! Sweet summer-time,
Ye sing to my heart of youth's golden prime—
And distance and death, and long years between,
Recede with their joys and their sorrows keen;
And tender eyes lingeringly rest on me—
Loved eyes, that on earth I shall no more see.

For spring brings the swallows to last year's nest,
And world-weary hearts wander home to rest.
No home like the old of sunshine and dew;
No faces so dear and no heart so true!
Whenever, wherever my feet may roam,
My heart turns with love to my childhood's home.

MARY J. MURCHIE.

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DOMESTIC NEST-BUILDING.

A BEAVER in captivity will build a dam across the kitchen, making it of sticks and brushes with the most charming air of doing the best he can. The nest-building of the birds has also a delightful air of contrivance about it. One likes them for the marvels they do with bits of grass and rag and wool; and one feels profound respect for the robin that made his nest in a watering-pot, after ascertaining with his bead of an eye that it was a safe one with a hole in it. There is human nest-building too; but considering their resources, the birds are before us in the utility and beauty of their work; while, in contrivance, the beaver in the story leaves us nowhere. Our house-furnishing corresponds to the nest-building of the birds. It is the preparation of our home. Sometimes the work requires no small ingenuity; then we deserve to share the triumph of those feathered nest-builders who do wonders with the most simple materials.

Utility and beauty are to be as guiding-lines in arranging our plan. Let it be remembered that we are not contriving a furniture mart, nor a bric-à-brac shop, nor even a palace on view, but a house to be lived in, every room and part of which is to be made enjoyable. It is greatly a matter of common-sense and good taste; these produce better results than the cheque-book and the complete house-furnisher. The moneyed system results in a mansion complete from a grand piano down to a cat and a duster. The system of contrivance boasts having secured all one likes best and all in good taste. The planners and contrivers are the true nest-builders.

In house-furnishing, it is well that old times are changed and old manners gone. One has to go back a long way to find beauty and utility combined in ordinary rooms. Very far back, the rich had their baronial halls, carved oak and stained glass; but if we come down to recent times and to the bulk of the people, the idea of beauty in the house was either false or unthought of. Who does not remember prim old-fashioned

households, where the notion prevailed—and alas! perhaps prevails still—that the best room was a sacred apartment only to be opened for visits and on Sundays? In that prehistoric period, the genteel drawing-room was a chamber of horrors. On the threshold, one was met by an odour of carpet and cold chimney, and a mouldy suggestion of dead roses in a jar. Windows glared through white curtains that could have stood up manfully by themselves—stiff enough to cut the children's fingers with their edges. A centre table occupied the best bit of the floor. A sort of Druidic circle of books lay upon it, displayed for the sake of their covers, and piled at equal distances; and the covers might as well have been there without the leaves for any use that was ever made of them. In the middle of this charmed circle of books not to be read, stood an object dreaded by the household and avoided as a danger—only some fruit, shocking to the appetite, covered by a glass shade, supposed to be of fabulous value and anxious to crack. The chief ornaments of the room were likewise dangerous and to be shunned, as they wore glass ringlets round their heads—a custom suitable to the taste of the time, but neither useful nor beautiful. In fact the gilded and misshapen 'ornaments' of that period were not to be compared with the shells on a cottage hob. The unused drawing-room was completed by a white or spotted paper, a carpet where even the flowers grew in spots and lines, and a regiment of chairs in uniform—perhaps wearing regulation pinafores to save their uniforms. The only flowers were of wax, paper, or—spare us, O memory!—feathers with quills in them. The occasional table may have been so called because it stood up only occasionally, and at other times stretched its one leg and hid its papier-mâché face upon the floor.

Well, we have changed all that; but some modern drawing-rooms are hardly more useful. There are rooms so crowded with treacherous stands and brittle trifles, that ladies enter steering nervously; and men lured in against their will are surprised to find a safe seat, and dispose of

their legs with relief and thankfulness. If you shun the milkmaid's stool, you may set the gold screen swaying; if you retreat from the tripod of fern, you may back into the mock-easel; and ten to one the easel will floor the gipsy table with the photographs, and the table will slaughter the wicker-work-and-palm-leaf stand with the invaluable china perched on it. There is a story told of a perfect hostess who merely rang the bell beside her and continued the conversation when the leg of a guest had tipped over the tea-table and massacred all her china at her feet. But what the guest felt, history does not relate; perhaps, like Artemus Ward, he girded up his 'lions' and fled the scene.

A man prefers a broad floor, a sense of space, seats varied, restful, and strong, his favourite pictures, some of his favourite books, some attention to his favourite ideas of art and beauty. Beside this, he has a certain mysterious pleasure in seeing feminine taste excel his expectations. He is proud of the vision of the artistic effect which women create as by magic out of simple things. Taste can buy beauty in these days almost for a song. The well-chosen colouring of paper and paint-work are half the battle won; the margin of polished floor or of crisp cool matting is a great advantage; used in moderation the brilliance of glistening china has its worth; art enamels give the energetic housewife a means of turning old furniture and colourless brackets and shelves into resplendent ornaments. Shops of foreign goods sell almost for nothing the lacquered gold of Benares, the art colours of India, the glowing pottery of Japan, perfect in shape and hue, and the quaint porcelain of China. At a moderate outlay the 'withdrawing-room' becomes worth its name, beautiful and enjoyable.

There was an old tradition that the family should be solemnly fed among crimson and mahogany. The gloomy dining-room and the heavy dinner are fading away together. Does not half the charm of a picnic lie in its bright surroundings? If a crust on the hillside tastes well, why not dine in a cheerful room—with warm colour and warm firelight, of course, for the winter, but with a glimpse of green outside for the summer, and a picture of the green moor or the misty mountain where one fain would take the bit and sup instead?

The old plain hall and dull staircase have now given place to a pictured hall, even in very simple houses, luxurious curtains for the doors in winter, stairs before all things bright and gay with artistic colour, landings ornamented with glowing jars, green plants, tinted windows.

The use of colour has indeed wonderfully developed in the last few years. People who know its value, design their rooms in contrasts or in harmonies. One of the leading artists delights in painting incidents set in a drawing-room background of yellow and cream and

golden brown. Even up in the sleeping-rooms we may take a hint from this fancy for colour. The blue room and the pink room have still a country-house sound charming to modern ears; but in these days the new varieties of old colours are enchanting. The knack of enlarging small bedrooms has also been discovered. A large plate of looking-glass is let unframed into one of the light-papered walls, to reflect the room, and to serve better than the common bulky mirror. Then the furniture is enamelled ivory white; for it may be noted here that the effect of white is always to enlarge.

Probably there is a nook in the house devoted to books, with sometimes a suspicion of smoke in the air, and a tendency to break out all over in papers. This room is sacred to the lord and master, and none but the wife or daughter can venture to put it in order. In the judgment of the owner, a housemaid would produce a hurricane and leave a desert behind her. If smoke is expected, the floor should have rugs over a hard covering—not matting. Where there are home-made book-shelves, a border, almost as good as leather edging, can be formed of American cloth divided into two-inch strips, and with the lower edges cut into half-circles shaped with a coin and carefully pinked. The ornamentation of the room must be guided by the man's taste, and so abundant as to remove all sense of a plain or dismal sanctum. Some men enjoy a piece of armour, a copy of a Greek vase, or an old blunderbuss, more than their wives would enjoy the pick of the china shops. Others are of the poet Longfellow's mind, and have the dearest of all faces gazing down at them from a picture on the wall.

Most houses have for at least some time another sanctum better still, with white boards and safely guarded windows and fireplace. The nursery must be 'pretty' from the children's point of view. There must be softness and bright colours in the rugs the little one loves to roll upon; something attractive and within a child's knowledge pictured in all directions, but not closely or in a crowded confusion. There must be space to make what the maids dread as a 'strew'—a fine large comfortable 'strew' for a wet day. Above all with whiteness, brightness, toys, and plants, the day-nursery ought to be the most cheerful room in the house. This is the right place for a bird-cage to become part of the furniture, unless the children have already the much-enduring kitten.

The nursery is like the Paradiso; now—down to the Inferno. A kitchen opening on a garden is a treasure in a house; but not every house has got it. However, with neatness and brightness in this region no house can dispense. It should be planned to be like a cottage. An ugly kitchen is a bad one; and a bad one means discontented servants; and discontented servants mean an unpleasant house. The maids take a pride in their shining utensils, as you do in your vases. A simple picture or two, a glimpse of snowy muslin to the window, white tables, the workbox, the chair in a cosy corner, and the ticking clock—all these make up the down-stairs cottage.

This brings us to the end of this domestic

nest-building. Our hints resolve themselves into two principles: arrange the house not by rule or custom, but for the use of each room; and let beauty unite with use in every part.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN the enemy had retired, Madame swept about the room in triumph, talking vehemently the while. Oho! that Mr Snelling of whom they had heard so much! Well, my friends, we have beheld him, and what did we think of him? *That* for him! Madame with great deliberation set the tip of her thumb-nail behind her white front teeth and snatched it away with a click.

'That for him, to be sure!' cried Isaiah, and snapped his fingers in derision. It was noticeable, however, that Isaiah went suddenly solemn after this demonstration. Madame walked about declaiming, and he listened, with no air of conviction. 'I tell you what it is, mum,' said he after a while; 'we've acted for the best; but if my opinion goes for anything, the gaffer's got us in the pot, and can put the lid on at any minute.'

'What do you mean?' Madame asked scornfully.

'I mean, mum,' Isaiah answered, 'that if Robert Snelling likes to try to do it, he can ruin the lot on us. I know him, mind you. He says he'll win if he spends a thousand pounds.'

'That for his thousand pounds!' Madame answered valiantly, with a repetition of her former gesture.

'That's all very well, mum,' replied Isaiah; 'and I'm no more for giving in than you are. But theer's wit in wood-choppin', and reason in the roastin' of eggs, and we've got to look things in the face, mum.'

'Very well,' said Madame cheerfully. She dropped into an armchair, and set her plump hands upon her knees. 'Now then—look them in the face. What do you see?'

'I see, to begin with,' Isaiah responded, 'that we can't keep the lad away from him. The law's on his side. Master John's father willed him into Snelling's care along with the property. It's a chancy thing to meddle with the law.'

'Are you so much a coward,' Madame demanded with flashing eyes and kindling colour, 'that you counsel to give back the poor innocent to this monster?'

'It'll matter very little what I counsel,' said Isaiah, scratching his head viciously. 'He'll have him back, and nothing we can do can hinder him.'

'That is so,' said Jousserau from his corner. 'But look, my good sir, if—— No; I cannot exprime my thoughts in English.' He flashed round upon Madame: 'Look you, dear friend. This man can do what he will. He has the law on his side. Even if we should uproot ourselves and become vagabonds, he can trace us.'

'What?' cried Madame wrathfully. 'You also?'

'Listen! The monster does not want the child at all, unless it is that he should do him a mischief. And yet it is his right to have him, and his duty.—Now listen, I beseech you. Let him have the child, since no better can be done; but

let us warn him: "You shall be held responsible for whatsoever happens to the boy."—Vigne can find employment at Castle-Barfield. He is a sound good workman, and will be welcome anywhere. We will go and live there. We will stand over yon monster in constant terror. We will defy him: "Lay a hand upon the boy, do a thing to hurt him, and we will rouse the land against you." If you ask me what I advise, it is, that we see this brutal giant without a day's delay, that we tell him to his face: "You shall have what you want, you Snelling, but, at your peril, you shall do your duty."'

The little man rose to his feet, and gesticulated against the imaginary Snelling with such ferocity that Isaiah felt his blood run cold. He had never reconciled himself to the southern vehemences, and found it hard to believe that so explosive an energy could find a vent in mere words. He was persuaded that in his calmer moments Jousserau would not hurt a fly; but whenever the small man and his *pays* got into an animated discussion, he half anticipated murder. Especially at the dinner-table he dreaded controversy, for there the two bosom-friends flourished their knives and forks against each other with such passionate demonstration of apparent hostility, that he had a round score of times risen to intervene between them; and though he had been laughed at for his pains, and though Madame had assured him that these seemingly bloodthirsty antics were compatible with the tenderest affection, Isaiah had always had his doubts about it. He shook his slow-going midland British head at Jousserau's present attitude.

'No, no!' he said decisively; 'no threats, no bloodshed. I'm a law-abiding man.'

Madame, half laughing and half impatient, turned upon him to explain. She laid Jousserau's scheme before him, and in the very act of telling it, herself caught fire at it.

'There's something in it,' said Isaiah.

'Something?' cried Madame. 'It is the only thing.—Look, Mr Vintare: in Castle-Barfield there is the greatest of all the houses that make decorative glass in England. My husband has been offered work there; and only that that end of the town is so black and dirty, and the sky there always so dark, he would have gone long ago, because the pay is better. Mr Jousserau is leaving us; we have been obliged to send away that wicked Mr Orme—he has his week's notice now—the children are away, the house will be lonely. In Castle-Barfield there are two or three hundred of our fellow-countrymen. There is a French colony there. We shall be within two or three miles of the child, and we can watch over him. The surrender will be no surrender. I wish now that we had not troubled to send the boys to Oxford.'

'There's something in it,' Isaiah repeated. His intelligence was of a slower order than that of Madame or Jousserau. He was not accustomed to allow himself to be persuaded to a new opinion in a moment. 'I shall live about there,' he added, after an interval of reflection. 'I think between us we can defy the gaffer to hurt the lad. He dar' not do it in the face of what we know.'

They talked eagerly for an hour or more, devising all manner of schemes for the defence of

young John against his guardian, until at last Isaiah gave his knee a resounding slap and broke out: 'I've got it!'

'What have you got?' Madame asked him.

'It's all right, mum,' Isaiah answered. 'I've got it! The lad's as safe with the gaffer as Daniel was i' the den o' lions. Leave it to me; I've got it.'

Madame was naturally curious; but Isaiah declined to say a word in elucidation of his project. He nodded and winked repeatedly, and once or twice his inexpressive features creased with a smile of successful cunning. When he took leave of his hostess, he shook hands with unusual warmth, and drawing her towards him, whispered: 'I've got it; it's as good as done for,' and so disappeared, bearing his secret with him. Riding homewards in the slow local Sunday train, he repeatedly hugged his knees and chuckled, and his scheme so inflated him that he altogether forgot the troubles his own championship of the runaway boys had brought him.

Arrived at Castle-Barfield, he walked sturdily off to the house of Farmer Gregg. It was the farmer's habit to honour the Sabbath by eating an unusually solid mid-day dinner and going to bed after it; and when Isaiah arrived, he was informed by the serving-maid that the master was asleep, and must on no account be disturbed.

'Fatch him down,' said Isaiah; 'I've got news for him.'

'I dusn't wake him for my life,' said the girl.

'Fatch him down,' repeated Isaiah. 'It ain't every day of his life he gets news of a runaway on'y son that's been away a twel'month.'

'Oh, be gracious!' said the maid, 'have they found Master William?' and Isaiah responding by the woodenest of nods, she scuttered violently up-stairs and fell to hammering at her master's door.

The farmer came down, angry-complexioned and short of breath, his eyes yet half sealed with sleep, and his iron-gray hair raying from his head in a hundred different directions. The maid, who was of an emotional turn, was weeping and beating her hands together over the unexpected news.

'What's it all about?' cried the farmer.—'Here, somebody, send this calf to the cowshed. Let a man hear his ears.—What's it all about?'

'I've brought you news o' William, Mr Gregg,' said Isaiah smoothly.

'You have, have you?' the bereaved father answered. 'It's time somebody did. Wheer is he?'

'He's at Hoxford,' returned Isaiah, with a careful aspirate in deference to the reputation of that seat of learning. 'He's well and hearty, and being took good care on.'

'That's a blessin',' returned the farmer, taking down his pipe from the mantel-piece. 'Is he a-comin' back again?'

'Well, that's as may be,' Isaiah replied. 'I reckon it depends a bit on whether he'd be welcome or no.'

'I'll mek ready for him,' said the farmer. 'Theer's summat i' pickle as ought to be pretty ripe by this time.'

'I say,' said Isaiah, 'do you know what he run away for?'

'Yis,' replied the tender parent. 'He was too proud-stomached to tek a hiding from his own feyther.'

'Not he,' said Isaiah. 'I'll tell thee all about it.'

He was diplomatist enough in telling his story to avoid for the time being the mention of his own part in it. The farmer stared at him, open-mouthed and open-eyed, and in the extremity of his astonishment, dropped his pipe. It broke into fragments at his feet, and he stared from Isaiah to the pieces and back again without so much as an exclamation.

'It was thy Will's pluck an' good sense,' said Isaiah, 'as saved the lad.' He was developing traits of cunning not expected even by himself, and was full of admiration for his own wiliness. 'You remember what poor young John was like before he run away?'—The farmer nodded, staring with wondering, indignant eyes.—'Well, now,' said Isaiah, 'he's as bright as a new-scoured kettle. He's that cliver of his head and his fingers it's a wonder. It's all thy Will's doin'; and I tell thee, thee's got a right to be proud of him.'

The farmer offered no reply to this, but clapping both hands to his mouth, bellowed for his boots. They were brought to him, and he pulled them on, turning purple in the face.

'Now,' he said, 'I'm goin' to pick the heaviest ridin'-crop theer is about the house; and if thee'dst like to see a bit o' sport, thou'rt welcome.'

'What are you going to do?' cried Isaiah.

'Do?' cried the farmer. 'What do you think I'm going to do? I'm going to hide Bob Snelling.'

'Not of a Sunday, gaffer,' cried Isaiah persuasively. 'Leave it for to-morrow. It ain't a work o' necessity—it's a work o' pleasure.'

'It won't keep, Isaiah,' said the farmer; 'it won't keep, lad.'

'Bless you, yes,' urged Isaiah, 'and be the better for it.'

To give an unlooked-for piquancy to the discussion, Snelling's great form loomed in the doorway at this moment.

'Afternoon, neighbour,' he said, perceiving Gregg.

'You come in handy,' his neighbour responded, and began to look about him with a threatening eye.

'I've got news for you,' said Snelling, advancing into the room.

'Hast?' cried the other. 'I've got news for thee.'—Isaiah placed himself between them.—'Let me get at him?' the angry man stammered. 'Let me get at him! I'll flog the coat off his back.'

'Oh!' said Snelling calmly, balancing his riding-whip in his strong hand. 'This is my discharged servant been spreading lies about me. That's the man I sacked this morning, and he comes here, a-poisoning my reputation. You believe him agen the word of a man you've known all your life, a fellow as goes sneaking round, lying behind his old master's back.'

'Look here, Bob Snelling,' said Isaiah, shaking a denouncing forefinger at him; 'I've spoke behind your back, and I'll speak before your face.'

'Don't call me Bob Snelling,' returned his late employer sternly.

'I wouldn't,' said Isaiah, 'if I could find anything worse than your own name to call you by. You want to know what I've been saying behind your back? It's what I said afore your face this morning, and what I'll say afore your face again. John Vale trusted you with his boy, and trusted you with the boy's land. You tried to rob the lad of his land, and what's more, you tried to rob him of his brains. You've got the law of us, but we've got the whip-hand of you. The lad's coming back; but you've got to take good care of him this time. Raise a finger on him, and I'll rouse the parish.'

Snelling turned white, but he held his ground. 'The man's a spiteful madman,' he made answer. 'I won't demean myself by talking about such rubbish. My neighbours know me, and I can trust 'em.—As for you, Isaiah, you shall pay for this.'

'Thee shalt pay,' cried Gregg. 'I'll take the lad's word agen thee, any minute. I was comin' straight to gie thee a welkin', Bob.—Oh! it's no secret. Be'est welcome to the news. I'll know the rights o' things. I'll wait till my lad comes home.'

'As for a hidin', Mr Gregg,' said Snelling, with a rude slow dignity, 'it doesn't become a man o' my years and inches to brag before a man o' yours. I should be loth to hurt you; but about that I'll say no more. If you're so blind you can't see where this chap's spite comes in, I'm sorry for you, and that's my last word.'

'It ain't mine,' said Isaiah. 'I'm your discharged servant, right enough. But what did you sack me for? I served you faithful, as I served your father afore you. I never was slothful i' business, nor wrong by a penny. I know my work, and you can tek on a better man when you can find him. You sacked me, gaffer, when you found I knew the truth about you; and afore we part, I'll tell you one thing for your comfort. You called the lad a idiot in my hearing yesterday. He was that or pretty near it a year ago. But we know the difference now. There's no cliverer or brighter lad for fifty mile round, and that's what a twel'month away from your clutches has done for him. Now tek him back agen, and let me see a sign that you're frightening him back into what he used to be, and then I'll show you something. As big men as Bob Snelling have seen the inside of a lock-up afore to-day.'

'Was it my fault,' Snelling answered, 'as that young brute threw a stone at my nephew two years ago? Is it any wonder that the lad's got better? If he has, is there anybody as has got such a right to be pleased at it as I have? Let the lad come home again. Let the parish see how he's treated. When your own lad ran away with him, was that my doing? It was him as tempted John away; and he started, if all tales be true, because you thrashed him. I'll talk no more about it. Change your mind about floggin' me, farmer, and so good-bye to the pair o' ye.'

He walked home, proud enough to look at, but feeling altogether foiled and broken. He raged bitterly against the suspicions which surrounded him, and appealed to his own part for a defence against the opinion of his neighbours. What right had any man to believe this shameful

charge? The mere right of truth was nothing to him, for they could only suspect. It was nothing that their suspicions were well founded. He alone could know that.

The boy was coming back again, and watched as he would be, he must needs treat him kindly. The black and dreadful phantom hidden in his mind took a forward step or two, and seemed to whisper, 'You will have need of me.' As yet, he dared not look it in the face; but he learned to own to his own soul that the awful thing was there.

DERELICT SHIPS.

A DERELICT or abandoned ship drifting hither and thither before boisterous breezes and constant currents is a truly pitiable sight to a seafarer at any time. Such vessels, moreover, are as dangerous to ships that may chance to cross their erratic course as ever uncharted rock heaved up by volcanic action from hitherto presumably fathomless depths of old ocean. Some are seen wholly dismantled, their severed spars crashing like battering-rams against their wounded sides; others with masts still standing, but sails blown into shreds, that flap against the swaying yards in savage unison, while the wind wails a shrill accompaniment across the chafing cordage. Rudderless, with seams gaping wide, these deserted hulls await the final breaking-up that sooner or later comes to all. White-capped waves, raised by the cyclone's fury, make a clean breach over the forsaken ones as they wallow in the trough of the sea, and play sad havoc with the upper works, until at length the riven fabrics fall asunder. Abandoned vessels, however, are sometimes so strongly constructed as almost to defy the war of the elements; and none but navigators are aware how many months such floating wrecks remain intact to drift about the ocean to the great danger of ships on their voyages. Derelicts have probably proved fatal to many a good ship that has left the land to disappear as utterly as though she had never been. Ships floating keel uppermost are a great menace to navigation, as nothing but a curl of foam indicates the danger to a mariner, be he ever so watchful. The North Atlantic is strewn with deserted vessels after every hurricane. There is a greater traffic on this expanse of water than on any other ocean; and the timber-ships trading to North-America are both old and numerous. Worn-out timber-laden ships unfit for any other trade form a large majority of the drifting derelicts.

It would seem that ships are more frequently abandoned than formerly; but no reliable comparison can be made, inasmuch as the ratio between the number of ships left derelict and the total number afloat in any given period is only available for recent years. There was an ancient axiom that freight was the mother of wages. If a ship were abandoned, her freight was lost; and consequently, wages could not be claimed by the distressed seamen on arrival in port without their ship. Then, as now, it was the uniform practice to insure ship, cargo, and freight from any part of the world. Should the ship be cast away, every one having an interest in the property has a legal right to be indemnified to the full extent which his insurance covers. The seaman who lost his clothes and barely escaped with his life was in

olden times held to forfeit his wages, which were not legally insurable.

The reasons urged by eminent jurists in justification of this anomaly were peculiarly plausible and self-satisfying. When a man is well aware that the abandonment of his vessel would leave him penniless, as by this act he voluntarily forfeited all claim to remuneration for services rendered, and that, on the other hand, by remaining on board his disabled ship he ensured certainty of pay, although at the end of a protracted voyage, the mariner would be more chary of deserting his ship. Seamen, however, as a rule are loth to leave their ship, and practical men have succeeded in partially removing this disability. The law was modified so that a ship's crew are entitled to payment of wages up to the date of her loss; and it has been proposed that pay should not cease until the arrival of the breadwinner at home, provided he make no unnecessary delay in his return. This is but fair; for the ship-owner who has insured both ship and freight is in just the same position, should she be totally lost, as though his ship had made an average passage home without having to pay a crew for navigating her. It may be objected to this that the dread of loss of wages being banished will lead to greater freeness in abandonment; for when a steamer heaves in sight proffering an asylum to tempest-tossed mariners in a ship as leaky as a sieve, it is ten to one that they will cease pumping and betake themselves to the boats. Then the officers must perforce follow, as to remain would be suicidal. Moreover, the master is probably influenced somewhat by the knowledge that his employer is well covered by insurance; and the competition among underwriters leads to settlements of claims that might otherwise be resisted. Quite recently, a large water-logged derelict was picked up and towed into a United States port. Upon examination, it was discovered that her cargo consisted of worthless timber, and holes had been bored through her sides under the water-line. Her master had entered into a conspiracy with the shipper of the cargo to cast away the ship with her worthless but heavily insured cargo. He would have succeeded had she gone to pieces, as expected. Her owners were saddled with an expensive lawsuit to recover this ship from her salvors. Happily, this manner of making derelicts is very rare.

Not every vessel deserted by her crew is a derelict in the eyes of the law; in other words, although *de facto* abandoned, a ship may be *de jure* reclaimed by her own crew, even though strangers may have boarded and taken possession in the enforced absence of her crew. We remember a case of a Norwegian ship dropping her anchors in a gale of wind on a lee-shore. Master and all hands made for *terra firma* and awaited the issue, intending to return when the wind went down, if the anchors held her. Meanwhile, a tug came along, slipped the vessel's anchors without her master's consent, and towed her to a safe port. Ultimately, the captain recovered his ship by legal process. A ship to become legally derelict must have been abandoned, not only without hope of recovery by her crew, but also without any intention on their part of returning. It is said that if a cat or dog be found on board of a ship, she is not a derelict in the strict sense of the term. The

Norwegian *Familiens Minde* fell in with a Portuguese vessel in mid-Atlantic making signals of distress. Both vessels hove-to, and in a short time the whole of the Portuguese abandoned their ship, declaring her unseaworthy. The crew of the Norwegian vessel found that the stranger might possibly be brought into port; and as her late crew refused to return, the mate and two or three men of the *Familiens Minde* resolved to take the risk. Sail was made on the salvaged ship, and, strange to say, she arrived safely at an English port some days before her salvor. On the arrival of the latter at Gravesend, the Portuguese mate was so affected at the news that he committed suicide. Had not these plucky Norwegians brought the derelict to England, she might have drifted about for months in the track of shipping.

The United States Hydrographic Office awoke to the importance of making known the probable positions of derelicts and other formidable obstructions to navigators in the North Atlantic, and have for some time past published monthly Pilot Charts, setting forth in a simple but precise manner the whereabouts of every shifting danger reported to that department up to the time of going to press. Lieutenant G. L. Dyer, U.S.N., is the present hydrographer, and his carefully collated charts should be in the hands of every shipmaster who crosses the Atlantic. These charts are distributed to navigators without charge; and branch offices have been established at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, and San Francisco, where shipmasters will find all the latest nautical information courteously placed at their disposal by the United States naval authorities. The independent testimony of such charts should be especially valuable to lawyers and others interested in questions relating to collisions with derelicts or icebergs; or to loss or damage in fog or through stress of weather.

Mariners upon water-logged ships in mid-ocean are frequently compelled to endure terrible suffering, sometimes ending in a horrible death. At the commencement of the Victorian half-century, the *Caledonian* encountering the full force of a hurricane, became water-logged and unmanageable. Her crew remained for thirteen days on the wreck, subsisting on the dead bodies of their shipmates. Cabins and provisions were under water. The Russian ship *Dydden* rescued the survivors from their perilous position just as they were about to satisfy the cravings of thirst with the blood of the cabin boy, whom they had resolved to slay. Extraordinary heroism was evinced by the mate of the Russian ship. Single-handed, that brave man rescued the stricken seamen during bad weather in a small boat at the imminent risk of his own life. A ship named the *British Gratitude* was subscribed for by British merchants and presented to that officer, in order that his action might live in the memory of his countrymen.

Five years ago we were seated in the saloon of the *Annie Johnston*, a graceful iron-built barque belonging to San Francisco, U.S., as she lay in one of the Liverpool docks. Commenting upon the fact that America owned very few iron ships, the captain stated that this vessel originally belonged to Liverpool owners, and was then the *Ada Iredale*. She was abandoned in flames, owing to the spontaneous combustion of her coal cargo, on the 15th

of October 1876, in fourteen degrees south latitude, one hundred and eight degrees west longitude, or about nineteen hundred miles from the Marquesas Islands, which her crew reached in open boats, after twenty-five days, with the loss of only one man. The burning derelict drifted westward to Tahiti, a distance of over two thousand four hundred miles, and was towed into port by a French war-ship on the 9th of June 1877, nearly eight months after her abandonment. Her coal cargo continued burning till May 1878, when she was repaired, renamed, and placed under the stars and stripes.

The *Oriflamme* was abandoned under similar circumstances in June 1881, in eighteen degrees south latitude, ninety-three degrees west longitude. Four months later, she was passed about two thousand miles farther westward; and in February 1882, her iron hull drifted ashore on the island of Raroia, one of the Low Archipelago, and was visited by natives, who brought away her bell, on which was engraved '*Oriflamme*, 1865.' She subsequently sank in deep water, after drifting over two thousand eight hundred miles in eight months.

We were in Algoa Bay in 1864, when a large iron ship, apparently not under control, was seen standing in for the anchorage. If we remember rightly, she proved to be a prematurely abandoned vessel, laden with a valuable cargo of jute. Slight repairs were effected, another crew obtained, and she arrived safely home, after having drifted derelict for several months.

As a rule, drifting derelicts are wooden-built vessels, as the oldest iron ships are not yet sufficiently ancient for the timber trade. Sir T. Brassey, in his yacht *Sunbeam*, passed the abandoned *Carolina* when three hundred and fifty miles west of Ushant. She was between two and three hundred tons' burden, her masts snapped short off, and laden with port wine and cork. It was with difficulty that his boat's crew could be restrained from bringing away some of the wine. Barque *Ulster*, abandoned in February 1880, was sighted by many vessels; and about twelve months after she came ashore on the islands to the north of Scotland, where her cargo of timber was salvaged. Barque *Laboramus* was derelict from May to October of the same year, and was finally towed into Vigo. The *Agenoria* was passed derelict off the west coast of Ireland in July 1846, and in September off Cape Wrath. She drifted ashore at Hartlepool in December, and forms an interesting example of the set of the waters round the northern shores of Scotland from the Atlantic into the German Ocean.

One of the most remarkable derelicts in the North Atlantic was the schooner *Twenty-one Friends*. She was observed in March 1885, about one hundred and sixty miles from Chesapeake Bay; and four months later was two thousand miles east-north-east of the position where she was abandoned. Thence she drifted towards the north coast of Spain, and was last seen in the vicinity of Cape Finisterre. She had been reported by no fewer than twenty-two vessels at intervals more or less widely separated. How many have to congratulate themselves on unwittingly giving her a wide berth? The Gulf Stream bore her right across the Atlantic in about eight months. Some such ship might easily have given

rise to the old sailors' superstition with respect to the 'Flying Dutchman,' doomed to be continually met with off the Cape of Good Hope. The schooner *Monantico* was abandoned in December 1886, in thirty-nine degrees north latitude, seventy-two degrees west longitude; and was last met with in the following July in twenty-eight degrees north latitude, thirty-five degrees west longitude. The schooner *Ida Francis* was abandoned in seventeen degrees north latitude, sixty-five degrees west longitude, in March 1886, and drifted, by zigzag courses, on to the north shore of the island of Abaco, nearly ten months later. The Barque *Vincenzo Perrotta*, derelict in September 1887, in thirty-six degrees north latitude, fifty-four degrees west longitude, was passed, looking as fresh as ever, on 23d February last, about twenty-three miles from Watling's Island. The American ship *John T. Berry*, bound from Philadelphia to Japan with a cargo of petroleum, caught fire, and was abandoned on 9th January, last year, in thirty-four degrees south latitude, one hundred and sixty-four degrees east longitude; and in June was discovered bottom up about seven miles from Newcastle, N.S.W. Her anchors had fallen out, and held her right in the track of shipping making this antipodean coal-port. A glance at the charts showing the prevailing ocean currents in the vicinity leads us to infer that the burning, or burnt-out, wreck drifted outside of New Zealand, and thence to the Australian coast. The above-mentioned derelicts have happened to get into the large ocean currents, and aided by favourable breezes, have made some remarkable drifts. Other ships that have been left derelict in parts of the ocean where winds and currents are variable and of little strength, have been known to remain almost stationary for months. Barque *Stormy Petrel*, most appropriate name, was abandoned in December 1886, in forty-seven degrees north latitude, ten degrees west longitude, directly in the track of vessels bound to and from Gibraltar. There she remained a menace to mariners for exactly six months, having drifted during the whole period about six degrees to the northward. Barque *Rowland Hill* was drifting in February 1886 in forty-two degrees north latitude, fifty-two degrees west longitude; and in the following November was still close to the same spot.

The *W. L. White*, a wooden, three-mast, timber-laden schooner, built in 1884, has just terminated her remarkable cruise. During the awful American blizzard of 13th March 1888 she was abandoned, water-logged, about eighty miles from New York, U.S. The genial Gulf Stream and westerly winds drifted this derelict right across the Atlantic, and on the 23d of last January she brought up to her trailing anchors on the north-west coast of Scotland, near Haskeir Island, one of the rocky Hebrides. From the beginning of May till the end of October she drifted aimlessly about in and out of the Gulf Stream and the Labrador currents, setting north-east and south-west respectively. During this long interval she was reported by no fewer than thirty-six ships, three of which sighted her in one day. In her cruise of ten months and ten days she traversed a distance of more than five thousand miles, was reported forty-five times, and it is impossible to estimate how many more vessels unknowingly

passed her at night and in foggy weather. We are indebted to the admirable charts issued by the Hydrographer of the United States Navy for a complete history of the *W. L. White*. Last January, two large ships collided with derelicts while under full sail, and received serious damage, so that the importance of this subject cannot be over-estimated.

In ancient times, under the Rhodian law, both stranded ship and cargo became the property of the owner of the seashore whereon she had drifted. There were no underwriters or Lloyd's agents in those days. Now, salvors and others interested participate in the profits according to agreement or decision of a law-court.

Derelicts have ere now proved useful to the writer of fiction. Wilkie Collins in *Armada* has drawn a weird word-picture of a derelict timber ship that makes us shudder as we read. Occasionally, the crew set fire to their ship before quitting her; but this is seldom done, lest evil tongues should assert that she was purposely destroyed for the sake of the insurance. It would, however, be a good thing, on falling in with a derelict in fine weather, if shipmasters would set fire to such a drifting danger. Men-of-war could have good torpedo practice with them, as one had not long since. As we write, the U.S. warship *Yantic* has been ordered to set sail in order to destroy the *Vincenzo Perrotta*, mentioned above.

Those who live at home at ease may wonder how it is that a derelict ship can keep afloat so long; and seeing that they keep afloat, as shown above, why they ever were abandoned. They keep afloat because their cargo happens to be of a buoyant nature, as in the case of timber-laden vessels; and they are abandoned because, even if new ships, once water-logged they are unmanageable, in danger of capsizing, no food can be got at from below, and when heavy weather comes, all hands have to betake themselves to the tops, as the seas break completely over the wrecks, which lie like logs upon the heaving waters. Seamen in derelicts have often had to dive in the cabins for scraps of food. They hold together so long because the ships are stoutly built, though too old in many instances to carry perishable cargoes.

OGILVIE WHITTLECHURCH.

CHAPTER II.

OGILVIE proposed to make his first halt at Queensferry, where, at the time of which we write, that immense and almost superhuman work of engineering, the Forth Bridge, was just being begun. He arrived there about noon. As yet the operations had not advanced beyond the merest preliminaries; but these alone were on so vast a scale, that the imagination recoiled from the task of estimating the amount of time, labour, skill, and capital it would take to bring this gigantic undertaking to a successful termination. A huge iron caisson, destined to form the base of a column, had been completed, and was to be launched that afternoon, and he determined to wait and see the operation.

No one in good health takes a long country walk without feeling hungry; and Ogilvie, who had been indulging in sharp pedestrian exercise for about three hours in bracing air, was simply

ravenous. His knapsack held a small store of cold provisions, but that was only for emergencies. At present, a little inn, near at hand, seemed to offer the prospect of a much more substantial lunch, and thither accordingly he repaired.

In answer to his inquiries, the landlord informed him that the parlour was engaged, but that whatever he pleased to order could be served him in the taproom.

'No, no!' interposed a young man, who at that moment emerged from behind a glass door leading to the parlour in question, and who had evidently overheard the conversation in the taproom. 'There's lots of room in there, Forward, and this place will be chokeful of workmen in a few minutes. Come in, and let me introduce you to my mother and sister.' The speaker was a young officer of the mercantile marine, named Rimington, whom Ogilvie had often met at Leith, where he had been staying to go through a course of drill, in his capacity of sub-lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve, on board the gunboat stationed there.

Gladly accepting his invitation, Ogilvie followed him into the parlour, where he was duly presented to the two ladies. The elder of these, Mrs Rimington, was a widow. Her husband had been lost at sea not many years after they were married, and this, doubtless, had something to do with the subdued and rather sad look which her face so often wore. There was something very kind and winning about the look, notwithstanding its sadness—something that had the effect of making one feel at home in her presence from the very first—that seemed to say to Ogilvie: 'You are my son's friend, so of course you are mine also, and I hope that you will consider me yours.'

Her daughter, Miss Rimington, was a delicately lovely girl of about eighteen summers, of a type of beauty rather Spanish than English. Neither in her manners nor conversation, however, was there discernible the slightest trace of that languid deliberation, sometimes natural to, and sometimes affected by brunettes. On the contrary, she was in every respect like any other pretty healthy English girl of her age. She seemed also to have inherited from her mother the gift of being able to put people at ease in her presence.

'I suppose,' said Mrs Rimington, 'that you are like us, Mr Forward, very nearly leaving the neighbourhood without having seen the Forth Bridge?'

'Oh, well, mother,' put in her son, 'you know they say that there's many a Roman shopkeeper who lives and dies without seeing the Colosseum; and then we have come at last.'

'Are you on a walking tour?' asked Miss Rimington of Ogilvie, as he unstrapped his knapsack.

'Only a very slipshod sort of a one, I am afraid, Miss Rimington,' he replied. 'I shall never walk farther than I feel inclined; and if at any time I want to avail myself of the coach, I most certainly shall do so.'

'I was thinking of going for a tramp myself,' said Rimington; 'but I shan't have time.'

'Isn't it a shame, Mr Forward?' said his sister. 'George has only just finished drilling on board that horrid little gunboat, and to-morrow he will have to go to Glasgow to join his ship.'

'It does indeed seem hard,' sighed Mrs Rimington, glancing fondly at her son. 'He hasn't been six weeks in England; and if Mary and I hadn't come up here, we should hardly have seen him at all.'

'Nonsense, mother,' laughed Rimington. 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good; and if I hadn't been qualifying to serve my Queen and country on board the gunboat, we should have all stayed vegetating down at Whitby, and then you and Mary would never have seen Edinburgh.'

'Do you live at Whitby, Mrs Rimington?' asked Ogilvie. 'My father has just taken a house there, in North Crescent. I hope we are neighbours?'

'In North Crescent! Oh yes, we are neighbours, and very near ones too. We live just at the end of North Crescent, at Rose Cottage. I hope we shall prove good neighbours, and that we shall see you there.'

'Well, I had no idea that you were a Whitbyite, Forward,' said Rimington. 'Why, I believe that the world grows smaller every day. I never thought very much of our planet after my first voyage to Australia; but lately I've positively got to despise it.—Hullo! here comes lunch at last. Hadn't we better set to work? It would never do to be late for the launch.'

When they went out after lunch, the last preparations were being made round the caisson. Rimington, as became his profession, was chiefly interested in the actual launching arrangements; so was his mother. So, while these two were inspecting sluices and chocks, rollers and tackles, and the rest of the attendant paraphernalia, Ogilvie, as an engineer, was able to explain to Miss Rimington the construction and use of the caisson itself. And so interested and attentive did he find his pupil, that he went on to instruct her in the principles of the 'cantilever' system of bridge-construction, demonstrating its advantages and picking out its weak points most impartially. The conversation, however, was disturbed soon afterwards by the very event which they had come to see—the launch of the caisson. Everything worked perfectly; and in a few minutes, amidst the hurrahs of the workmen, the great machine was quietly floating in the firth, ready to be towed off to its position, and sunk.

Having taken leave of the Rimingtons, who were going back to Edinburgh, Ogilvie crossed the Forth by the ferry-boat, and, pipe in mouth, resumed his tramp. When a man smokes, he meditates; it's a law of nature. If his tobacco be ordinary, his meditations have a tendency to be practical; if good, they are more inclined to be abstract and philosophical. Now, Ogilvie's tobacco was good, and before he had walked a mile, he had satisfactorily established the hypothesis, that the pleasantest people are always those whom one meets unexpectedly; but then he was not thinking of Miller.

CHAPTER III.

'Keep her as she goes, Mr Rimington, and get a small pull of the weather-braces if the wind draws aft. If it draws aft much, you can set studding-sails.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' replied Rimington, second mate

of the *Maharanee* clipper, and who was then on watch.

'But if we only have a little luck, we'll be first ship home; I'd bet a year's pay on it,' said the skipper as he went down to his cabin by the after-hatchway after giving the above directions.

They had just caught the south-east trade, after rounding the Cape, homeward-bound from China, with tea and one passenger; and, as the captain had said, it seemed by no means unlikely that they would be the first of that year's tea-ships—not steamers, of course—to take the pilot on board in English waters. But everything depended on crossing the line. If they were lucky enough to get a puff to carry them across the 'Doldrums,' it was a certainty. If not—well, they must hope that the others would suffer the same delay.

Rimington paced the poop, pipe in mouth, occasionally giving a critical glance at the main-royal, and longing to get that little pull of the weather-braces; but each time that he looked, the shaking of the weather-leech told him plainly that nothing must be touched. It was two bells (nine o'clock), and his watch would be over at midnight. But he was not particularly anxious for that. There was no great hardship in pacing the poop and smoking his pipe in the soft moonlight; while the balmy air, set in gentle motion by the southern trade, fanned his cheek and filled the sails; and the ship, just heeling to its tender caress, except for an occasional gurgle under the bows, slipped noiselessly through the water.

Presently he was joined by the passenger, Mr Parkins. The latter was a man with whom things had gone well. He had originally gone out to China to take up a post in the Customs, then, as now, chiefly administered by Europeans. His duties, however, were not so arduous but that he was able to carry on a certain amount of business on his own account. The Flowery Land at that time presented a grand field for an enterprising man; and by unflagging diligence, aided by a few lucky speculations and a natural aptitude for business, he found himself in a few years, and while still quite young, one of the richest tea-merchants in Shanghai. He had resigned his Customs appointment some time ago, and was now going to revisit his native country. He had intended to take a berth on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's splendid steamships; but chancing to light on his old schoolfellow and chum, Rimington, serving on board the *Maharanee*, he had changed his mind and taken passage in her instead.

The two friends continued for some time to walk about in silence; then Parkins said: 'It's a strange chance that has brought us together, old chap. I suppose that if I had been asked, there is no one in the world whom I should have said that I thought I was less likely to meet walking along the jetty at Shanghai than yourself. You never used to talk about going to sea.'

'No; I never had any intention of doing so; in fact, when we knew each other, I don't think we either of us troubled much about professions. On the whole, I'm not sorry that things have turned out as they have. A sailor's life is a hard one; but there are a good many worse; and if you don't stop my heaven-born right to growl

at anything and everything I have to do, I can jog along very happily. Every one can't be a Cræsus like you.'

'No; I suppose not. Certainly, I have been very lucky. It would be interesting to know what has happened to all the other Olswick fellows.—By the way, there is one especially I want to speak to you about. Do you remember a little chap called Whittlechurch, who was expelled? Wasn't his Christian name Ogilvie?'

'Yes; it was.—What about him?'

'Well, it's rather a long story, and a very curious one.—Wait a minute till I get a light.'

'Right you are,' said Rimington; 'and meanwhile I'll get the yards in a bit.—Watch, round in! Weather-braces! Come along there; shake up, shake up!'

For a few moments the watch could be seen moving about the deck in obedience to the order, while the blocks creaked and the yards were trimmed. Then all was quiet again.

'Finished, old chap?'

'Yes.—Now, let's have your yarn.'

'Most of my property,' said Parkins, 'as you know, is some way in the interior; and last tea-harvest I went to inspect some improvements which I had had made on one of my estates, up the Chongokiag. I reached the place by a little steam-launch, without any misadventure; but when we started to come back, we found that one of the cylinders was out of order and could not be used. I didn't care to take a passage down in a junk, so there was nothing for it but to wait. The engineer said he should be about three days repairing the damage; and for want of a better way to spend the time, I decided to visit Wangtsing, the capital of the province and the seat of government. I found it the most thoroughly Chinese place that I had ever seen. Not a single mission has managed to build a church there, and I don't suppose that there are half-a-dozen Europeans in the whole place. It so happened that I arrived at a very opportune time: the whole town was *en fête*, and a long procession was being formed to meet and welcome the governor's army, which was returning victorious from an expedition against some pirates, and was expected back that evening. I had heard something about these pirates at Shanghai, and knew that the expedition was the result of several very urgent remonstrances made by the Western ambassadors to the government at Peking; and I was heartily glad to hear that it had been successful.'

'I heard of them too,' said Rimington. 'But I fail to see the connection between a nest of Chinese pirates and our old schoolfellow, Ogilvie Whittlechurch.—What are you doing with the helm down there? Keep her away, man, can't you? Give her the helm! You'll have the ship aback in a minute.—Who is that at the wheel?—Miller?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Let me recommend you to keep your eyes open, then.'

'He's a good enough seaman, as a rule,' explained Rimington; 'but they all go to sleep on a calm night, if you don't look out.—However, to continue your yarn. I had just said that I didn't see what the pirates could possibly

have to do with Ogilvie Whittlechurch, or Ogilvie Whittlechurch with the pirates.'

'Wait a minute, old fellow; I am just coming to it.'

'Well, that evening, sure enough, the army did come back, and with such a beating of drums and waving of banners as you never saw in all your life. A Chinese soldier is a rare hand at that sort of thing, if at nothing else. Then there was a whole wagon-load of heads; and two of the pirates' prisoners whom they had rescued, and who were carried in litters. One of these litters contained an old Chinese merchant who had been captured on board one of his own junks, and who, except for a good fright, was very little the worse for what he had gone through. The other, an Englishman, was Ogilvie Whittlechurch's father.'

'Whew! How did you find out that?'

'From the man's own mouth. The governor sent me a message that a fellow-countryman was dying at the palace, and would like to see me. I found the poor fellow worn down to a shadow with fever, and obviously at his last gasp. He seemed to have something on his mind that he wished to tell me; but it was perfectly awful to listen to him trying to speak while his voice came and went spasmodically—interrupted every minute by terrible fits of coughing. The gist of what he said was this: His name was John Whittlechurch. When he was young, he had been a bad lot—a drunkard, by what I could make out; then he emigrated to America, leaving his wife and her baby in England. For a long time he seems to have got on no better in the new country than he did in the old; but a few years ago he had a stroke of luck at the diggings, and became a millionaire. He then started to come home, westward, to try to find his wife and child; but the ship was wrecked in the China seas, and all who escaped the waves were captured by the pirates. Before leaving America, however, he had taken the precaution to make a will which he left with his solicitors at Sacramento. In it he left everything to his wife, to go to his son Ogilvie at her death. In case neither should be found, everything was left to a certain Pedro Bersaño, who seems to have been a sort of banker at the diggings, and who on this condition had advanced him money to carry on digging his claim.'

'What usury! I suppose the fellow is a thorough scoundrel.'

'I shouldn't wonder—anyway, he seems either to have done fairly well out there, or else to have made the place too hot to hold him; for he has gone to London, so the dying man told me. His present address is "The Californian Club," near Leicester Square.'

'Humph! I'll bet he's a rascal.—But wait half a minute, old chap;' and so saying, he walked to the compass—the ship was two points off her course. This was too much for Rimington's patience, and he told the helmsman so in no very gentle language; threatening, if he had again to find fault with him during the watch, to give him an extra trick to practise in. Having thus given vent to his indignation, he returned to where his friend was standing and resumed the conversation.

'Did he give you no details by which to trace his wife and son?'

'No. I think that he wanted to; but his strength was quite used up in telling me as much as he did, and he died in my arms not an hour after I had come in.'

'But how do you know that the Whittlechurch we were at school with is the man you want?'

'I can't be certain, of course; but Whittlechurch is such an uncommon name, and so is Ogilvie as a Christian name, that I hardly think there can be two. Besides, the age seems about right.'

'Well, there should be no difficulty in finding him. We can trace him from the school. And then, even if he is not the man himself, he must surely be a cousin. I suppose you told the lawyers all you knew?'

'Yes; and they send me a telegram to say that they were employing a detective in London to make inquiries.'

'Well, I wish a relative of mine would die a millionaire and make me his heir.—And now, I think I'll try how the topmost studding-sail stands.—No; I won't, though; it's just eight bells. The other watch can do it when they muster.'

THE LAW OF DISTRESS IN FRANCE.

THE state of agriculture in France was last season very bad, and quite disastrous in the La Rochelle district. According to a Report by Mr Warburton to our own Foreign Office, nothing that Great Britain has suffered can 'compare with the depth of the depression which exists there.' As has been the case in this country, the landlords in France are helping their tenants by allowing time for payment of rents and by making large reductions. That they are right in this is certain; but few persons are aware of the very great powers a landlord in our neighbouring country has by which he can enforce his claims; and that he does not use his 'giant's power' is most creditable.

It appears that every tenant is bound to pay his half-year's rent the day it becomes due. If the tenant holds his farm under a lease or other agreement in writing made before a notary public, and does not pay his rent on the day it falls due, his landlord sends him by a *huissier*, or bailiff, what is called a *commandement*, which is a notice ordering him to pay at once under pain of a seizure. The law gives him twenty-four hours to obey this order, and then, if he has not paid, the bailiff, without any decree or process from a legal court, takes possession of everything in the place, farming-stock, implements, crops, furniture, money, or anything else he may find—all goes to satisfy the claim for rent, to the exclusion of every other debt. From this moment all the property is in charge of the legal authorities, and it is a criminal offence to interfere with it. Next, the bailiff makes an inventory of it, and fixes a day for the sale, which must not be sooner than eight days off, and posts up on the nearest market-place a copy of this inventory, with the notice and date of the sale. In the interval between this and the seizure the landlord is entitled to the use of the farming implements and stock for carrying on the farm-work, and the judge is applied to and names a manager to conduct the farming operations for

him. In due time the sale takes place, and the landlord is paid his rent and costs out of the proceeds.

But the tenant's liability does not end here: the law provides that the failure of the tenant to fulfil his part of the contract is a ground for terminating the tenancy, and that, moreover, he is bound to compensate the landlord for the trouble and annoyance he has put him to. The case then comes before the *juge de paix*, who cancels the lease or agreement, and proceeds to consider what loss the owner is likely to suffer from delay and difficulty in reletting his land or other causes, and condemns the tenant to pay damages accordingly. Thus, within a fortnight from the time the rent became due, the owner can have recovered rent, costs, and damages, as well as possession of his property.

It was mentioned that the landlord has a preferential claim on everything there may be at the farm, and can seize it for rent due, and the question which naturally occurs here is, can a dishonest or disorderly tenant successfully evade a seizure? There are two ways in which this is attempted: one is by making away with the property; and the other by resisting and obstructing the officer who carries out the seizure. But the French law makes both processes very difficult. In the first case, it provides that if the landlord has reason to think that his tenant will make use of the twenty-four hours' law given him between the order to pay and the putting in of the execution, to make away with anything, this interval may be suppressed on application to the justice, who thereupon gives an order to seize at once. And if, when this has been done, it appears that the tenant has already removed anything, and placed it in charge of a third party elsewhere, or if he has sold it to him, the judge gives an order to follow it wherever it may be, seize it, and replace it on the farm. If it has been disposed of, even by *bonâ fide* sale, within forty days previous to the seizure, the sale is invalid, and the article is taken away from the purchaser, who loses his money, and has no remedy except by a civil action against the seller at some future time. Both these orders by the *juge de paix* are what is called 'orders of urgency,' and differ from others inasmuch as they can be executed instantly, and at any time, even on non-legal days, such as Sundays and holidays.

In the second case of resisting or obstructing the officer, if the bailiff is prevented from going into the house or farm, he simply places a person to watch while he goes to the nearest justice, mayor, or *commissaire de police*, who comes down at once, forces an entry, and puts him in possession. If he is assaulted or intimidated, the punishment is very severe, and in an assault case is measured according to the number of persons engaged in it. If no more than three persons are concerned, the law assumes that it may not have been premeditated, and the punishment is six months' imprisonment. Over three and up to twenty, it is more serious, and two years is the term that can be given: this by the Court of Correctional Police, without a jury. But if the number exceeds twenty, it is considered 'rebellion,' and is punishable by *travaux forcés* (penal servitude in the convict settlements); and here the trial is before a jury, with a change of venue

to another part of France if the Minister of Justice thinks that prejudice exists which might affect the impartiality of the jurors in the locality.

In case of other agreements, such as verbal ones, the legal process is the same, except that the landlord, instead of putting in an execution without a special writ or order of court, goes in the first instance to the *juge de paix* for an order to seize. Mr Warburton well says that 'this is how property rights are enforced in this republican country, and it goes a long way towards explaining what is sometimes described as the "craving for land" which exists in France, especially amongst the poorer classes, and why they are always ready to put their hard-earned savings into it at a rate of purchase which often gives them only one and a half or two per cent. interest, as is done by persons in the position of domestic servants, who continue to remain in service and let to a tenant. It is, however, much less a craving for land than for a perfectly safe investment, which, though it may pay badly, they can manage as they think best, and are certain no one will ever be allowed to take from them.'

MY ESCAPE FROM THE JHANSI MASSACRE.

MANY as were the 'hairbreadth 'scapes' from massacre during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58, there are few which surpass the closeness of the shave I then had for my life. I had been a sergeant in the Bengal Horse Artillery, than which, I believe, a better corps never existed. I was then an overseer of Public Works at Jhansi, in Central India. I rode like a centaur; and if there was a thing I loved, it was riding a horse that was a good jumper. Such a one I luckily had then, or I should not be alive to tell this tale.

Though the first outbreak of the Mutiny at Meerut came like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky, so utterly unexpected was it by the Europeans, yet, after that first explosion, all who had eyes to see perceived that other local outbreaks were only a matter of time and detail. So it was at Jhansi, which was garrisoned by a regiment of native infantry. All, except the infatuated officers of that regiment, knew that the soldiers were only awaiting news of some further success to their cause to join their brothers-in-arms. The officers persuaded themselves that their regiment at least was loyal, and lived in misplaced confidence. I was a young bachelor, and therefore less anxious than I should have been if I had had a family to look after and save. I could not, of course, go away, because my duty required my presence in Jhansi; and day by day, as rumours of more and more extensive defections reached our ears, I saw more clearly that when mutiny broke out at Jhansi, it would be difficult indeed for the few Europeans to escape to any of those strongholds, few and far between, where the presence of European troops gave Europeans a chance of present safety, and a base for future struggles for supremacy with the mutinous natives. Jhansi was surrounded with disaffection and far from help.

It was a bright morning in June. After finishing a few eggs and toast, which with coffee makes the Indian *chota hazree* (small breakfast), I

started on horseback on my daily tour of inspecting the buildings under construction or repair. I had a hunting-whip in my hand, and a few rupees in my pocket. It was very early. I just barely noticed that my servants (in India they are all men) were grouped together as I left the gate, instead of being at work; and that unusual silence and quiet reigned in the bazaar or line of shops through which I passed. The bugles had sounded for morning parade before I started from home; and the native infantry regiment was already at its drill as I passed the parade ground. I soon met my superior officer, the executive engineer, received his orders for the day, and went about my work. Very few of the workmen had put in an appearance, and even these were not at work, but seemed evidently to be expecting some event. On my urging them to work, they grinned in silence, and then began handling their tools, but very listlessly. My duty had taken me far away from the parade ground, and, luckily for myself, into quite the opposite part of the Station, as we call the garrison towns in India.

I heard a roll of musketry-firing; but that was no unusual sound in a military station, nor alarming to a military man: it did not at all attract my attention. But that roll was followed up by a succession of solitary shots at irregular intervals; and these, I knew, formed no possible part of the evolutions of a regiment at drill. My heart stood still for a moment. The long anticipated time had come: the men had mutinied, and were shooting their European officers. Just then, a mounted officer rushed by me, urging his horse to racing speed; and as he passed, he called on me to flee for my life. Away we went; and he told me nearly every officer had been killed, some by the first volley, and others by the dropping fire. We galloped on along the road, not recking whither. Suddenly, some soldiers appeared at a distance and pointed their muskets at us. To pass them was impossible. We turned sharp to one side, and put our horses to the low wall and fence that edged the road. My horse rose and cleared it in splendid style; but the officer's heavier charger fell with him. I dismounted to help him; but he lay stunned and unconscious. The bullets of the soldiers were falling around us. I could do him no good, and to linger was but to lose my own life too. I mounted again, and continued my flight, clearing every hedge, fence, and ditch on my way across country. Many a shot was fired at me; but luckily neither I nor my horse was hit. In a few minutes I was out of sight of my pursuers, and safe for the moment.

I checked my horse, to gain him time to breathe, and myself to reflect on what I should do. I found that I was near the road that led to Gwalior, and not far from some brick-fields which were under my supervision. Of course I knew the men engaged there. It was a question whether they would or would not turn against me. But I trusted to my popularity with them for one thing; and for another, to the swiftness of my horse. It was indeed necessary for me to seek some shelter for the day; for a summer sun in India very rapidly becomes too hot for European comfort or safety. My only chance was to continue my flight at night; I therefore rode into the brick-fields. I found but five men at

work; they had all heard the firing, had guessed what it meant, and the others had gone to hear and see what had resulted. My men expressed their joy to see me unhurt; and urged me to take refuge with them for a while and to continue my flight afterwards. I dismounted, therefore, and was taken into one of their huts. Then we all sat down and discussed the situation.

'No one,' they said, 'will come to look for Europeans in our huts, for we are too poor and miserable to be thought of, or suspected of harbouring you. But your horse will betray us; for if he is seen about here, they will, of course, search the huts.'

'Besides,' said another, 'you cannot expect to escape on horseback, for, under existing circumstances, that would be too conspicuous a mode of travelling, especially with English saddle and bridle.'

'Your only chance, sir,' said a third, 'is to travel by night and on foot, in order to get to Gwalior unobserved.'

I told them I was entirely in their hands, and that I trusted to their goodness for my chance of escape. Even with the sense of the imminent danger in which I was placed, I had time to observe with satisfaction their simple gratitude for the little—indeed nothing more than justice and some kindness of manner and word—that I had done for them.

'You have been good to us,' they said; 'you have been our father and our mother [*mai-bap*]; and we will do all we can for you.'

And they did a great deal. For five days I lay hid in their huts; for the native soldiers or sepoy had scattered themselves over the country, pursuing the few Europeans who had escaped the massacre at Jhansi. Every one of them except myself fell into their hands during this savage hunt, and was ruthlessly murdered in cold blood. The hunters returned to Jhansi; but many were still about, patrolling the countryside, to pick up any straggling European wending his way from some scene of massacre towards the few stations where European life was still safe.

The bricklayers first gave a smear here and there with clay to my horse and his saddle, trailed his bridle on the ground, and turning his face homeward, gave him a good cut of the whip. He went off; and I never saw him again. They left me alone in the hut and went about their own affairs, as if nothing unusual had occurred. Unleavened cakes (the well-known *chapatties*, or wheat-cakes) and milk was all that they could get for me—their own food; because to have sought for better fare would have excited suspicion. On the evening of the fifth day they told me I had better start, as the sepoy had returned from their hunt. They got some berries, and with their juice they rubbed my face and body and hair, and changed my rather florid complexion into one of genuine dusky Indian hue. A suit of rough workman's clothes—trousers and short shirt—were put on me; a turban was tied on my head; a *chuddur* (sheet or mantle) of cotton was thrown over my shoulders; and my stockings and boots were replaced by a pair of old native shoes. They refused my offer of the few rupees I had about me; but tying them in a rag, they tucked them

into my waistband. After dusk, they conducted me a couple of miles on the Gwalior road and bade me farewell.

I have often heard Europeans say that there is no word in the Indian language for 'gratitude.' I do not know. Those poor bricklayers at any rate showed me that the thing itself is not altogether absent from Indian hearts.

How can I express the sense of utter loneliness which I felt when they had left me! About seventy miles of a good straight road lay between me and the friendly haven of Sindhia's camp at Gwalior, for which I was bound. But I knew that not a friendly soul lived between. I could trust no one on the way. I must avoid all contact with the natives, lie hid by day and travel by night, seek food and water by stealth, and carry my life in my hand—the sole European wandering over miles upon miles of hostile ground. Under ordinary circumstances, I could easily have done the journey in four days. But unaccustomed to the peculiar Hindustani shoes which I now wore, I could not do my best. What creatures of habit we are, to be sure! I found that my progress was not rapid, and blisters very soon began to burn on my feet for want of stockings. I had not done ten miles, when the dawn appeared, and I began to look out for a hiding-place. I went off the road and climbed into a large widespread tree, and was well hidden in its leafy branches. From this lofty perch I scanned the country round; and, to my great delight, I saw a small pool of water not far off. I was feeling very thirsty; but still I was obliged to wait patiently in my friendly tree for many a long hour, because, with the dawn, travellers came up who had begun their journey early, taking advantage of the cool of the morning to reach their first halting-place, for their mid-day meal, before the sun became too hot.

It was nearly noon, when seeing the road quite clear of enemies—for such to me were all who passed—I slipped from my tree and hastened to the pool. Under other circumstances, I would not have touched such water with my fingers; for it was a pond frequented by cattle, and consequently none of the purest or cleanest. But now! I was agonising with thirst; and it was a pleasure not easily understood by those who have never undergone such an ordeal to find the all-necessary water near at hand, no matter in what state. The forethought of my friendly bricklayers had provided me with several wheat-cakes, enough to satisfy the wants of nature for a few days. At the edge of that pool, under the blazing sun, I ate a few of my cakes, and drank of the filthy water, which yet seemed nectar to my parched mouth. Then I hastened back to my tree.

Late in the evening, when the short tropical twilight had been extinguished in the darkness of night, I descended, and went forward again on my solitary way. My feet were all the worse for my first day's journey, and I had had no sleep in that time. My progress was proportionately slower. The dawn saw me hardly eight miles from my starting-place. A ruined edifice some distance off the road was my shelter on this day; and in the area enclosed by its dilapidated garden wall I found a well, and luckily an old bucket and

half-rotten rope lay near it. Again I ate of my cakes, and I drank of the well water, and was able to have a good sound sleep in the friendly shelter of the ruin. Tired in body and wearied in mind, I slept long indeed, and night had already fallen when I awoke. After more food and drink, I started again, much refreshed with my rest. I travelled again all night; and in spite of my sore feet, I forced myself on, and made good progress. But the next morning found me in a sad predicament. I could see no cover or shelter of any kind, except a small clump of tall trees in the far distance ahead. I made for it, but with a heavy heart, for I knew that it indicated the roadside well where travellers rest for their mid-day meal. Such I found it to be. Still I could do nothing else; there was no other place to rest in. Perhaps also my success so far had emboldened me to a little negligence. I went up to the well, had another feed on the last of my wheat-cakes, and a hearty drink from the well. I then retired to the furthest of the trees, and lay down at full length on the ground, covering myself all over with my *chuddur*. This was rehearsing what I intended to do when travellers came up, for thus the natives are accustomed to take their short mid-day rest. At first the coast was clear, and I could lie at ease, with my head uncovered: I dared not trust myself to sleep. Very soon, however, travellers began to pass along the road, and many looked curiously at the lazy man who had either overslept himself till too late in the morning, or was beginning to sleep too long before noon. They were, however, too intent on their own journey to mind me much, and they went on; it was not from them I expected trouble.

The crucial time came as noon approached. The blazing sun shone in full glory and heat. Travellers began to drop in at the well. I covered myself—head and all—with my mantle, pretending to be asleep, but carefully noticing every arrival. Among them, to my horror, I saw two sepoys armed with swords. They in due course began their meal, chatting freely; and I lay quite still, hoping that, after food and rest, they would proceed on their way, leaving me once more at liberty to resume my journey. Unluckily, the sun had begun to beat upon me; yet I dared not move. The mere fact of my lying thus still and immovable made them suspect I was a corpse.

'Perhaps he has been poisoned,' said one.—'Or died of a snake-bite during the night; those cobras are so deadly,' said another.—'He may have money on him,' suggested a third.—'He evidently does not hear us,' said a fourth; 'let us go and see how matters stand.'

Slowly two of them approached me, shook my shoulder, and at length gently raised the *chuddur* from my face. At the first glance, they sprang back, shouting the word 'Faranghi!' (European). I jumped to my feet; and in a moment I was surrounded by the entire group, including the two sepoys, with their swords now drawn.

At first I felt quite dazed, for I could not comprehend what had so suddenly betrayed me. But on their pointing to my face, and one of them producing a small pocket mirror (such as native dandies often carry about), I looked in the glass and saw a strange sight. While my blue eyes

showed that I could not be a native, I had also, while drinking, washed off the berry juice from my lips and part of my face, disclosing portions of a white skin, which convicted me of being a European indeed. It was useless to struggle or resist; the band was too numerous, and two had swords. They seized me at once, and dragged me nearer the well, and my hands were tied behind my back with the bucket rope. Some were for killing me at once. But the two sepoys, greatly extolling their own prowess in having made me a prisoner, said that I belonged to them, and that they would take me on to Jhansi, where a reward was offered for every European brought in. As they were armed, no one disputed their argument, and I was left to them.

After a while, I was told by them to walk on between them. I did so, for resistance under the circumstances would have been madness; nor was I without hope that some unforeseen chance might yet enable me to escape. They were now, after all, only two to one, because, to avoid sharing their expected reward, they would not allow the others to travel with them. After having walked several miles back towards Jhansi without offering any resistance or making any remark, I saw with delight that they became less suspicious and observant of me and my doings. I gradually and cautiously tried the rope that bound my wrists. Luckily, it had not been knotted with the skill of a Jack-tar; and I found after a little working that I could easily free my hands. I was far too cautious to do so at once, however; I was determined to wait for a favourable chance.

That chance came much sooner than I had expected. The day was very hot; and it was not long before we were all very thirsty. A little after four in the afternoon, as we walked along, one of them said: 'I see a well, a little off the road; let us go and drink.'

'We had better hurry on to Jhansi,' said the other.

'It will not take long,' said the first; 'and we must take care that our prisoner does not die of thirst or of sun-stroke, to which these cursed Europeans are so subject; otherwise, good-bye to our reward.'

'Very well,' said the other. 'I have heard it said that brandy causes sun-stroke, and drinking water keeps it off.'

'He has accompanied us very tamely,' said one.

'He must be a coward,' said the other; 'they all are, except when they are together.'

I listened, but said nothing, and we went to the well, some distance off the road. One of them ungirded his sword and put it down on the ground while he drew water from the well. Near it sat the other sepoy, his sword at his belt, waiting for his drink, while I stood near him, with my hands behind my back. Now or never, I said to myself. I quietly slipped my right hand from the loop that held it. To seize the sword on the ground and draw it was the work of an instant; the next, the sitting soldier fell a corpse to the ground, with his head almost severed from the neck with one blow of the sharply ground sword. At the noise of the attack, the soldier who was drawing water turned round, and for a moment was petrified at seeing his late prisoner

free, brandishing a naked sword, and slaying his comrade. Recovering himself, he rushed at me with a shout ; but him also I slew with his own sword.

I was once more free, and what is more, I was now armed. From my dead enemies I took their *chapatties*. In India, travellers generally carry some food with them, to meet the not unfrequent cases of finding scanty supplies. Not a soul was in sight. I ate and drank, and thanked God for my deliverance. Then I started once more in the Gwalior direction, but I kept clear of the road. I led the life of a nocturnal animal, resting during the day, and hiding as I best might, but during the night pushing forward at my best speed towards Gwalior. When the soldiers' *chapatties* were done, I satisfied the cravings of hunger by eating mangoes from the trees or the melons in the fields. Nor did I disdain the raw cobs of Indian corn, or in fact anything edible I could find. Never could I have believed in my old soldier days, when we used to grumble at our beer and beef and bread as supplied by the commissariat, that I could ever have managed to get down my throat what I ate with such relish during those four days. We never know what we can do till we try.

On the eighth day after leaving Jhansi—the fourth after slaying the soldiers—I reached Gwalior, wearied, fagged, footsore, and almost tired of life. Another couple of days of such misery, and I should either have lain down to die, or have recklessly thrust myself into the midst of my enemies. But the distant sight of the great rock-fortress of Gwalior revived my spirits. I was soon conducted to a house, and tended and cared for, by order of Maharajah Sindhia.

Oh the luxury of a bath, after all that time and travel and suffering ! A few days of rest and good food had almost set me up again, when I was once more started on my flight. The Maharajah continuing loyal to the government, incurred the animosity of his own people ; and after a time of seething discontent and ill-suppressed murmurs, his troops broke out into open mutiny against him, crying to be led to join their brothers in arms. Attended by only a handful of faithful servants, Sindhia was obliged to flee to Agra for his life. Gwalior was of course now become too hot for any European ; and I followed Sindhia's example.

Again I started on my wandering ; but this time I had fewer adventures, for the distance was shorter. On the second day, I swam across the river Chumball, at the imminent risk of being seized and devoured by one of the numerous alligators that swarm in its waters. But on the other hand there was the certainty of being seized and slain if I sought the ferry : bridge there then was none. I passed Dholpore ; and soon found comparative safety under the influence of the vicinity of the European forces at Agra. There, in due course, I arrived, safe indeed as to life and limb, but I was not a very presentable object. My feet were blistered, swollen, and torn ; my clothes were filthy and ragged ; my skin was tanned and raw with the heat of the sun ; and my eyes were inflamed and nearly blind from the continual glare and fine dust of the road. In all, I had done about one hundred and thirty miles, I may

say barefoot, for the native shoes I had got from my bricklayers proved almost worse than useless to me.

As I came near to Agra, late in the afternoon, a lady driving in her carriage saw me, and very kindly took me up and conveyed me to the fort, still a good distance off. The neighbouring Europeans had found shelter and safety in Akbar's old fortress, which was garrisoned by a large European force. I was taken to the Commandant, who heard my statement of what had occurred at Jhansi ; and I was then attached to the battery of artillery in garrison. But I did little duty. An attack of brain fever soon followed ; and during it I was nursed with the utmost care and tenderness by the wife and daughter of our sergeant-major. Before a year was out, I married that girl. When India had been reconquered and peace restored, I was sent back to the Public Works Department. I have risen ; and I now bear the commission of a lieutenant in Her Majesty's service. As I owe this rise to the steady habits insisted on by my wife, and as I could not have got her, in all human probability, but for the mutiny at Jhansi, I don't grudge the sufferings, great as they then seemed, which I endured in my Escape.

P R E S E N T S.

THE subject of Presents, their giving and their receiving, is one which periodically makes its appearance in every household. On the wedding of any near relative or intimate friend, the matter is revived ; and in spite of the large amount of discussion the question on each occasion receives, a similar condition of nebulous uncertainty exists whenever the point recurs. To those who enjoy in any fashion the sweets of domestic life—which a cynic once stated to be preserved in family jars—the discussion of the matter is a familiar incident. The ethics of giving presents are essentially subtle. It is curious to observe with what a delicate sense of the fitness of things the eventual choice is made by the feminine side of the family, and not without reason, for many important points have to be taken into consideration which the male mind is somewhat apt to disregard. In the first place, the sum to be expended in the purchase—a feature usually regulated by a sliding scale finely graduated to the social or other estimate of the recipient, and his or her known power of appraising or appreciating whatever may be given.

There is, of course, much that is genuine in the feeling which dictates the custom of giving presents ; but it is impossible not to see that in many cases it is regarded as a social exaction, severely taxing alike the purse, the ingenuity, and the tact of the donor. Where the genuine desire exists to increase one's friends' or relations' possessions with some positively useful or seasonable object, there is usually very little difficulty in the choice ; but when, as in the present day, so many subtle social factors are brought into play in the regulation of friendship, the trouble is—to some people at least—considerable. It may safely be said that no small element of

pride enters into the matter; and nowadays, when the daily papers give at length—if scarcely so fully as do their contemporaries across the Atlantic—a list of the presents at the various fashionable marriages, a fresh element is introduced. Indeed, it may be said that the custom of making a display of the wedding gifts is not a little calculated to enhance the value of the original choice.

The wedding-present difficulty may be regarded as one of a peculiarly exasperating nature to all concerned, except, perhaps, the manufacturers and vendors of such expensive trifles. The singular monotony which usually marks the choice of such gifts has, it is true, of late years been somewhat relieved by the American innovation of handsome cheques in lieu of some costly trinket; but the custom, for reasons too obvious to mention, has never found any very general favour. In this connection, a point in which a vast amount of ingenuity will be displayed by some is the skill with which a purchase will be made, the actual value of which it would be difficult for any but the initiated to suspect. To obtain something which will look like what it has cost, or, if possible, a little more, is a desideratum with not a few. Again, to those who possess a large circle of friends and acquaintances, there enters the question of duly considering the natural susceptibilities and the tastes of each and all; in the present day, indeed, the latter point is one which needs most careful consideration. With those who are known to possess a knowledge of art and the many fascinating ins and outs of bric-à-brac, greater care in selection is necessary than with those who are regarded by their friends as being indifferent to such matters. Altogether, the question is one fraught with innumerable difficulties. The Queen, as is well known, has long since reduced the anxieties of her task in the matter of wedding presents by confining her gift to the same unvarying article, a handsome Indian shawl; and not a few knowing ones have followed the excellent example set by Her Gracious Majesty.

In spite of all these inconveniences, it must be admitted that there remains some slight element of pleasure in the matter of present-choosing, for the choice of a present entails the pleasant exercise of a certain amount of patronage, and, it may be added, not a little 'shopping,' with the concomitant excitement of turning over any quantity of articles to be selected from. Bewilderment, it is true, only too usually on such occasions seizes the unwary, with the fatal result so familiar to all who have either been married or had any acquaintance with newly-married couples. An eminent Associate of the Royal Academy—now, alas! no longer with us—is indeed known to have once affirmed as one of the reasons for his refusing to enter into the state of matrimony, that he dreaded the avalanche of wedding presents with which he knew he would be overwhelmed by an admiring circle of friends and relatives, whom he would be too sensitive to offend by treating their respective offerings in accordance more with the artistic taste displayed by each than by the position of the donor. As a matter of fact, this latter point is not the least of the many difficulties surrounding the question of giving presents. Though in the abstract, and

indeed in the concrete, it may seem pleasant to receive presents, in not a few cases their receipt is regarded only in the light of a troublesome formality, the very practical expression, in fact, of that species of gratitude which has been well defined as a lively sense of favours yet to come; for it would seem a tacitly accepted understanding that some return is expected. Again, there are the presents which certain persons of grateful disposition consider it right to bestow on friends and relatives for services rendered—services which could not exactly be repaid in money—a form of present which happily possesses few or no disagreeable elements, though requiring, it may be mentioned, not a little tact in its management. This tact is no less necessary in the distribution of those well-meant and generally essentially useful presents which the well-to-do are in the habit of despatching from time to time to their poor relations.

In spite, however, of all these and numerous other features, many of them agreeable, many others very much the reverse, which enter into the question, the custom of giving presents retains its hold on society, a hold which, indeed, it is safe to predict, it is scarcely likely to lose, for the institution is one apparently ingrained in human nature. The modern sociologist will of course prosaically account for the fact by telling us that we inherit, from an earlier and somewhat less barbaric state of existence, the tradition of a motive of propitiation in distributing gifts among those whom we thus flatter by silently implying our sense of dependence on their protection. This, of course, is the theory of the Oriental custom to the present hour. We in the West have, however, come to lose this deeper meaning, while we have none the less retained the custom.

BEAUTIFUL FOR EVER.

SOMEWHERE there is a radiant land,
All beautiful for ever,
A world by balmy breezes fanned,
With skies unclouded ever.
Upon that stormless shining shore
Falls music as in days of yore,
For ever and for ever.

There, Time can never dim the light
Of eyes which sparkle ever,
For golden hair grown silver bright,
Is beautiful as ever;
While on the brow Care cannot trace
A line that Love would not efface—
For ever and for ever.

Here, close at hand, before our eyes,
Unveiled by Love's endeavour,
That land immortal round us lies,
All beautiful for ever.
Seek not some distant dreamland shore,
But here, Love murmurs o'er and o'er,
Dwell ever and for ever,
Beautiful for ever.

DAVID RUSSELL AITKEN.

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OUR WEATHER-EYE.

As the metropolitan, not to call him the Cockney, humourist remarks, 'There's a deal of weather about just now!' and surely—the gist of this joke lying of course, as it does, in the fact that no particular sort of weather is specified—the familiar saying has the advantage of being applicable to all times and seasons. Hence, although at the present writing there happens to be a bitter frost and a leaden, snow-portending gloom prevailing, very likely by the time these words find their way into print we shall be enjoying the first genial breath of spring, the glorious warmth of midsummer, or the mellow calm of autumn. But what of that? It makes no difference in the pungency of the facetiæ, and we hold it a great thing to be able at a moment's notice to have a brilliant observation of this kind ready to our lips. When, too, it is remembered how popular the topic of the weather always is, and how constantly we are called upon to refer to it in a casual way, we should not undervalue the privilege of living in the midst of a community where jokes of this refined and erudite pattern are commonly bandied from mouth to mouth! Londoners, if not credited with equal smartness to what is usually found on the other side of the Atlantic, are at least not deficient in the quality, and may be honestly said always to have their weather-eye open.

Amongst the people who practically and literally live with their weather-eye open, sailors and shepherds take the first place. But of those who are distinguished for a like sharp-sightedness, in the moral sense of the expression, it would not be possible to make so easy a classification. Lawyers and gentlemen 'in the City,' perhaps, would generally be regarded as hard to beat in this respect; but as nowadays, just, indeed, as in former days, everybody is bent on personal advancement, we must suppose that it is only a very few who fail to keep a sharp lookout (in other words, to go about with their weather-eye open!). Naturally, in every congregation of men

there will be found a percentage of purblind beings who, to judge from their behaviour, wilfully and persistently shut that particular eye, right or left, which, if but only opened a very little bit, would show them the proper course to adopt. Unfortunate folks there are, who, as the phrase runs, will ever be blind to their own interests, and who, when their attention is drawn to the point—that is, to the right line to pursue—will stubbornly maintain that they do not see it, or that they do not take your view of it. According to their own accounts, however, this class cannot be large, for who admits he is not wide awake? Who is not always keeping his weather-eye open? The result of the individual's own exertions is the test; and it is only when we examine the failures and successes in life, that we can arrive at a just estimate of the numbers who have retained a fixed gaze on the main chance.

Then, again, some difficulty arises from the various powers of sight or degrees of discrimination possessed by certain people. The vision of many is so different from what would be naturally expected—they take such determinately wrong views of things—that one begins to doubt if their moral optics can be anatomically constructed upon normal principles. They see things so perversely, that they may be said to resemble the colour-blind, and are so, indeed, literally, for they seem incapable of discriminating between what are storm-clouds and what is blue sky in their outlook. Hopeless creatures these, in every sense, and upon whom our Cockney jocosity would inevitably fall flat; for what would be the use of telling them that 'there is a deal of weather about,' when they have scarcely a notion that they are surrounded by an atmosphere of any description—when they are, in a word, so 'right-and-wrong blind' as to be perpetually averring that black is white.

Since, too, this blindness includes deafness—for sounds do not seem to convey the same meaning to them as to ordinary mortals—it is a pity these infirmities are not accompanied by that dumbness frequently associated with the

latter affliction. Were this so, we should at least be spared a vast amount of vapid and misleading jargon.

Hopeless therefore as it appears, to get quit of this inevitable percentage of wrong-headed people, it is pleasant to turn our 'weather-eye' towards the heavens themselves, and away from all metaphorical allusions to them. We have hinted that sailors and shepherds possess the faculty of prophetically reading the signs of the sky more correctly than most classes. This is perfectly natural, for, to take the mariner first, his very life depends on the keenness of his optic nerve. His avocation trains him to keep a wary watch upon the slightest indications of change of wind or weather, and to interpret them aright on the instant. Disaster and wreck are the inevitable consequence of any neglect of this study, and if he be caught napping, woe betide him indeed; moreover, it is to the sailor we owe the very expression the 'weather-eye.'

The coast populations and 'waterside characters' generally, also acquire a familiarity with the elements little short of that of those who actually 'go down to the sea in ships;' but of all the dwellers on land, the shepherd is the soundest weather prophet; and luckily, for if his own well-being is not imperilled by an ignorance of atmospheric fluctuations, at least the lives of his flocks depend entirely on the acute perception of his 'weather-eye.' He is well aware that according to the way in which he judges the skies will greatly depend his success or failure in bringing young lambs into the world and guarding the lives of their mothers. Not necessarily, however, is he always looking aloft for the clue which is to guide him in his preparations; the movements and behaviour of his charges themselves reveal to him much of what may be anticipated.

A story used to be told in illustration of the shepherd's weather-wisdom by Lord Palmerston, who, one fine morning, when riding across Salisbury Plain in company with a delicate friend who much feared a wetting, asked a shepherd what his opinion of the weather was. Looking critically around him, not at the heavens, but at the movements of his sheep, the man replied: 'It'll rain afore evenin'.' The two horsemen were incredulous, for the weather was simply superb at the time, the perfection of a summer day—a day the like of which can hardly be met with in any country but England, when sun and air mingle in such sweet proportion, and so temper each other, that the man would be hard indeed to please who could not attune his nature to his surroundings—a day, in fact, which would be likely to evoke another pleasantry from our Cockney commentator, in the remark that it was 'a fine day for the race!' meaning the human race. So, the friends, disregarding the shepherd's warning, rode on, and were thoroughly drenched by a shower which fell soon after noon.

'How did you guess it would rain?' asked Lord Palmerston, as, damp and disconsolate, he and his friend passed the same shepherd on their return homewards.

'Whenever you see yon old tup rubbin' of hisself agin' that post of a mornin',' answered Colin, 'be sure it'll rain afore night!'

Animals, after all, are endowed with instincts in this matter of weather, as in many others, which might put much of man's boasted science to shame; though why, in this instance, the old tup always scratched his back against a post when rain was coming, it is hard to guess. The only inference is, that in the mysterious and unseen working of the laws governing the universe, the approach of rain is heralded by some irritation of the sheep's coat, which acts more directly, or at least more practically on his dull brain than all our weather-eyes put together do, on what we are pleased to call our cultivated intellects. We may take it as indisputable if we please, that, according to the old jingle, 'a rainbow in the morning is the shepherd's warning;' but how if there be no rainbow? and Lord Palmerston evidently could not have seen one that morning, however wide he might have kept his 'weather-eye' open; nor the shepherd either, for the matter of that; but he had learned by rule-of-thumb that it was not always sufficient to direct his 'weather-eye' to the weather itself. Few people whose avocations lie mainly out-of-doors in the country fail to acquire a smattering of weather-wisdom from the same sort of source—that is, from observing the habits of the animal world, from the cattle in the fields down to the smallest thing which creeps or flies.

Some birds are especially knowing in their behaviour meteorologically, or they look as if they were. Who has not seen the way a jackdaw or a magpie, for instance, cocks his eye upwards, as if constantly on the lookout for squalls? And if we are unable to detect anything significant in the aspect of the skies to justify his anxiety, we may be sure our feathered friend could put us up to a thing or two, if he chose, of which through our own senses we have not the faintest inkling. Rooks, swallows, starlings, sparrows, and the rest, all shape their behaviour and their notes according to what the weather not only is, but is going to be; and without possessing any definite acquaintance with natural history, residents in the country, observing them, acquire, like the shepherd, a weather-wisdom impossible for the inhabitants of large towns to attain to. Their comfort or interests are seldom, or only indirectly, affected by the weather. Except when an east wind is blowing, the Londoner scarcely notes the points of his compass, and often could not tell you which is north or south. He has no crops, live-stock, or gardens to think of, therefore he is not driven to keep his physical 'weather-eye' open in the way rural populations are. For this reason we suppose it is that he and his kindred endeavour to make up for the deficiency by cultivating their mind's eye to that pitch of sharpness always supposed to characterise the town mouse, when compared with his young friend from the country.

When meteorology shall have become an entirely exact science—and its strides during the last twenty years suggest that this desirable end is not far off—we smoke-dried citizens may also become as knowing about weather as sailors and shepherds. A 'weather-eye' will be provided for us by the official department, and we shall be in

a position every morning at our breakfast-tables to adapt our actions and costumes to the meteorological prospects not only for the day but possibly for a month ahead.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXI.

AND now, if you please, for a while we will go into pleasant company. Who pleasanter, this pleasant summer morning, to begin with, than Miss Cecilia Shorthouse, trimly attired in a pink spotted cotton print, going demurely about her preparations for her own and her father's breakfast? Pink is not the colour the best suited to a blonde, but it has a neat fresh brightness of its own, and a pretty girl of an honest complexion will contrive to look well in almost anything.

The summer brightness lay outside on the wide fields, the scattered cottages, the well-kept farmyard, and the rambling disorderly old garden. Roses pushed into the diamonded window, and soft flecks of sunlight stealing in between their close tracery were sliding and glancing about the red-tiled floor of the kitchen. The scrupulous cleanliness of that apartment combined with Cecilia's own neatness of aspect to flatter her talents as a housewife. The polished steel fender glowed ruddily in the light of a small clear fire. The odour of coffee and the snizzle of frying bacon pleased ear and nostril with appetising suggestion. The brownish napery of the table had a country freshness in its look, and an odour of the country, caught from the grass on which it was bleached after every washing. The rough table service was lustrous with mere cleanliness, and Miss Cecilia, moving deftly here and there, looked like a pretty genius of household order and comfort.

The farmer her father came clamping over the brick-paved footway which led between the untrimmed masses of flower and shrub from the gate to the kitchen door. He brought a field-appetite with him; and as he stood at the doorway scraping the soil from his boots, a grunt escaped him, expressive half of expectancy and half of satisfaction. 'Breakfast ready, wench?' he asked, with a tone of approval.

'All ready, father,' said Cecilia.

The farmer hung up his hat, and took a seat near the table, with a hand on either knee. Cecilia set before him a mighty dish of fried bacon; and whilst he transferred a portion of it to his plate, poured out his coffee. He set to work gravely, like a man who meant business, and his execution by no means belied his air. Eating was too serious a business with Mr Shorthouse to be mixed with anything so trivial as mere conversation; but when the meal at length was over, he pushed his plate aside, and heaving a full-stomached sigh, turned half round from the table, and fixed his daughter with a glance which was both bovine and kindly, and had a distant, nine-tenths hidden gleam of humour in it. 'Well, my wench,' said he by way of exordium.

'Yes, father,' Cecilia answered.

'Thee'st been thinkin' for a fortnight,' said Shorthouse, with the slow contentment of a well-fed man. 'Hast made up thy mind upon the matter yet?'

'What matter, father?' asked the demure Cecilia.

The distant look of humour in the farmer's eye flickered nearer, and darted inward again. 'Fill me a pipe o' 'bacca, my dear.'—The girl took a long clean clay from its place upon the mantelpiece and obeyed his request.—'Now give me a spill.' He pulled slowly at the fragrant bowl, resting an elbow on the table, with the stem of the pipe poised lightly in the cleft prepared for it by a broad thumb and forefinger. 'Sit down. Let's have a talk. There's Mr Snelling waiting for his answer. How long dost mean to keep him?'

The girl made a faint motion with head, hands, and eyebrows. The compound gesture seemed to signify that the query was of no moment, and that she had not thought about it.

'Oh, tut, tut! my gell,' said Shorthouse. 'Fie, fie! It'll niver do to treat a man's offer in that sort of way. You'll be gettin' a name for coxcombishness. Snelling's a good chance, Cecilia, and there's many and many a gell would jump at him. He's warm and he's solid, and what's more, he's an out and out John Bull. It's true he ain't as well off as we thought him since young John Vale's turned up again; but he can play at countin' ha'pence with most folks hereabouts, and he'd win with nine out o' ten of 'em. He's old enough to know his own mind. He's made one woman a good husband already, and there's little doubt as he could please another. I think very high of Robert Snelling, Cecilia; and as for the lyin' stories that are abroad about him, I value 'em less than I do a puff of this 'bacca. Annyway, it's the part of a good wench to let the man have his answer. Think about it. Come now. Is there anything in your mind agen the man?'

The girl gave the same curious no-answer as before.

'Come, come!' said her father. 'Thee can't find a Yes or a No. I've niver been the man to persuade a gell to marry agen her own wishes. I've seen mischief come o' that sort o' thing i' my time; and if you can't like him, you can give him a civil "No, thank you." I shall be a bit sorry if it comes to that, for I've a kindness for the man, and I should like to see thee settled.'

Cecilia, who had taken a seat opposite to her father after filling and lighting his pipe for him, now rose slowly with downcast eyes and began to clear away the breakfast things. She had never read a play, a love-poem, or a romance in all her life, and she had always quite naturally supposed herself to be a young person of a business turn. The proposed marriage was practical enough, and looked likely to be prosperous. She could have the handsomest of dresses. There was a dashing trap to drive about in. None of her schoolmates or acquaintances had made so excellent a match as was now offered to her; and half the girls of the district would have been ready to pull caps for the favour of so eligible a groom as here came a-courting. But very dimly and vaguely the girl felt there was something wanting. A little course of romantic reading might have told her what it was; but, as has been said already, her maiden fancies had received no help of that sort, and she was left to her own resources. These seemed to help her very little, if at all. There was nothing to be said against

the marriage, and there was very little more than nothing to be said in its favour. She was sufficiently happy and contented as she was; and Snelling at least had no power to spread over the cold outside world which lay beyond the home of childhood and maidenhood that wonderful glamour of hope and yearning for which every woman looks instinctively once in her lifetime. Love is not a thing of looks exclusively, and the experiences and confidences of lovers would find their way through the world without the aid of the romancer's art. Certain tender, foolish little secrets had been breathed to her by old school-companions who had been led across the boundary of love's golden realm. She knew by intuition that there might be more in marriage than a mere change of home and companionship; and the sentimental whispers had found an answering echo in her heart. Experimentally, she knew nothing. It goes without saying, since she was a pretty girl, that at least half a score of the young men of the neighbourhood had made sheep's-eyes at her. She had thought them infinitely ridiculous and tiresome, as girls will do until Mr Right comes along, as the country phrase has it, when, somehow, they find the same airs and appeals on a sudden grown infinitely touching and pleasing. But Mr Right had never presented himself even for a moment within the bounds of Cecilia's horizon. She walked in maiden meditation, fancy free, and when the middle-aged lover came with his solemn respectable ways and his round balance at the banker's, she knew not what to make of him or what answer to give him. The merest hint of experience would have told her that she was shockingly indifferent, and that a marriage under such conditions would have been a crime against herself. A sensible mother would have enlightened her in a day; but as it happened, she had no guide at all.

'Come!' said her father, when he had watched her for a minute or two as she moved about the room, 'try and mek up a mind one way or another, Cecilia. You hurt a man's pride in himself, keepin' him waitin' i' this wise.'

'I don't know, father,' Cecilia answered. 'My mind goes shilly-shally. I don't think I like Mr Snelling well enough to marry him. I'd sooner stop at home. I don't want to marry anybody. —You don't want to get rid of me, do you, father?'

'The sakes forbid!' the father answered. 'Do what you like, my gell. Only mek up your mind. See if you can't mek it up to-day. I'm awy to market; and I shan't be back afore night-time. It's a hundred to one I shall meet Snelling there; and if you'll promise me as I can give him his answer to-morrow, it'll be a load off my mind. Now, theer's a good wench—let it be Yes or No to-night.'

Cecilia stood before him with the coffee-pot in one hand and the sugar-bowl in the other, looking downwards. She paused for a second or two before replying, and in her fluttering indecision her colour came and went. 'I'll try, father,' she answered; and almost as she spoke the words she looked up with a sudden air of resolution: 'I'll give you an answer when you come home this evening.'

'That's right!' cried Shorthouse, rising from his seat and patting her fondly on the shoulder.

'Thee'st have the wull day to think on it; and if I see Snelling, I'll tell him he can come to-night for his answer.'

'Don't do that, father,' she replied. 'You can take it to him. It will look more friendly, and perhaps it might hurt his pride less.'

'That sounds like No,' cried Shorthouse.

'Don't plague me now, father,' said Cecilia, with an unaccustomed touch of pettishness. 'I hate to think about it. I'll tell you to-night.' She extended the coffee-pot and the sugar-bowl widely apart, and half-laughingly, half-poutingly pecked him with a kiss. 'Go away to market; I'll tell you to-night.'

Her father chuckled her under the chin and drove away to business, revolving things in his dim mind. He was not a peculiarly intelligent man at any hour; but he was fond of his girl, and his one hope in the whole business was that she might choose for her own welfare. He had a sort of idea that she stood on a higher platform than himself, and that she saw things differently. He had sent her to a spruce and quakerish finishing school, where she had learned to speak without the broad drawl, and in an accent which seemed to him to resemble that of a fine lady; though, to a finer observer than Farmer Shorthouse, it was still rustic enough in all conscience. He was a little bit afraid of her, and she had always from her infancy upwards exercised a tender tyranny over him. If he had felt at any time that he was being governed, he was the sort of man to resent it; but the reins with which she guided him were coloured light, and so skilfully managed, that for a fair half of the good man's time he took her way under the devout impression that he was going his own.

The girl being left to herself, went about her duties for an hour with something less than her customary sprightliness; and at the end of that time, having loyally finished her household tasks, sat down to face the question: to marry, or not to marry? There was nothing to draw her, nothing to repel. She would as lieve be left alone as be troubled by the proposal, and would almost as soon have received the proposal as not. She put on her sun-bonnet and walked into the garden in a grave inquietude. Her father wished for the marriage, and had often urged her to it during the past fortnight, even whilst he had told her all along that his one desire was that she would take her own way and be happy in it.

There was a summer haze abroad, which the heat of the sun had not yet dispelled, and the gentle eminences which closed in her view on the side towards Harley were suffused with a soft brilliancy. There was always an invitation and a mystery in the presence of these distant hills. In a landscape so generally level, and even monotonous, they were a constantly evident landmark, and from her childhood upward they had stood for her in evidence of the barrier which existed between her own simple life and the great wide world beyond. She stood looking at them now with half-closed eyes, with their tender greens and grays shot through and through with softened sunshine, and a sudden yearning seized her to be beyond them and to pierce the mystery they hid. There was a pleasant sadness in her thoughts, she knew not why.

A couplet of an old hymn floated into her fancy :

Had I the wings of a dove, I would fly
Far, far away, far, far away.

The beauty of the distance, and the mystic sense that something lay beyond for her, drew her unconscious feet from the garden into the lane. The dog-roses broke there into a riot of colour, pink and white and red ; and the wild honey-suckle, then opening, made the air heavy with its odour.

The quiet lane, with its overarching hedges, and the great moss-grown boles of its forest trees here and there, was like a secluded walk in some wild garden. The banks were hidden with fern and foxglove, and a hundred exquisite weeds delighted the senses with perfume and colour. The girl walked in a waking dream, with the hunger of youth in her heart. It was a new sense, and not strong enough to be painful. The natural, wholesome country odours, the warm still air, the dancing flakes of sunlight on the road, the pleasant shadows, the hues and perfumes which surrounded her, and the hazy glories which dwelt upon the distance, all gave it nourishment in equal part. She forgot her promise and the matrimonial pros and cons, and wandered on, almost unconscious of everything but that faint, pleasurable unrest, the pure, unconscious budding of her body's soul.

She was walking on in this wise when she was suddenly startled by a wild whoop as if of victory, and looking up, beheld two boys in the act of charging down upon her. For a mere second she was startled ; but a moment later she found herself shaking hands with Messieurs William Gregg and John Vale. The two boys were in holiday attire, and looked happy, contented, and well cared for.

'We've come home !' says Master Will in a tone of pride not unpardonable in a boy who has run away from home, has kept away a whole twelvemonth, and, to his own prodigious astonishment, has escaped parental chastisement on his return. Somehow or other, to run away from home is a boy's highest heroism ; but if the act of escape has something of the rocket's rush and roar and glory in it, the home-coming is pretty often humiliating, and resembles the fall of the stick. In most cases, indeed, it provokes the fall of the stick in another sense ; and Master William, though a staunch boy, as we have seen, had had his reasons for looking forward with some misgiving to a meeting with his father, and was proportionately rejoiced when the encounter was got through with nothing more than an affectionate and admiring growl. As for John, he lived in clover, and was beginning to believe that nobody had ever tripped on such a blunder as he had fallen into when he ran away from Uncle Snelling. For of all the indulgent guardians from whom misguided wards have run away in the history of boyish romance, none, surely, had ever been so forgiving, so amiable, and so bent on making the recovered home pleasant as Robert Snelling. The two youngsters were agreeably conscious of their own high feat, and still more agreeably conscious of the unusual fact that rebellion had brought with it pleasant consequences.

Cecilia lectured them gently as in duty bound ;

and they, like the good boys they were, listened with a pretence of downcast contrition which lasted for ten seconds, and was then dissipated by the appearance of a weasel, who paddled across the road at a little distance in front of them, and of course imperatively demanded to be stoned.

Cecilia was not sorry to be delivered from her own fancies. The boys brought a healthy rush of the air of common life with them, and were so full of the high spirits proper to their age, that she herself caught the infection.

Young John, attracted by something or other, ran forward, and suddenly diverging from the track, climbed half over a five-barred gate, and began to chatter with extraordinary vivacity in an unknown tongue. A man's voice answered him from the field, and Master Gregg raised a howl of delight.

'There's old Jousserau !' he cried, 'I'll bet he's painting. He said he was going to.' The boy was alight with pleasure and excitement, and seizing Cecilia with both hands, he tugged at her eagerly. 'You must come and see him. He's no end clever. He won't mind you a bit. He's the kindest fellow in the world.'

'Who is he ?' asked Cecilia, hanging backwards, and allowing the boy to pull her.

John heard the query, and scrambling down from the gate, dashed towards her. The two opened their conversational batteries at once, and were so vividly descriptive that she could understand neither. At length she silenced one of them, and so succeeded in making out the history from the other. It was this old Jousserau who had found John on the morning on which he had received that cruel blow upon the head ; perhaps he had saved his life, at least both the boys were of that opinion, though it was not probable that Jousserau himself shared it with them. It was this same old Jousserau who found them weary and footsore in the streets of Warwick, and had taken them home to the kindest and most hospitable shelter. It was he, further, who had taught John drawing and painting.

The narrative concluded, both boys seized upon her and dragged her forward. She went willingly enough, being spurred by some curiosity concerning a personage who had such a double claim to distinction in those parts as to be at once a foreigner and an artist. She made some laughing protest too ; but the boys haled at her, and brought her to the gate.

Jousserau, who had been at work seated on a camp-stool before a small field-easel, had risen, and stood facing the gate with a palette, a maul-stick, and a sheaf of brushes in one hand, and a single brush in the other. Cecilia had formed some shadowy idea of him in her own mind, and he contradicted it completely. The boys had called him 'old' Jousserau, and she had expected to find herself face to face with a patriarch. Seeing that he was young and handsome, she became momentarily confused, and would fain have run away if that act could by any means have been made compatible with her sense of dignity. The sense of dignity was not helped by the manner of her introduction to the stranger, the boys tugging at her as if they pulled a carriage, her sun-bonnet a little disarranged, and some of her hair, rebellious in spite of most assiduous dressing, flying loose beneath it. Jousserau

raised his hat, which of itself was a startling and unusual thing; but she had self-control enough to respond by a courtesy, at which Jousserau stared a little. John began to patter in French and English, making the two strangers known to each other. The artist raised his hat once more, and again Cecilia courtesied.

'Lovely day,' said the artist, in his slow, queer-sounding English. 'Beautiful spot, mees.'

Cecilia responded rather shyly, and the little Frenchman went back to his work. The girl wanted very much to escape, but was hindered by her own shyness. The boys went quiet, and stealing behind the painter, watched him eagerly, craning their heads hither and thither to make out at what particular object he was at work. Cecilia, partly excited by their interest and partly moved by a desire to be out of the painter's sight, took up a place behind.

Good-breeding, as a thousand social philosophers have observed already, is very much a matter of nature, and Cecilia did not find her awkwardness of long endurance. By-and-by she began to be as much absorbed in the novel work before her as the artist himself. The boys were as quiet as mice, and Jousserau seemed to have forgotten their presence. But on a sudden he turned round upon his camp-stool and arose, hat in hand. 'Pardon, mees,' he said, 'if I should ask a great favour. I feel I am an impertinent. I cannot say it. My friend John shall say it for me.'

Friend John being appealed to in the artist's native language, translated. Cecilia's pink dress was the thing above all others the artist desired for his sketch. He would be immensely obliged if she would seat herself upon a felled tree half-way across the meadow, and would allow the two boys to be grouped by her. He would not detain her a quarter of an hour—perhaps not more than ten minutes.

'I am an impertinent,' said Jousserau again, standing hat in hand before her with his black eyes smiling and his white teeth flashing, and his hands and shoulders raised in a little shrug of appeal; 'but'—

'Look here,' said Will, laying hold upon her anew: 'that's where you've got to sit;' and straightway bore her off, all blushes and confusion. She walked across the meadow feeling hoydenish, and somehow guilty of a breach of the proprieties. She took her seat in the place indicated; and Jousserau, calling to the boys, directed them as to how to place themselves in her neighbourhood. They obeyed; and for a minute or two a solemn silence reigned. Cecilia was quite ashamed of herself, and was convinced that this swarthy young foreign person had no right to submit her to such an ordeal. The boys retained, with a somewhat sheepish quiet, the poses Jousserau had directed them to take. The painter, bending assiduously over his work, shot every now and again a keen glance at the group, and once or twice fixed it for some seconds at a time, so that Cecilia's embarrassment seemed to have reached its highest point. But in a very short time, in spite of these disagreeables, she found the séance over. The artist, rising to his feet, took off his hat. 'Sank you,' he said; 'I have finish.'

'Come along and look at it,' cried John; and Cecilia was once more pulled forward. She was

bending blushing over the sketch, not quite making out its meaning in her confusion, when a sound of hoof-beats made itself audible in the lane, and looking up, she saw the head and shoulders of Robert Snelling above the flowering hedgerow. He was lowering at the group with what she took for an expression of serious disapproval; and when he caught her eye, he gave a mere curt nod and rode on again.

ALBANIAN BLOOD-FEUDS.

SCODRA, the capital of North Albania, in which for the time being my lot is cast, has an evil reputation for blood-feuds and assassinations. Here, as in many other semi-civilised communities, the law is extremely uncertain, and the yataghan and pistol prompt and decisive. And there is no need to go into the mountains for evidence on this point. Between the end of the public garden and the entrance to the Konak is a long lane or passage between two high walls, which shut in houses and gardens on each hand. At the top of this passage are the great gates of two houses; and at the bottom of it sits a mountaineer in Mirdite costume, with a rifle across his knees. For hours together he sits there looking up and down the road, and guarding the entrance to the lane leading to his chief's house. Presently he will be relieved by a man the counterpart of himself, who will take his seat upon the vacated stone; and then the first guard, after stretching himself and exchanging a few words with his relief, will slowly stride up the lane and disappear through one of the great gates at the top. This stone by the side of the road is never without a mountaineer with his rifle across his knees, and his pistol in his *sila*, calmly smoking cigarettes and exchanging nods with passers-by of his acquaintance.

In one of the houses at the end of the lane lives an Agha of Middle Albania, who has fled from his own country on account of a blood-feud with a neighbouring family of greater strength and importance than his own. The chief of the most powerful family in the Agha's district is a young Bey, who has been educated in France, and who, besides the habit of wearing Frankish dress, has brought back from Europe only the vices of his schoolfellows and none of their few virtues. In an altercation on some trifling matter, this young Bey struck the Agha in the face; and, instantly, the relatives and retainers of the two chiefs drew pistol and yataghan upon one another, and a brisk skirmish ensued, in which several men were killed and more wounded. For some time the houses of the two chiefs were in a state of siege, and whenever the rival factions met in the street or in the bazaar, a free fight occurred, to the temporary interruption of business. These constant battles became such a nuisance, and were carried on so ruthlessly, that the Turkish government at last interfered, and succeeded in deporting the Agha and his family to Scodra, where they live more or less as state prisoners, leaving the Bey's family masters of the field.

Nearly every day the Agha quits his walled-in and fortified house and goes for a walk in the afternoon. First marches a retainer with a rifle

on his shoulder, and a perfect arsenal of smaller weapons in his girdle. About five yards behind comes the Agha, a tall, lean, well-knit man of fifty, but looking about thirty. His long moustaches are still golden brown, and his sun-burnt clean-shaven face is smooth and without a wrinkle. His head is shaved above the forehead; and on the top his hair is cropped close and covered with a fez, so that no gray hair tells of advancing age. He wears the mountaineer costume of tight trousers and short jacket; but his waistcoat is a blaze of gold embroidery that almost hides the crimson-velvet ground on which it is worked; and his trousers are seamed with heavy stripes of gold lace. He wears jack-boots reaching to just below the knee, and they are triumphs of his bootmaker's art, being worked all over with gold and silver wire in many a fantastic pattern and device. And so he stalks proudly along, glancing about him with eyes like a hawk, his hand resting on the carved silver butt of his pistol. Behind him, at intervals of about a yard, follow his two sons, each one with his right hand grasping a weapon; and bringing up the rear come two more Mirdites with rifles and pistols. They march along at a slow and stately pace in Indian file at the side of the road without exchanging a word except when, at rare intervals, the chief jerks a word over his shoulder at the son following him, and receives a grunt in reply.

In this cheerful fashion they stride along past the public garden through the streets to the Turkish quarter, where perhaps they visit an acquaintance; and then they stalk home again as solemnly as if they were attending their own funerals. Some day they expect to meet a body of their enemies in the street, for they owe blood to the Bey's family; and then a battle will begin as they stand, and unlucky will be the passer-by, European or otherwise, who does not bolt to the nearest place of shelter, for rifles and pistols will ring sharply out, and bullets will whistle up and down the road with little regard for harmless men going about their lawful business. If a company of the Turkish *zaptiehs* join in, under the pretence of separating the combatants, matters will be ten times worse, for these latter will fire their Martini-Peabodies 'promiscuously' at the crowd, and will in all probability draw the fire of both parties upon themselves for interfering in matters which do not concern them. And the people who will suffer most will be the unwilling spectators who have not been able to get under cover in time. Happily, there is little or no chance of such a catastrophe, for Scodra is getting too civilised for faction-fights in the streets, and the Pasha knows better than to let such things occur, when he has four or five consuls in the town at one end of the telegraph wire, and the ambassadors at Constantinople at the other. So the Bey's family is no doubt carefully watched, and any large party of them would be promptly prevented from entering the city; and without a strong body of men, it would be madness to attack our friend the Agha, for he is well guarded, and, moreover, under the protection or surveillance of the government.

But even now isolated affairs of honour are by no means rare, and men who have blood-feuds are frequently shot down in the streets or bazaar.

The month of Ramazan is particularly fruitful in such efforts to obtain justice or revenge. During this month, no good Mussulman may touch food or drink from sunrise to sunset; he may not even drink a single cup of coffee or smoke a solitary cigarette. It can easily be imagined what a painful trial this is when Ramazan occurs in the summer, and how terrible must be this enforced abstinence from food and drink under a broiling July or August sun, when almost every scrap of vegetation is burnt up, when no rain has fallen for months, and the very air seems like the blast from a furnace. The hours between sunset and sunrise are so short in the summer that there is little time for feasting, and the long hours of daylight can with difficulty be whiled away in sleep, even if there is no work to be done in the bazaar or in the city.

And so every now and then groups of hungry and thirsty Mussulmans may be seen standing at their gates watching for the sun to go down and scowling savagely at the 'dogs of Christians' who go cheerfully about puffing their cigarette smoke after a good meal at mid-day, and as much coffee as they can drink all day. It by no means improves their tempers to see well-fed 'infidels' going by while they are watching for the guns from the castle with which sunset is saluted during Ramazan, to tell them that their sixteen-hour fast is over; and so more men are shot down in private quarrels during that month than in any other month of the whole year. Only two or three years ago, fourteen men were shot in Ramazan; but every year the number of these murders grows less, for Scodra is slowly becoming civilised, and the influence of the little European colony getting more powerful. Still, about once a month regularly throughout the year, Simon the cook having bothered me to decide whether muscular fowl or leathery beef will be less distasteful to me for dinner, stands fez in hand, evidently brimming over with news. I feel that I am expected to inquire what the news is, and I do so. 'Has your lordship heard,' he says eagerly, 'that Hassan has shot the son of that Hussein?' Simon always refers to his fellow-countrymen by their first names, prefixing with airy indefiniteness the pronoun 'that.'

'What Hassan?' I remark, for there are probably two or three hundred in the city.

'The son of that Selim who lives near the bazaar.'

Having localised my man, I proceed: 'Why did he shoot Hussein?'

'How should I know? The evil one entered into his head.'

As the occurrence happened so recently, it is difficult to extract more than a bare outline of facts from my cook. To-morrow, when he has had time to discuss the matter fully with his friends over a glass or two of *raki*, he will give me full and marvellous details; but to-day his brain has not had time to grasp more than the simple fact that one man has shot another.

The causes of these unhappy quarrels are frequently very trivial. A dispute over a game at cards or a jostle in the bazaar will suffice to make a man fire upon his friend and shoot him dead. And the matter does not end there. Every member of the murdered man's family is bound in honour to seek out and shoot the murderer

wherever he may find him. If he cannot find the actual homicide, then he must kill the brother, or the son, or some near relative; and having in this manner appeased the spirit of his murdered kinsman, the right of blood passes over to the family of the original murderer, and they in their turn lie in wait for one of their enemy's clan, picking out for choice an only son, or the man whose death will cause the greatest grief and distress to the opposite side. These feuds go on from generation to generation, and the original cause of some of them is lost in antiquity.

In 1857 the Turkish government made a vigorous attempt to put down the vendetta, for over five hundred men of Scodra alone were wandering houseless and homeless among the mountains on account of blood-feuds. Nearly every tribe accepted the truce excepting the Mirdites; but the wild law of a life for a life was never finally stamped out, and never will be until a firm and settled government makes its administration of justice independent of *baksheesh*, and respected by the tribes as without fear or favour. The Roman Catholic priests have done their best to stop it in the mountains, but without avail. A reforming young priest once went so far as to excommunicate a man who had notoriously killed several persons in a blood-feud. The murderer believing himself shut out from heaven, not by his own misdeeds, but by the over-zealous action of the priest, called upon him, and threatened him with instant death if he did not then and there withdraw the sentence of excommunication. The poor priest tried to shuffle out of it, but in vain; the mountaineer was inexorable, and after obtaining his absolution, marched off with the warning that His Reverence had better confine himself for the future to his own province.

A quarrel once arose between two friends because one had promised the other fourteen cartridges, and afterwards refused them, and as a consequence, twelve men lost their lives in one day. A terrible feud between two mountaineer families had its origin in a pig eating the young crops of a neighbour as they were springing up. The owner of the crops shot the pig, and the owner of the pig instantly shot the slayer of his animal; and many years passed and many lives were lost before this blood-feud was appeased and the *bessa* established. But often the causes of a blood-feud are serious enough. Many arise from a young girl having been carried off without her parents' consent, and any insult to a woman is promptly punished with death. An injured husband is bound to avenge the stain on his family and himself by shooting the offender, or ever remain a disgraced and dishonoured man.

The other day I was going along a street in the Turkish quarter when I saw a head and the barrel of a rifle protruding round the corner of a by-street just ahead of me. When I reached the spot I saw a young Mussulman of the town sitting calmly on a large stone, like the Agha's mountaineer, but with a different purpose. In the street I had just come up was the entrance to his enemy's house, and every day for weeks past he has been watching that doorway for several hours a day. When he hears footsteps coming, he peeps round the corner, as he did when I came along; but generally he sits on his stone, whence he can just see the gateway. His

family is at feud with the owner of the house, and the last victim who fell was his brother, shot as he was going to his shop in the bazaar. The avenger of blood is a tall fair youth about twenty-three years of age, and he will wait patiently until his enemy or his enemy's son comes out of those great gates, and then he will avenge his brother. They owe him blood, and so, until he has fired, no one will fire upon him. The inhabitants of the house know that they are watched, and now and then, when the young man is not at his post, the father, or son, slips out, and returns stealthily after *Aksham*; but the servants, women, and cousins move in and out freely all day, for in Albania no man touches a woman, and the distant relatives are comparatively safe as long as the chief offender is unharmed. Some day the young fellow's long vigil will be successful; the enemy will leave the house thinking all safe, and then a rifle bullet will avenge his dead brother's blood. He will wait long and patiently, and until he has attained his object will not raise the siege of the house. Nothing will turn him from his purpose; he would be disgraced for ever if his brother's murder went unavenged; and it is too much to hope that, before he succeeds in shooting his foe, the day of blood-feuds will have passed away from Scodra.

OGILVIE WHITTLECHURCH.

CHAPTER IV.

THE *Maharanee* did win the race, and now lay safely secured alongside the wharf. The crew have gone; and the officers, who are now at breakfast in the cuddy, have only to send in their store accounts and turn the ship over to the owners' agents, before they, too, will be free to go home.

The post has brought Rimington two letters. The one he opens first is in a lady's handwriting:

ROSE COTTAGE, Monday.

DEAR OLD GEORGIE—Why don't you come home? Mother and I go to the station about six times a day. I try to impress on her that you're not worth it; but I know we shall go on doing so until your majesty deigns to honour us with your presence. But your poor sister's spirit is not yet *quite* crushed, and she doesn't mean to wear out her best pair of shoes for nothing. So be advised in time, sir. Take the first train north, and throw yourself on the mercy of the court. Remember the cold pigs that somebody got last year.—Mr Forward, whom you introduced to us in Scotland, has been here a good deal when he has been on leave. His father is the nicest old gentleman you ever saw. They have been awfully kind to us, and take us out in a little yacht of theirs. We went to Robin Hood's Bay in her last week; it was so jolly! Colonel Forward says that he hopes you will come in her a lot, if you do not have enough of the sea at other times.—The post is just going, so I must make this letter a short one, and say good-bye.—Your affectionate sister,

MARY.

The other letter was from Parkins:

GRAND HOTEL, Monday, Sept. 12.

DEAR RIMINGTON—It seems that we were entirely on the wrong scent. Our Ogilvie Whittle-

church is at present in a solicitor's office. His father and mother are both alive, and he has no first-cousins. He is going to look me up to-morrow. Come and lunch with us at one o'clock.
—Yours very sincerely,
JOHN PARKINS.
P.S.—Where the right man is remains a mystery.

Rimington had a good deal to do that forenoon, and could not help arriving rather later than the hour which Parkins had named. He found them waiting lunch for him. It was so long since he had seen Whittlechurch, that it required some effort of memory to recall his appearance; but, this made, he fancied that in the young man before him he could still trace some resemblance to the little fellow he had known so long ago at school.

Lunch was served in the dining-room, and afterwards they retired to Parkins' sitting-room for cigars and coffee. During lunch the conversation had been chiefly about Parkins' adventure at Wangtsing, and now it again drifted back to the same topic.

'Well,' said Parkins, 'this shall be a warning to me never again to confuse probability with certainty. That there should be another Whittlechurch in the world was only likely; but that there should be another Ogilvie Whittlechurch of about your age, not a relation, I thought impossible.'

'But I have suspected his existence for a long time,' quietly put in the young solicitor.

'You have!' exclaimed at once both Rimington and Parkins.

'Yes. Don't you remember that when I was kicked out of Olswick, old Layton said that he had seen my name cut on one of the apple trees I was supposed to have robbed.'

'But hadn't you been there?' asked Parkins.

'No, I had not; and to this day I remember my indignation when the doctor refused to believe me. The question then arises: how did the name get there? And to this question there are only two possible answers. Either one of the fellows at school owed me a grudge, and carved it; or else some one of the same name had been in that very orchard the same afternoon. A cynic would say that the first answer was the more likely; but I prefer to believe the second.'

'There are blackguards everywhere,' said Rimington. 'But if a fellow did carve your name, and then allowed you to be expelled without saying a word, he must have been a very black sheep indeed. Why, a fellow who could do a thing like that as a youngster, would have murdered a man or robbed a bank before he was twenty. Under ordinary circumstances, however, I should be inclined to accept the first theory. That there should be another fellow of your name, and that that fellow should have been at a certain place at a certain time, is too much to assume. But now the case is altered. We know for a certainty that there is, or, at anyrate, that there was, another Ogilvie Whittlechurch. Is it, then, more likely that this individual was at a certain place at a certain time, or that one of the Olswick fellows was, for his age, one of the most utter sneaks and blackguards that ever stepped?—What do you say, Parkins?'

'I won't venture an opinion; but what I will

do is to write to Pryer the detective, who is employed about this; and it will be for him to decide whether the trace is worth following up.'

After some further conversation, Rimington and Whittlechurch took leave of their host, who promised to write and inform them of anything which happened in the matter.

From the *Grand Hotel* in Northumberland Avenue to Gatti's café at Charing Cross is not five minutes' walk; yet, while Parkins and his friends were still sitting over their coffee at the former establishment, Mr Pedro Bersaño, at the latter, was waiting for Charles Miller, able seaman, who was to meet him there at three o'clock. Thus does chance delight in 'impossible' coincidences. While, however, Parkins, Rimington, and Whittlechurch were quite disinterested parties, actuated solely by a not unnatural desire to follow to its conclusion, and, if possible, facilitate the unravelling of a mystery which had been so remarkably thrust under their notice, Mr Bersaño, on the contrary, had, as we know, a very considerable personal interest in the question. Miller also was bent on business, inasmuch as he had no intention of giving his information for nothing.

'Gatti's' is something of a compromise between an English refreshment bar and a continental café. In shape it is long and somewhat narrow, its greater dimension being parallel to Villiers Street. Entering at the end nearest to the river, there is a door on the left leading into the restaurant. Then comes the bar, which extends about half the length of the room. On a level with the upper end of the bar there is a sort of semi-partition, which more or less divides the room into two parts. Above this, again, is the door which leads to the ladies' cloak-room on the left. Behind the bar, two Hebes are in attendance; and an Italian waiter looks to the wants of those visitors who prefer to patronise the numerous little marble tables which are scattered, in true Neapolitan style, about the apartment.

When Mr Bersaño arrived, it wanted ten minutes to three, and the café was absolutely deserted. He called for a tankard of *lager*, and sat down at a table opposite the bar. He had not long to wait. At about five minutes to three, Miller entered by the upper door, glanced round, and then accosted him: 'Are you Mr Bersaño?'

'I am.—And you, I presume, are Mr Miller?—Come over here.' So saying, he led the way to the farther corner of the room, where they would be out of hearing of any stray customers.

'Now, what is your business?'

'I'm thirsty.'

'Porter?'

'To begin with.'

The porter was brought and paid for, then Bersaño continued: 'You say that you have information of great importance to me. What is it?'

'Tain't nothing to be given away.'

'Indeed! And may I ask the reserve price?'

'A hundred pounds.'

'You are drunk.'

'And yet, I don't speak so extraordinary thick. There's others will give me just as much for it.'

'Others will give you just as much, will they? In what way does your information concern me?'

'Twouldn't do you any 'arm if a certain Ogilvie Whittlechurch was found, by any chance, would it, mister?'

Cool and sharp-witted as he was, Bersaño could not help an involuntary start at this sentence. The man evidently did know something, and he had not come on a fool's errand, after all. Instantly recovering himself, he replied: 'True; it will be slightly to my advantage if they fail to find him.'

'It would make you a millionaire?'

'Well, not quite; but I have yet to learn in what way you can be of service to me in the matter. So far you have told me nothing that I did not know already.'

For reply, the other tapped his tankard.

'More porter?'

'Rum.—Ah! that's more warmin'. 'Ere's at yer, mister.'

'Well?'

'I can give yer the whereabouts of this chap for a hundred quid; and if yer don't like that—well, I'll give 'im the straight tip about the will.'

'I conclude, however, that he knows his own name, and will be fast enough to answer when they advertise for him.'

'Young men don't read the papers—leastways, not carefully—and there ain't nobody but an old bloke to point it out. You see, 'e don't call 'imself Ogilvie Whittlechurch.'

'Well, I accept your terms. When I have your information, I will give you a hundred pound.'

'Yes?—I don't think. We'll put it t'other way, please. You shell out the shiners—then I'll spin the yarn.'

'As you will. But I don't carry the Bank of England about with me, so you must come to my rooms.'

Both men were now in earnest. As soon as they were safely in one of Bersaño's rooms, he produced without further haggling a cash-box, from which he took fifty sovereigns and five ten-pound Bank of England notes, and handed them to Miller.

The latter then proceeded to give his information, which he did faithfully and fully and without omitting a single detail; and explained also how the story of the will, and Bersaño's address, had come to his ears.

The other had grasped the situation before he had half finished, and was busy maturing a scheme of action while he listened. A shrewd unscrupulous cosmopolitan, familiar with the ways and customs of every state in Europe and America, he knew that England was the worst, from his point of view, in which this could have happened. In France, Germany, or the United States of America, his course would have been simple. He would have introduced himself to Forward under an assumed name, picked a quarrel with him, and shot him. In other parts of America, a hundred dollars would have paid for a few inches of steel, which would have done the business with even less trouble. But in England—in England, one has to be discreet in these little matters. However, something must be done.

When Miller had finished, he was rising to go.

'Stay,' said the other, looking at him fixedly. 'You have been of great service to me, but you can be of greater service still.'

'Ow's that?'

'You say that he lives at Whitby?'

'Yes.'

'The cliffs are high on that coast?'

'Yes.'

'And overhanging?'

'In some places.—Why?'

'Merely curiosity. But you must be thirsty. I have some excellent brandy in the cupboard here; will you try a glass?'

Miller nodded.

'Water?'

'No.'

'I see you appreciate it.—Have another?' And without waiting for a reply, he refilled the glass. Then he continued: 'Let's see what was it we were talking about?—Oh yes, the cliffs at Whitby—I wonder if people often fall over them?—I wish this fellow would; but of course he won't. I would give a thousand pounds to know that he had done so.'

Their eyes met.

'Make it two.'

'I will draw you a cheque for fifteen hundred, dated ten days hence. If the account of a certain dreadful accident does not appear in the papers before that date, it will be stopped.'

'And if 'e ain't at Whitby?'

'Well, then, he might possibly fall over a cliff somewhere else, or even into a canal—life is so uncertain.'

Two days after this interview, George Rinnington was able to leave London for the North, and arrived at Whitby station at about nine o'clock in the evening. It was rather more than two miles to Rose Cottage; but, feeling rather stiff and cramped after his journey, he chose to walk, notwithstanding that the night was stormy and threatened rain. In view of the latter, he took the precaution to put on a big Flushing overcoat, which was strapped up with his rug. It was a good thick coat, an old friend, which had stood him in good stead on many a cold night-watch, and was fitted with an enormous hood, that rendered its wearer completely secure from the fury of the elements. He took a handbag with him, and left directions for the rest of his luggage to be forwarded in the morning.

It was indeed a terrible night; and the weather was rapidly becoming worse. The wind blew in sudden gusts over the cliffs from seaward, while at the foot of them the angry waves broke with a deafening roar, which promised but little mercy to any ship which, through bad seamanship or unfortunate circumstances, should be wrecked that night upon the coast. Happily, the quiet which reigned both at the lifeboat shed and the rocket-apparatus house was a sign that, as yet at any-rate, no vessel had fallen a prey to the tempest.

His thoughts as he walked turned naturally to the home he was approaching, and to his mother and Mary. Who but a sailor can appreciate that word home in its true sense? In all his wanderings, in all his hardships, the thought of it is there, shining ahead like a guiding star, a beacon

of hope. Coming up Channel on a dirty night, the wind cutting him like a knife, the snow blinding him, and with every chance of a collision at any moment, he remembers that he is only a few hours off England, and the thought cheers him up. Rimington knew that they were not expecting him till the next morning, and he amused himself by thinking of their surprise when he turned up. He pictured to himself his mother, sitting in her armchair by the fire, with Mary on the rug at her feet, working or reading aloud. Then would come his knock at the door, and they would wonder who it could be at that time of night. But their wonder would not be for long. Mary would have guessed that it must be him, and be peeping from the top of the stairs when the maid let him in. Then what a kissing and hugging and asking of questions! How he would enjoy his supper that evening, and his pipe after it, sitting with his mother and sister by the fire. He was now nearly there; and just as he arrived at the little iron gate leading into the garden, he was rather surprised to hear, during a temporary lull, the sounds of a piano, and—yes, there was no doubt about it—a man's voice singing to its accompaniment. Who on earth could it be? He remained listening for a few seconds with the gate open, and was just going to reclose it after him, when, as he turned to do so, his attention was drawn to the figure of a man standing a little way off in the path along which he had just come. There would have been nothing very strange in this, but that he had happened to notice on his way that he was the only individual on the cliff.

'Some one who has walked across the common, I suppose,' he thought, 'to see whether there is a wreck, and get a blow through.'

Just then, however, to his intense astonishment, he saw the man deliberately lie down on the ground. 'By Jove!' he thought, 'the fellow's in liquor. I can't leave him there, or he'll either die where he lies before morning, or else wake up and fall over the cliff.' So, hastily reclosing the gate, he started forth, like a good Samaritan, to rescue the unfortunate wight from his perilous position.

ANOTHER MARVEL IN GUNNERY.

THE country which has surprised the Old World with so many startling novelties and inventions—amongst others, the Pneumatic Dynamite Gun of Lieutenant Zalinski—has just sent us another wonder in the form of a shell filled with dynamite, which may be fired from any ordinary breech-loading gun. The inventor of this marvel in projectiles is Lieutenant James W. Graydon, late of the United States navy, who, being well aware of the drawbacks involved in the use of dynamite or other high explosives for bursting charges of shells, turned his attention towards overcoming them. These disadvantages are the sensitiveness of such compounds to heat and concussion, and the liability of the nitro-glycerine in the dynamite to separate from the carrier with which it is associated in manufacture. Knowing these drawbacks, Lieutenant Zalinski designed his Dynamite Gun, previously explained to our readers (5th March 1887), and in which air-pressure is used

for the propulsion of the projectiles. Lieutenant Graydon improved upon the Zalinski Gun; but neither his arm nor that of his competitor met the requirements of the case. Their guns are admirable for use on board ships or in land defences; but, owing to their cumbersomeness, they could never be used in the field or in siege operations. To adapt dynamite shells for firing from ordinary guns, which can at present only be done with gunpowder, has been the aim of Lieutenant Graydon, and in this he has succeeded not merely in theory but in practice. The success which has attended the solution of this difficult problem is, alas! another illustration of how the inventive genius of man can be turned to sinister purposes; but as the advocates of scientific warfare argue that the very destructiveness which will ensue in future wars will render them impossible, or, at anyrate, will make them less frequent, the gain to humanity at large will be all the greater.

To return, however, to the Graydon Shell. Two objections are raised to the use of gunpowder in firing dynamite shells. In the first place, the blow exerted on the base of a shell by the explosion of a charge of gunpowder in the bore of a gun would inevitably fire an unprotected sensitive explosive. In the second place, the bursting charge of dynamite would be ignited by the heat generated by the friction of the shell in its rapid passage through the bore. In either case, premature explosion in the bore would be the result, which would mean destruction of the gun and the gun's crew. Now, to prevent either of these eventualities occurring, Lieutenant Graydon lines the inside of the shell with asbestos cloth, which is an excellent non-conductor of heat, and which isolates the dynamite from the metal, and prevents the transmission of heat from the latter to the former. He next divides the dynamite into pellets or cartridges not exceeding in bulk half a cubic inch, each pellet being besides enveloped in paraffined or varnished paper. This envelope prevents the exudation of the nitro-glycerine or other active agent in the explosive from the absorbent with which it is associated, and its concentration in some part of the charge, when it would assume the very sensitive and dangerous state common to nitro-glycerine when not combined with an absorbent substance. The envelopes of the pellets also cushion the charge, and serve to prevent the shock of the explosion of the firing-charge being transmitted to the dynamite in the shell in such a manner as to cause premature explosion. The blow from an explosion of gunpowder upon the base of a shell, by the way, may be as high as forty-seven thousand pounds' instantaneous pressure per square inch. Lieutenant Graydon further subdivides and isolates the dynamite in large shells by the use of partitions in the projectiles. These partitions prevent relative motion between the pellets of dynamite, and minimise friction among themselves, caused by the rapid rotation of the shell, to the lowest possible degree, if not altogether.

Dynamite shells thus constructed may be safely fired from ordinary guns by the usual time or contact fuses. When it is desirable, however, to obtain high penetrative power in the case of firing against armour-plates or masonry fortifications, a slow-acting contact fuse should be used. Lieut-

tenant Graydon has devised an ingenious arrangement for the purpose, which consists of a spiral spring holding back the contact piece or striker. On the shell striking the object at which it is aimed, the spring becomes extended, and at the moment of the forward motion of the shell ceasing, it flies back and actuates the striker, when the charge is exploded. The shell, owing to the momentary retardation of the action of the fuse, is permitted to bury itself in the armour-plate or masonry, and the full bursting effect of the shell-charge is utilised at the moment when the projectile has reached a point at which it can do most damage to the structure. It was stated before that all this is not mere theory. As a matter of fact, the shell of Lieutenant Graydon has been repeatedly practically tested, three series of experiments having been made in the presence of officers of the United States army, of which there is a full record.

The first trials were made in August 1886, when several rounds were successfully fired from a three-inch field-gun at the Presidio, San Francisco. A few days later, a second series of experiments was carried out, fifty-two dynamite shells being fired from a four-and-a-half-inch siege-gun at Fort Winfield Scott, with equally destructive effect. The American artillery officers present reported so favourably to the United States War Office that further experiments were ordered. In December 1887, consequently, trials on a large scale were made at Sandy Hook, attended by members of the United States Ordnance Board, a one-hundred-and-twenty-two-pound projectile containing two and three-quarter pounds of dynamite being fired with a twenty-three-pound powder-charge from a seven-inch rifled gun. The target represented part of an iron turret the sides of which were fourteen inches thick. Two rounds wrecked the target, whilst a third round utterly demolished it. This was considered so satisfactory that a further series of tests, which are to demonstrate the utmost capabilities of the Graydon shell, have been arranged for. It is also stated that experiments are shortly to be made in this country, Lieutenant Graydon having succeeded in interesting the War Office authorities in his invention.

THE REALITIES OF YACHT-RACING.

BY A LANDSMAN.

It had always been my ambition to take part in a yacht-race. I had often felt my heart bound with excitement and enthusiasm at the sight of a snowy-winged fleet flying before the breeze amid showers of glistening spray; and although I had never been on board a vessel of any kind except a Thames steamer and the *Calais-Dowres*, I was convinced that the deck of a smart yacht was the sphere whereon I should excel if I could only get an opportunity. I had an opportunity this summer, and I have changed my mind.

I don't know whether some remarks I let fall to my old friend Macstane, when he was spending a few days with us at Tooting, prompted the invitation or not; but my delight literally knew no bounds when he wrote asking me to join his yachting party on the Clyde to witness the

regatta, in which his cutter the *Rosebud* was to make her first appearance as a racer. Of course I accepted the invitation. I positively jumped at it; and in spite of a good deal of covert sarcasm on the part of Mrs Jones, I decided to make my debut as a yachtsman in proper style—blue serge coat, straw hat, and canvas shoes, as one sees the fellows got up on the pier at Dover.

'It's very absurd to go to such unnecessary expense,' said my wife, when I presented myself habited in nautical garb for her inspection the evening before I left home. 'It's simply ridiculous. A man of your figure too. I am really surprised at you.'

I didn't think that Mrs Jones's reference to my size was in the best possible taste, but I passed it over. Between ourselves, I think she was annoyed at our friend's omission to include her in his invitation; but he always said that ladies were in the way on board a yacht during a race; and of course I agreed with him.

'I am sorry that Macstane didn't ask you, too, my dear,' I said, blandly ignoring her remark; 'but perhaps you would not have enjoyed the trip.'

She had been studying my costume with a critical eye, and took up her needlework again, giving me a final dig as she transferred her attention to it. 'No; I don't care about the sea,' she said.—'I do hope you won't be sick.'

Sick! The idea of *mal-de-mer* as a possible result of bearing a hand on board a racing yacht had never crossed my mind, it was so incongruous. To be sure, I had suffered agonies crossing the Channel, but that was a different thing altogether; everybody allows that passage to be the most trying known to travellers. But on board a ten-ton cutter in the Clyde! I laughed pleasantly at Mrs Jones's forebodings, and said that I feared she did not know much about yachting.

'I daresay you will know more in a day or two, Algernon,' she said dryly. 'All that glitters isn't gold, you know.'

Mrs Jones has a somewhat irritating habit of combining prophecy and proverb; but justice compels me to admit that she is very often right. I was foolish enough to tell her the details of a day's fishing I had with Bilston up in Yorkshire once, and she has never ceased reminding me how she warned me not to go. My troubles on that occasion have furnished her with texts for many a lecture, and now she seems to take a placid satisfaction in contemplating the discomforts which may attend my present expedition. It is not reassuring; and I go up-stairs to change my clothes, harassed by unsailor-like doubts as to the unqualified pleasures of the prospective cruise.

Two days later I am standing on the *Rosebud's* deck, enjoying the magnificent scenery of the Clyde at Wemyss Bay. It is a lovely morning, and there is enough wind to send the yacht quietly through the waves without making her lean over too much. Macstane, a very pleasant young fellow called Baynes, a weather-beaten old tar answering to the name of Sandy, and my humble self, compose the crew. I have helped them as much as I can in getting up the sails; but the numbers of ropes are so awfully confusing, that I contented myself with pulling and

hauling just when I was told, so as to avoid getting into scrapes.

'We must get out the spinnaker, Sandy,' says Macstane, who is steering, to the ancient mariner. — 'Will you fellows give him a hand?' he adds addressing Baynes and me.

Of course I am delighted to assist, and should be even more so if I had the faintest notion what a spinnaker is. It's a sail of some kind, no doubt; but where it is to go I confess I am quite unable to see; however, I follow Baynes forward, and wait in readiness to act upon orders.

'Can you swim, Mr Jones?' says Baynes in a half-whisper, as I help him to let down a thing he calls the 'boom.'

'Not very well,' I reply, a little anxiously. — 'Why?'

Mr Baynes glances at Macstane to see that he isn't listening, and says very gravely: 'Macstane oughtn't to have brought you if you're not a good swimmer; he'll cram on every inch of canvas, irrespective of the boat's ability to bear it, if he takes it into his head. He's a perfectly reckless man himself, you know.'

This is rather disquieting; the breeze is freshening already; and when we have succeeded in setting the spinnaker, the yacht heels over in a manner which is very alarming. I begin to wish that I hadn't come; but Macstane is smoking his pipe so coolly that I don't like to do more than hint at the very unnecessary danger we are incurring.

'Do you think she can carry so much quite safely?' I ask with assumed carelessness.

'Carry it! My dear fellow, you don't know what the *Rosebud* can do if she tries. I've got a lovely flying jib to set next—a thundering big one. Wait till we get *that* up.'

Baynes, who is standing behind him, gives a perceptible start, and looks at me with an expression of undisguised horror. Really, I didn't think Macstane would have been guilty of such foolhardiness, and I feel myself turning pale.

'Beginning to feel queer?' asks Baynes, looking at me as he lights a huge cigar and sits down at my side. 'We shall find it a good deal livelier down at Largs.'

I do not quite understand Mr Baynes. I feel perfectly well, and he ought to know that my change of colour is the echo of his own natural apprehensions. I suspect that he dreads giving offence to Macstane, who is very touchy, and the most obstinate man on earth. Perhaps it will be wisest for me to take my cue from him and say nothing about the sails; but I confess that I don't like the prospect before us at all.

We are tearing along through the water at an extraordinary pace, and if I could only be sure that Baynes's fears are unfounded, my highest ideal of yachting would be realised; but I cannot forget that we are in momentary peril of our lives. Presently, we sweep smoothly round a headland, and a sight bursts upon my view which reawakens my old enthusiasm. We are entering Largs Bay; the blue stretch of water is swarming with white-sailed yachts of every size, from the pyramids of canvas, which Baynes tells me are sixty tonners, to boats smaller than the *Rosebud*. They are dashing and flitting in all directions, wheeling round with the graceful ease of seabirds, threading their way amid the fleet

like things of life. The strains of the band on board the flag-dressed steam-yacht which belongs to the Commodore add to my rising excitement. It is glorious; and if the wind would moderate a little, I would light a cigarette; but as Baynes foretold, it is 'livelier' here than at Wemyss Bay; and before long I begin to remember that last trip I made across the Channel.

Macstane gives Baynes charge of the tiller and hails a rowing-boat. He says he must go and pay his respects to the Commodore, and invites me to go with him. I should like to be presented to the great man, who seems to be a kind of yachting Admiral; but the boat is pitching so frightfully that I wouldn't attempt to get into it from the *Rosebud's* deck for any consideration; so Macstane swings himself over the side and goes alone. I wish Mr Baynes's tobacco was not so dreadfully strong; if he were not almost a stranger, I should ask him to stop smoking, for I'm certain it's the smell which is causing my otherwise unaccountable disinclination to move. The breeze, which is very unsteady, drops to the lightest breath by-and-by; and as soon as the yacht is on a decently even keel, I pull myself together and go forward to escape the smoke and have a chat with Sandy, who looks a very intelligent person.

'How long do you think it will take us to go round the course to-day, Sandy?' I ask with the air of a pupil addressing a professor.

'Thaat,' says the ancient mariner thoughtfully, 'wull depend on the wind.'

I ought to have known that, of course; but Sandy gives the information in a tone which implies that he doesn't expect much common-sense from me; and I do not feel flattered.

'I suppose you know most of the yachts on the Clyde, Sandy?' I say presently with great respect.

'Ou ay, amais a!'

'Do you think, then, that the *Rosebud* has a chance of winning?'

Sandy gives me a look which says as plainly as speech, 'I never answer riddles,' as he replies: 'Thaat wull depend on what ither boaties are gaun.'

I feel thoroughly snubbed this time. I have heard a great deal about Scotch caution, and perhaps I ought not to have expected him to commit himself to an opinion; but I do think he might be a trifle less patronising in his manner. I make one more attempt to abstract information from him on a point which is fraught with anxious interest to me. 'Do you think,' I say very confidentially, 'that the yacht is at all likely to capsize with the amount of canvas she is carrying?'

Sandy glances upwards carelessly. 'She micht,' he says, 'if it were blawing hard enouch.'

I will not try to get anything more out of Sandy; he appears to be a very hard, unsympathetic person.

We have been gliding aimlessly about the bay, waiting for Macstane, who returns in half an hour and clambers on board in a state of raving frenzy. 'Such folly!' he exclaims as he resumes charge of the tiller and gesticulates with his right hand. 'We're to race in cruising trim! Spinnakers not allowed! Not even flying jibs!'

Macstane's feelings have evidently overcome

him : he began in a voice of thunder, and he speaks of the forbidden jibs in a wail of sorrow.

'I am so sorry to disappoint you, old man,' he says to me affectionately.

'Oh, don't mind it on my account,' I reply with great sincerity. 'I am not in the *least* disappointed, really.'

Macstane looks as if he didn't believe me, whereas, in fact, I am yearning to embrace the Commodore, or whoever is responsible for the prohibition of spinnakers and flying jibs. It has taken an immense weight off my mind; but Baynes's well-feigned expressions of regret warn me not to be too profuse in my assurances of contentment with the condition of affairs.

'What time does our race start?' I ask, when Macstane's growlings are beginning to subside.

'Half-past eleven,' he answers with a deep sigh.

'It's ten minutes after the hour now,' I say, looking at my watch. 'Perhaps we—that is, don't you think we ought to begin and take down the spinnaker?—It's an *awful* pity,' I add with a tremendous effort.

'Take it in,' replies Macstane with gloomy resignation. I wish I could feel a little sorry for him, he does look so dejected; I can't manage that, but go forward with Baynes, trying to appear as sorrowful as he does, and help Sandy to stow away the sail and trice up the boom.

There are seven other yachts in our race; and in spite of the crowding round what Sandy calls the 'boo-ey,' the *Rosebud* gets the best of the start, and passes the line (whatever that is) just as the gun is fired. The breeze has freshened considerably, and Macstane brightens up, whilst my spirits sink in proportion. I do hope I shan't be ill—it would look so foolish. By-and-by the wind drops again, and the boats lie idly in a clump, with flapping sails, whilst the owners shout greetings and chaff to each other. There appears to be a great lack of earnestness about yacht-racing. Our mainsail has been slackened out as far as it will go, and the boom waggles heavily over the water. Sandy and Baynes are lying flat on their backs enjoying the sunshine, and Macstane is nodding at the helm. 'It's a drifting-match,' he says sadly, 'a wretched drifting-match.' (Macstane seems very hard to please.)

'I wish I could be of some use,' I say eagerly. I really mean it, for this kind of thing is not my idea of racing at all.

Macstane looks at the mainsail and then at me. 'You might sit on the boom,' he says at last.

I don't quite see what good I shall do by sitting on the boom, but I assent cheerfully, and take up my position under his directions. 'I'd like you to sit out,' he says, 'as far out as you can go, with your feet against the gun'le—it will hold the spar so much steadier.—Can't you get out a little farther?—Thanks; that's capital.'

If Macstane was given to practical joking, I should think that he was taking advantage of me. I am sitting gingerly on the round polished boom, with my toes against the edge of the yacht's gunwale. I am desperately uncomfortable; the slightest slip of hand or foot will result in my falling plump into the oily swell below. It isn't kind of Macstane to have asked me to do this; and I swear I won't attempt to get out an inch farther if he offers me a thousand pounds. I wonder how long he means to keep me here?

'Your weight is the thing,' he says with great cordiality. 'Baynes or Sandy would have been no use, they are so light. It's a pity your legs aren't a little longer; you could get out so much farther.'

For the first time in my life I thank my stars for a very short pair of legs; but I do not altogether appreciate Macstane's criticism of my personality. He speaks as though I had been designed and sent to Scotland for no other purpose than to sit on the boom of the *Rosebud*. I can't take my eyes off the heaving water underneath, and a cold perspiration breaks out on my brow as I feel how dreadfully slippery the spar is.

'Does this do any good?' I ask Macstane after five minutes' silent agony.

'Not much,' he replies with brutal indifference. 'It's as nearly a dead calm as it can be; but you are as much use there as you could be anywhere else.'

It will be a very long time before I form one of a crew to man the *Rosebud* or any other vessel of the kind. I would not have believed that Macstane was such a callous ruffian.

'I think we might have lunch now,' he says after a long pause; 'there's not a sign of wind in the heavens.—Come along down to the cabin.'

We leave Baynes and Sandy in charge, and Macstane scrambles down the perpendicular ladder into what he calls his 'stateroom.' It is an age since I have essayed climbing a ladder, and the hatchway is barely wide enough to let me through; half-way I stick hard and fast, and, to make matters worse, my feet slip off the rungs. I cannot help giving a cry of dismay, which attracts attention to my attitude above and below.

'Shall I give you a shove down?' asks Baynes anxiously.

'Shall I give you a pull by the legs?' asks Macstane's muffled voice below.

'No, no, no,' I cry, struggling breathlessly to regain a footing on the ladder. 'I'm all right now.'

My last glimpse of the upper world shows me Sandy and Baynes grinning all down their backs; and I alight on the cabin floor in a heap, to find Macstane chuckling over me with a violence which threatens apoplexy. There are phases of yachting-life which are wholly devoid of romance.

'Hurt?' asks Macstane, trying to compose his features.

'Not at all,' I reply, rubbing my shoulder and trying to dissemble my feelings.—'I'm quite ready for my lunch, though.'

'There's one good thing about a calm, and only one,' says my host as we sit down—'we can lunch comfortably.'

To my mind, a calm possesses but one drawback, and that is the necessity for some one to sit on the boom; but I don't tell Macstane this opinion.

In spite of the threatening qualms which rendered me miserable an hour or two ago, I make an excellent meal off cold beef, cold apple tart, and bread and cheese. Under Macstane's advice, I take plenty of strong whisky-and-water. Just as it is the best cure, it's the best preventive of sea-sickness, he says, with the confidence of a man who knows; and as I have never heard anything to the contrary, I act upon his recommendation. It is very cool and pleasant down here in the

cabin; and if it wasn't such an undertaking to get through the hatchway, I should like to stay below. But I must get on deck sooner or later, and I'm perfectly certain that the least motion of the yacht would render quite impossible a feat I can only perform with difficulty in a dead calm.

'Going on deck?' asks Macstane as he sees me bracing myself up for the task. 'By all means, if you prefer it; then Baynes can come down to lunch.'

I squeeze myself through the hatchway with a mighty effort, and relieve Baynes, who is dozing over the tiller. He disappears below, leaving me in sole charge of the boat, for Sandy is snoring noisily on the deck forward. I won't awaken him unless I see some signs of wind and his services are required, for his manner when I spoke to him this morning did not impress me at all favourably. I cast a shuddering glance at the boom, which hangs over the water jerking lazily at the tackle; I would almost prefer a gale of wind for the rest of the day to another hour's duty sitting upon it. I had no idea one would meet with such disagreeables yacht-racing.

There are half a score of yachts lying becalmed all round the *Rosebud*; one much too close to be pleasant, in case a breeze should spring up; but I suppose it can't be avoided in weather like this. I am yawning frightfully. What a sleepy day it is. There is something very soothing in the gentle cradle-like rocking caused by the swell; and the hum of voices below only adds to my drowsiness. Every one I can see on board the other yachts appears to be taking a siesta. It looks shamefully negligent.

I don't know how it happened, but next time I raise my eyes I see that the *Rosebud's* bowsprit is trying to force its way through the mainsail of the boat nearest her, and the crew are bawling in stentorian tones at me. Sandy wakes up and springs wildly to his feet shouting: 'Pit doon the hellum, pit doon the hellum!'

Of course I take my hand off the tiller as though the brass binding had become suddenly red-hot. It does not appear to be a wise proceeding at such a juncture, but Sandy ought to know best, and I obey him promptly. Ah! I thought he was making some mistake; the instant I let go my hold of the tiller, he rushes aft and seizes it himself, telling me very rudely to 'let be.' After a great deal of rushing to and fro and much unnecessary noise, which draws the attention of the whole fleet upon us, our bowsprit is got clear, and the two yachts lie side by side, as if they couldn't make up their minds to separate again. A stout man who has been bellowing orders to the men on the other boat now turns to me and stretches out his hand. 'I claim a foul, sir! A more unseaman-like bungle I never saw. I'll trouble you for your name.' He says this very angrily and rudely, and I am debating in my own mind whether to apologise and take no further notice of him, or to call up Macstane, when he begins once more: 'What's your name, sir? I claim a foul, I tell you—a foul!'

'I'm not quite sure that I apprehend your meaning,' I said; 'but my name is Jones.' I spoke very civilly indeed, conscious that I was to blame for the accident; but he flies into a passion almost before the words are out of my mouth.

'Don't play the fool with me, sir! I am Mr Mactavish of Drumblewhin. Will you give up your name, sir?'

I always make a point of being courteous to strangers, but this person's manner is really very offensive. I draw myself up and answer with dignified hauteur: 'My name, sir, is Algernon Sedgewick Jones, of No. 93 Cranwood Terrace, Tooting.' I fold my arms and look very hard at him as I say this; but he doesn't seem to be pacified at all, and is beginning again, when another gentleman, who has been sitting with his back to me, stops Mr Mactavish, and, turning round far enough to see me with one eye, says languidly: 'What is your cutter's name, sir?'

'The *Rosebud*. She belongs to my friend, Mr Macstane of Glasgow.'

'Very good, sir. You have fouled the *Dido* most clumsily, and Mr Mactavish will claim the penalty.'

He adds something in an undertone which I do not quite hear, but it seems to amuse Sandy immensely. I cast a withering glance upon him, and go to the skylight to summon the others. They are both sound asleep (really, yachting-men are singularly lazy), and Macstane doesn't seem much pleased at being disturbed.

'What's happened?' he says. 'Breeze coming?'

'No,' I reply, feeling very much ashamed of myself. 'We fouled another yacht, the *Dido*.'

'Fouled the *Dido*!' exclaims my host.

'Fouled the *Dido*!' echoes Baynes, rubbing his eyes.

'Yes,' I reply. 'I am so deeply vexed about it.'

Macstane rolls off his seat, and in half a minute appears at the hatchway. 'I would rather you had fouled any boat in the race—all the boats in the race—rather than the *Dido*,' he says with strained calmness. 'She belongs to The Mactavish of Drumblewhin.'

'So I was given to understand,' I answer sorrowfully, glancing at the *Dido*, whose deck is now deserted, except by two sailors.

'Is he on board himself?' asks Macstane, wheeling round upon me so sharply that I jump backwards and nearly fall overboard.

'He's aboard,' says Sandy, answering for me with a nod of profound meaning.

'If Mactavish is on board,' says Macstane solemnly to Baynes, 'every yachtsman on the Clyde will know to-night that the very first time the *Rosebud* started in a race she was handled by a—by a' (he looks at me and hesitates) 'by a man who doesn't know port from starboard; and they will say I did it.'

'I told Mr Mactavish my name,' I say eagerly.

Macstane waves me aside with a groan, and sits down with his hands in his pockets, kicking his heels in the cockpit.

'Mactavish will claim the foul as a matter of course; and it will be reported in the *Scotsman* and the *Glasgow Herald*, and all the papers,' he continues, trying to fathom the deep disgrace I have brought upon him as a yachtsman.

I can't think of anything to say to comfort him. I am very, very sorry for the mishap; but I do think he takes it to heart rather too much. He sits in moody silence for a quarter of an hour, until the surface of the water is rippled by a breath of wind which makes the sails flap heavily.

'It's no good now,' he says in a hollow voice to no one in particular.

Nothing but my intense desire to make atonement would move me to make the offer, and I do it, forgetting that Maestane has no conception of the martyrdom it is to me.

'Would you like me to go and sit on the boom again?' I ask humbly.

He shakes his head. 'No; thanks, old fellow. We are disqualified by that foul, and couldn't win now anyway.'

Disqualified! Can't win now at all! And I am solely to blame for it. I will never, *never* place foot on the deck of a yacht again.

VEGETABLE BUTTER.

BUTTER is the name given, in a chemical sense, to all oleaginous substances which remain solid at a temperature of seventy-one to eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit. For popular purposes it is a misnomer, as all the fatty matters included in the term could hardly be used by modern housewives even for culinary purposes. The plants yielding the butter, although not confined to one country, nor even to one natural order, are nevertheless more abundant in West Africa and India than in other parts of the world, and are mostly members of the order Sapotaceæ. The *Bassia Parkii*, a plant indigenous to West Africa, and which derives its specific name from the renowned African traveller, Mungo Park, is particularly rich in the product, and is a source of great utility and profit to the natives. The fruit itself when ripe is eaten by them, and is said by travellers who have tasted it to be not unpleasant. It is about the size of a large prune, rather sour, but otherwise of an excellent flavour.

The butter is obtained from the seeds. The following is the manner in which the fruit is collected and treated. The crop commences at the end of May and finishes during the last days of September. The women and children go each day into the forests, especially after storms and tornadoes, and fetch large baskets or calabashes to the village filled with fruit which the wind has brought down. They throw them into cylindrical holes, that are found here and there in the Bambarra villages even in the middle of the roads. Whilst in these holes the fruits lose their flesh, which rots off: they are left there during several months, sometimes for the whole of the winter. The nuts are then placed in a kind of vertical oven; a fire is kept up under them, and this causes them to lose their moisture. As soon as they are dried, the shells are broken, and the white kernel is peeled, and then ground and made into a homogeneous mass. This is then placed in water which is kept boiling. The fatty matter floats to the top, and the dirt goes to the bottom. The butter is then put into a jar filled with cold water and beaten clear. Whilst in this jar it absorbs a certain amount of water, and to get rid of this it is taken out and beaten again. By this primitive process only about ten to twelve per cent. of the butter can be saved.

What the natives would do without it, it is hard to conceive. It practically serves them as food, medicine, and raiment (in the sense that they oil their skins with it). They eat it in the same way as we do ordinary butter, and mixed with an animal fat, it is considered a panacea against all evils and diseases. It is also employed for lighting purposes, and the smoke which is produced by its

combustion is said to be very efficacious in the cure of snake-bites. It is also largely used for soap-making; for this latter purpose it has more than once been introduced to European manufacturers, but up to the present has never been utilised on an extensive scale. No doubt, as the resources of the country are further developed, and inter-communication between the inland and the coast becomes more facilitated, we shall find this as well as other products equally valuable make their way to this market.

The Indian representative of the family, the *Bassia latifolia*, is very abundant in all parts of India, and the butter expressed from the seed is used in much the same way by the native Indians as that of the *Bassia Parkii* is by the West Africans, whilst the fruit in many parts forms a staple article of food. Every part of the tree, in fact, is of use; the timber being hard and strong, close, and even-grained, is used for the wheels of carriages, railway sleepers, &c. The flowers when dried have somewhat the odour and appearance of sultana raisins. They are produced in enormous quantities in March and April, after the old leaves have fallen; and before the new leaves have appeared, the crop rarely fails. The fleshy flowers fall off and cover the ground beneath the trees, and are gathered eagerly by the natives every morning during the flowering season. A single tree yields from two to four hundred pounds-weight of flowers. They are very rich in sugar, and yield when fermented a large quantity of spirit, as much as 6·16 gallons of proof spirit per hundredweight having been obtained from them. The spirit is manufactured to a great extent in India, and it is said that the government receive quite a large amount for duty on the spirits distilled.

The flowers have from time to time been placed before important distillers in England; but owing to a peculiar flavour being developed—caused, it is thought, by the persistent stamens, which it is difficult to remove from the flowers—the spirit distilled has never been brought into consumption in the British market.

NATURE'S REFRAIN.

A SONG OF MAY.

WHAT is the merle reciting
'Mid the leaves of the rowan-tree,
When the shadows rise from the valley,
And the sun leaps out of the sea?
And what is the skylark trilling,
As he soars in a rosy mist,
When the hill-cap awakes from dreaming,
And by Morning is crowned and kiss'd?

What do the waters murmur,
As they throb to the touch of Day?
And what do the young leaves whisper?
And what do the soft winds say?
The Song of songs they are singing,
Wherein our spirits have part:
Listen, Belovèd! all Nature
Doth echo, 'Sweet heart! Sweet heart!'

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

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THE SCENERY OF THE 'BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.'

It has been justly remarked by Lord Macaulay that the misfortunes of Viscount Stair's family 'have furnished poets and novelists with the materials for the darkest and most heartrending tales.' Pre-eminent amongst these is the story of his daughter, Janet Dalrymple, the prototype of Sir Walter Scott's 'Bride of Lammermoor,' who stabbed her bridegroom on their wedding night and died a few days after. Sir Walter is careful to disclaim any intention of tracing the portrait of the first Viscount Stair—one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age—in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton; but he virtually admits the close resemblance between Lady Ashton, the ambitious, hard-hearted, and vindictive mother of the bride, to the wife of the Viscount, Margaret Ross of Balniel, a woman of great ability, but of a violent and domineering temper, who brought him a considerable estate, though she did not contribute much to his domestic happiness. She was popularly nicknamed 'The Witch of Endor;' and was so successful in what she undertook, that she was commonly believed, in that superstitious age, to owe her success to magical arts. It was she who forced her daughter to give her hand to Dunbar of Baldoon, though she knew the girl detested him, and had already plighted her faith to another suitor to whom she was strongly attached.

The incidents which are embodied in Sir Walter Scott's story—the most powerful of all the tragedies the great novelist ever penned—really occurred near Wigtown, in the south-west of Scotland; but he at first declined to give the source from which he drew the materials of his tragic tale, because it might be displeasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties concerned; and probably for the same reason he transferred the scene to the east coast—the counties of East Lothian and Berwick, in which the prototype of Caleb Balderstone flourished. No part of Scotland is richer in traditionary, romantic, and historic incidents,

and Sir Walter has given additional interest to the district by associating it with the pathetic story of the last member of an old Scottish family. Going southward from Edinburgh, we enter upon it as soon as we cross the Esk, at Musselburgh, by an ancient, high, and narrow bridge, supposed to have been built by the Romans, which has been passed by all the sovereigns and ambassadors who for centuries either invaded or visited Scotland: by the Princess Margaret of England when she came to wed James IV.; by her hapless grand-daughter Mary when she visited Seton Castle, as she frequently did, to play at bowls and archery; by James VI. when he set out from his Scottish capital to take possession of the English throne; by his ill-starred son Charles I. when he made his visit to Scotland in 1633 to be crowned; and by his son James VII. when, as Duke of York, before he ascended the throne, he came to rule the country as the viceroy of his brother, Charles II. It was by this old bridge that the Scottish army passed to the battle of Pinkie, when a number of the soldiers and some persons of rank were killed by the cannon-shot from the English ships in the bay. The road leads up a steep brae from the river, and along the edge of the low fields where that disastrous battle was fought, and within sight of Carberry Hill, the scene of Queen Mary's surrender to the confederate nobles.

Proceeding onward, we pass the battlefield of Prestonpans, where the Highlanders in 1745 inflicted an ignominious defeat on the royal army under its incompetent commander, Sir John Cope. At its eastern extremity stood the magnificent mansion of the old and powerful family of the Setons, Earls of Winton, which was demolished towards the close of last century by an Edinburgh lawyer, who, under an illegal and, it was alleged, a fraudulent sale, which was ultimately set aside, obtained possession for some years of the castle and estate. The only object that remains truly worthy of the ancient magnificence of the place, associated with so many interesting events in Scottish history, is the beautiful collegiate church,

founded and richly endowed by the princely Setons. It has been recently cleared of the rubbish which long disfigured it, and put into a tolerable state of repair, to serve as a mausoleum for the Wemyss family.

A short distance to the south is Winton House, a picturesque mansion, which is regarded as the Ravenswood of the *Bride of Lammermoor*. It was erected in 1620 by George, tenth Lord Seton and third Earl of Winton, who was a magnificent builder, on the site of an old house destroyed by the English in Lord Hertford's invasion. It is different from the usual Scottish baronial style of the seventeenth century, and is altogether, externally and internally, a most interesting baronial structure, and every way suitable for the residence of the great old family whose last representative is the hero of Scott's tale. In its splendid adjoining forest he lays the introduction of the Master of Ravenswood to Lucy Ashton, when by his skill as a marksman he rescues her from the fierce attack of one of the wild cattle that roamed its woods. The *Tod's Den* where Bucklaw and Craigenfelt waited his return is about three or four miles distant. The state apartment of the castle was the scene of the signing of the marriage contract between Bucklaw and Lucy Ashton, interrupted by the sudden entrance of Ravenswood, who had hastened thither on his return from the Continent, followed by the furious threats of the vindictive Colonel Ashton, the expostulations of the clergyman, the touching appeal of the affianced lover to his mistress, and her enforced relinquishment of the broken piece of gold, the counterpart of his, and the pledge of their engagement, which till that moment she had worn in her bosom. The marriage contract between Dunbar of Baldoon and Janet Dalrymple was found a few years ago among the papers of the Earl of Selkirk, who inherited Dunbar's estates. The signature of the unfortunate lady bears unmistakable indications of her agitation at the time when she subscribed the document. It is impossible that Sir Walter could have seen it; but he could not have given a more accurate description of the signatures if it had been lying before him.

In that same apartment, after the ill-fated marriage and the bridal banquet, when the dancing was about to begin, the discovery was made that the picture of Sir William Ashton's father had been removed from its place, and in its stead that of old Sir Malise Ravenswood seemed to frown wrath and vengeance upon the party assembled below, as if ready to utter the words, 'I bide my time,' according to tradition the signal for the deadly assault on the usurper of his castle and estate.

In Winton House is also laid the last scene of this terrible tragedy, when the bridegroom is found lying on the threshold of the bridal chamber covered with blood, and the bride is discovered in the corner of the great old-fashioned

chimney of the apartment, her nightclothes torn and dabbled with blood, her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. The fine old church of Pencaitland, within a few minutes' walk of Winton House, will serve as an appropriate representative of Ravenswood Church, the scene of the marriage and burial of the ill-fated bride.

Leaving this interesting mansion, recently the residence of the late venerable Lady Ruthven, a charming specimen of a Scottish lady of the old school, we pass in succession the seat of the celebrated patriot, Fletcher of Salton; Lethington (now called Lennoxlove), associated with the memory of Queen Mary's famous Secretary Maitland; and pass through the ancient royal burgh of Haddington, the birthplace of John Knox, with the remains of its splendid Franciscan church, the 'Lamp of Lothian,' burned by the English during Hertford's devastating invasion. Hailes Castle, the principal stronghold of the powerful family of Hepburn, is seen in ruins, on the banks of the Scottish Tyne. A short way below, on the left bank of that river, is Tynningham, the seat of the Earl of Haddington, with its famous trees and magnificent holly hedges, which far surpass in size and extent those of which Evelyn boasts so proudly in his *Sylva*. In its vicinity is Whitekirk, the scene of the labours of St Baldred, and a celebrated place of pilgrimage in the olden times. At a short distance to the north is North Berwick Law, and the massive remains of Tantallon Castle, a principal stronghold of the great old house of Douglas, standing on a projecting rock, round three sides of which the ocean flows. Opposite is the Bass Rock, rising over three hundred feet sheer out of the sea, an old possession of the Lauder family, a prison of the Covenanters, and the last spot in Scotland held for James VII. after the Revolution.

Pursuing our onward route, we pass the ancient burgh of Dunbar, with the scanty remains of its famous castle, which stood many a siege of the English invaders, notably one in which it was defended with brilliant courage and success by 'Black Agnes,' the Countess of Dunbar, and daughter of the gallant Regent Randolph, Earl of Moray. A short way beyond, the road crosses the Brocks-burn, near Broxmouth House, a seat of the Duke of Roxburgh, where Cromwell had his headquarters before the battle of Dunbar, and passes through the battle-field where General Leslie was defeated by him in September 1650.

A few miles beyond this memorable spot, the county of Berwick is entered at a deep ravine, spanned by one of the most splendid viaducts in the kingdom, on the one side of which is the old fortalice of Innerwick, and on the other the ruined stronghold of Dunglass, which was blown up by an English page who fired the powder-magazine when the castle was held by the Covenanters in 1640, out of revenge, it was said, for having been chastised by his master. The Earl of Haddington along with his brother and a number of the neighbouring gentlemen perished by the explosion.

The tract of country on which we now enter is high and flat, but is broken at little distances by numerous deep and narrow ravines, each of

which has at the bottom a slender stream running from the adjoining Lammertown hills down to the sea. The most noted of these is the wooded ravine of Pease Dean, over which a bridge was thrown about a century ago, one hundred and twenty-seven feet in height, and regarded at the time of its erection as the highest bridge in the world. In former times an army, in order to cross this tremendous ravine, required to move singly, first down and then up the paths which traverse in zigzag fashion its steep and almost perpendicular sides. This was one of the passes which the Scottish army occupied when they hemmed in Oliver Cromwell at Dunbar, and which, in his despatch to the Parliament, he happily describes as a place 'where one man to hinder is better than twelve to make way.'

About five miles beyond Pease Bridge is the celebrated fortress of Fast Castle, the undoubted prototype of the 'Wolf's Crag' of the *Bride of Lammertown*. The solitary and naked tower, of which only a few fragments now remain, stands on a precipitous rock on the seashore, nearly isolated, and connected with the mainland merely by a narrow isthmus only a few feet broad, and so entirely unsheltered and unprotected that it would be dangerous to attempt to cross it in a high wind. 'On three sides,' wrote Sir Walter, 'the rock was precipitous; on the fourth, which was that towards the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge; but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow courtyard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables, partly ruinous, and enclosed on the landward front by a low embattled wall; while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a grayish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant.' The mainland at this point overhangs the castle walls, and is at least a hundred and fifty feet above the level of their site, so that after artillery came into operation it was virtually defenceless.

Though this wild and desolate spot is now visited chiefly—indeed, we may say exclusively—in consequence of its having been immortalised by the pen of the great novelist, Fast Castle in ancient times was a place of celebrity, and was connected with one of the most mysterious incidents in Scottish history. The Princess Margaret of England, after her marriage by proxy to James IV. at Lammertown, lodged at Fast Castle a night on her way to join her royal husband at Edinburgh. The castle was an ancient possession of the great Border family of Home. Patrick Home of Fast Castle was one of the negotiators of the truce between Henry VII. and James IV.; and Cuthbert Home of Fast Castle fought at Flodden under the standard of his chief, Lord Home. Fast Castle was repeatedly taken and retaken by the English. In 1570, when garrisoned by only ten men, Sir William Drury, governor of Berwick, sent two hundred men to attack it. After it surrendered to this force, a party of only fourteen English soldiers was left in it 'as a sufficient force to keep it against all Scotland, the situation being so strong.'

From the Homes, Fast Castle and the adjoining

lands passed to Robert Logan of Restalrig, by his marriage to the eldest daughter of Sir Patrick Home, who fell fighting under the banner of the Regent Moray at the battle of Langside. It was from its connection with Logan, who was a daring and unscrupulous villain, that Fast Castle has derived its chief historical celebrity and interest. A meeting was arranged to be held within its walls, and probably was held, between Logan and Napier of Merchiston, the celebrated inventor of logarithms. Logan believed that his castle contained a vast amount of hidden treasure, for which Napier undertook to make search by divination—'the black art.' It was stipulated in the bond signed by these two strange and incongruous confederates, and which is still extant, that Napier was to be recompensed with an exact third of whatever treasure was found, besides payment of his expenses, whatever might be the result of his search, and a safe-conduct back to Edinburgh. It is not known whether the philosopher actually journeyed to the spray-beaten tower of Fast Castle, and did there practise his 'craft and ingyne;' but he appears to have very soon discovered the true character of his Berwickshire host, for we find him two years after inserting in a lease of a part of his estate an express stipulation that the tenant should not sublet any portion of the land to any person of the name of Logan.

In Logan's hands Fast Castle appears to have become a den of highway robbers. In June 1592-3, he was denounced to the Privy-council for sending out two of his servants to rob travellers on the highway near his house. They had attacked Robert Gray, burgess of Edinburgh, and taken from him nine hundred and fifty pounds, besides 'battering him to the peril of his life.'

But the most important and celebrated incident which occurred in the history of this ancient stronghold was the use to which, in all probability, it was to be put if the Gowrie conspiracy had been successful. There is good reason to believe that it was the intention of the conspirators to convey King James from the Earl of Gowrie's house at Perth down the Tay, and thence by sea to Fast Castle. Once there, it was no doubt thought that the impregnable strength of the fortress would secure the conspirators against a rescue; while the proximity to the English Border would enable them to make the most of their royal captive in any negotiation with his jealous and unscrupulous rival, Queen Elizabeth. Logan's co-operation was purchased by a promise of the lands of Dirleton, which he designated 'the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland.' His complicity in this mysterious conspiracy was not suspected; and it was not until six years afterwards, when he had been two years in his grave, that it was brought to light by the discovery of the letters which had passed between him and the Gowrie brothers. His bones were exhumed, in order that the sentence of forfeiture might be legally pronounced over them; and Fast Castle and Restalrig, Logan's estate near Edinburgh, were bestowed on some of James's greedy favourites.

The historical celebrity of Fast Castle may have had something to do with its selection by Scott as the prototype of Wolf's Crag; but in all probability the great novelist was induced by its

solitary and forlorn condition to picture it as the appropriate residence of the last member of a great old ruined family. 'A wilder or more disconsolate dwelling,' he says, 'it was perhaps difficult to conceive. The sombre and heavy sound of the billows, successively dashing against the rocky beach at a profound distance beneath, was to the ear what the landscape was to the eye—a symbol of unvaried and monotonous melancholy, not unmingled with horror.' The feeling of desolation which the scene still inspires is not lessened, now that the ruins of the lonely sea-beaten tower are tenanted only by the seamew and the cormorant. It will be recollected by the readers of the tale that the novelist describes the Master of Ravenswood as having been engulfed in the quicksands, called the Kelpie's Flow, which lay between the tower and the sand-knolls where Colonel Ashton was impatiently waiting to encounter him in a duel. It has transpired that this was suggested to Scott by a story respecting the first Lord Belhaven, who contrived to conceal his existence for six years by causing it to be given out that 'on ryding across the Solway sands both he and his horse quhairon he raid were sunk in these quicksands and drowned.' It was owing to Mr Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe having on one occasion related this singular story to Sir Walter Scott, that the idea first occurred to him that he should terminate the existence of the Master of Ravenswood by a death similar to that which was feigned by Lord Belhaven, and which Sir Walter has made so deeply affecting as the final fate of his hero.

The other places connected with the story have been, of course, identified with corresponding places existing in the district. The churchyard of Houndwood is supposed to be the old solitary burial-ground of Hermitage, with its one or two shattered yew-trees, 'situated in the nook formed by the eddying sweep of a stream which issued from the adjoining hills. A rude cavern in an adjacent rock, which in the interior was cut into the shape of a cross, formed the hermitage, where some Saxon saint had in ancient times done penance, and given name to the place. The rich abbey of Coldingham had in later days established a chapel in the neighbourhood, of which no vestige was now visible. In the churchyard which surrounded it, warriors and barons had been buried of old, but their names were forgotten and their monuments demolished.' In this solitary spot, old blind Alice, the faithful retainer of the Ravenswood family, was laid. The fishing village of Eyemouth may represent Wolf's Hope, the scene of Caleb Balderstone's raiding exploits, and of the entertainment which John Girder the cooper gave to the Marquis of A—. In former days, it was noted for its contraband trade, as Sir Walter makes John Girder's mother-in-law admit, in which all the people, high and low, young and old, rich and poor, were more or less engaged. It was said of it fifty years ago that it had still a dark and cunning look, was full of curious blind alleys, and had as much of its buildings under as above ground.

Such are the places supposed to have been in Scott's mind when he laid out the scenes of his novel. Geographically, they lie too far apart to have formed the scene of any such story as Scott describes; but under other names, and grouped

anew by the all-fashioning eye of genius, they form the imaginary locality in which the novelist's men and women worked out the tragedy of their lives.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXII.

THIS made things worse for the moment; but by-and-by it made them better. She was certainly doing no wrong, and Mr Snelling had not yet the right to express in so pronounced a fashion his disapproval of anything she might do.

'I should know it was you, Cecilia,' said John, indicating the pink figure in the sketch.

'I don't know how,' answered Cecilia; 'you can't see the face.'

'No,' said the boy; 'but you turn your head in that way.'

'Very—pretty—attitude,' said Jousserau in his halting English; and stooping over the canvas, he laid a careful touch upon the figure with his brush.

Cecilia blushed; but now that she came to think of it, it really was rather a taking attitude. She had not the advantage of reflecting mirrors at her toilet, and except for what the looking-glass showed her frankly when she fronted it, could form no idea of her own personal aspect. In a general way, she approved of it, and she had her curiosities, like the rest of her sex. It had even occurred to her—as if it had been an idea entirely of her own invention—that it would be agreeable to be aware of one's personal appearance all round. The report of the most tasteful and trustworthy companion with respect to the condition of one's back hair, for instance, was less satisfactory than one actual ocular demonstration might be. This being sketched was one way of realising the vision, and so far it was eminently satisfactory. There were a grace and charm about the pictured figure which she had not had vanity enough to claim.

Jousserau was the better satisfied with the figure because it was his own handiwork; and Cecilia was far more interested in it than she would have been if any one else had sat as model.

'Charming!' said the artist, laying another touch upon it. 'Very. Yes. Oh, very.'

He was obviously a discerning young man, and the girl was impelled to steal a look at him. His frankness of compliment was new to her experience; but she liked it none the less because of its novelty. He was so very easy with it, and seemed to express his admiration so naturally, that it was scarcely embarrassing at all.

'This,' said Jousserau, indicating the picture with his brush, 'is not my force.' He turned and spoke in his own language: 'John, what is the English for *paysage*?—John shook his head to express his ignorance, and the artist was compelled to get on without his help.—'I do not do at my best when I do this. Trees—I am no good. Fields, hills—no good. I paint the face, the robe, the hands. Oh, with a great difference!'

'Indeed?' said Cecilia, not well knowing what else to say.

'At this,' continued Jousserau, indicating the landscape, 'I practise, and shall be better. Oh, yes. In time. Without a doubt. But I am not yet strong.'

'I think it is very beautiful,' Cecilia answered honestly. It was not only beautiful, but quite wonderful in her eyes.

Jousserau snatched the sketch delicately from the easel, poising it between both palms, and held it out to her. 'If mees approves,' he said. 'It is nothing. But—if mees would like it.'

'Oh no; I couldn't,' she cried, shrinking back. 'I couldn't even think of such a thing.'

'Why not?' he asked. 'Pray. Yes. It is nothing. It is bad, oh, very bad, but that makes so easy to accept it, and so hard to say no.'

'No; thank you,' she answered. 'I couldn't rob you of it.'

'Ah!' he said, artfully feigning deep humiliation. 'It is too bad to take. It is not worth your while. I beg your pardon. Shall I row it a-vay?'

'Please, don't do that, sir,' said Cecilia; 'but I cannot take it. It is very beautiful, but I must not take it.' The young man had begun to be nearly embarrassing, and there was evidently but one way to be taken with him. She fell back upon rustic candour and dignity. 'I have been told you have different manners in your country, and I daresay they are nice for those who know them. But in England girls do not take presents from young men.'

'Presents?' queried Jousserau. 'Oh, yes. Gifts. Can you call this a gift? It is nothing.'

'Thank you very much indeed,' said Cecilia, so decidedly that he returned the sketch to the easel and forbore to press her further.

'I am—what you call it?—rude,' he said. 'It is not good any more in my country than here. I do not mean harm, but I am savage.'

He looked so very humble and contrite, that she smiled at him; and straightway his swarthy handsome face beamed in answer, and he made a new movement towards the easel. She shook her head seriously, and he paused midway, again as suddenly contrite as a child.

'Not to show,' he asked, picking his way carefully over the treacherous boulders of the foreign language, 'that I am pardon.'

'You are very kind,' she said; 'but English people always say what they mean. We never say No and mean Yes, or say Yes and mean No.'

'True?' asked the little man, smiling once more. 'You are wonderful people. With us, we do often so; and the young meesses—oh, always!'

'So they do here, Mr Jousserau,' said Master Will.

'Not if they respect themselves,' answered Cecilia dryly. Then, with great sweetness: 'I have overstayed my time; I must wish you good-morning, sir.—Thank you for having let me see you paint.'

'It is I who must say sank you,' said Jousserau, raising his hat and bowing. 'I hope I have not frightened you with my savage ways?'

'Not at all,' the girl answered, half laughing.

She had not heard the hurried returning hoof-beats, and no one else seemed to have noticed them; but just at this moment Snelling's voice

was heard calling from the road: 'Miss Shorthouse, a word with you, if you please.'

'If you please, Mr Snelling,' Cecilia answered, turning and moving towards him.

Snelling rode to the open gate, and there dismounting, led his horse by the reins into the meadow. His brow was black with anger, and his clean-shaven lips were tight-set in the effort to repress it. 'Considerin', Miss Shorthouse,' he began, and then stammered and halted.

'Considering.' She prompted him rather coolly; but then his face and manner hardly indicated friendship, and she felt anew that he had no right to look at her as he did.

'Considerin' the question that stands as yet unanswered betwixt you and me, do you think it a fair thing to stand here listening whilst my character is took away by a law-breaking vagabond as I could ha' sent to prison a fortnight back, if I had had the mind to do it?'

'I don't know what you mean,' she answered. 'Your name has not been mentioned.'

'My name has not been mentioned?' he repeated in angry astonishment.

'Nobody has spoken about you, Mr Snelling,' she answered; 'or,' she added with the true Midland directness, 'thought about you either, so far as I know.'

'That's as maybe,' he said surlily. 'At any-rate, that fellow's no fit company for a young woman as may one day be my wife.'

'It's early days to talk like that, Mr Snelling,' returned Cecilia. 'I am obliged to you all the same.'

'Obliged?' said Snelling surlily. 'As how, if you please?'

'You let me see what I had to look forward to, Mr Snelling.—I wish you good-morning.'

The courtier had not bargained for this; and he began to see that he had gone too far. Cecilia was young enough to be his daughter, and in his own thoughts he had always taken an authoritative air with her. In his own thoughts he took authoritative airs with everybody, and it seemed to him that nature had given him rights that way. Even if he had been her lover as well as her suitor, her quiet disdain of his interference could hardly have pricked him deeper; but it was necessary to take another tone.

'Miss Shorthouse,' he said, 'you may not know it, but I have better excuses than you think for. If there is another man in the world who has been as sorely tried as me this two weeks past, I know how to be sorry for him. I have had lies upon lies heaped on me by the whole neighbourhood, and the man that stands there'—pointing towards Jousserau with his whip—'is answerable for a round half of 'em. So far as I can find, he has talked to nobody in this parish or its neighbourhood sence first he came here without striving to take away my character. I put that as my excuse for speaking to you as I did.'

'He has said nothing to me,' Cecilia answered. 'Your name has not been named between us.'

Now, so far Snelling had made his *amende*, and the girl, who was of a placable nature, had frankly excused him. Her father was the suitor's partisan, and she had naturally imbibed his opinions. If she had entertained so much as a doubt of them, the question of Mr Snelling's proposal would have been settled in a moment.

But Snelling could not let well alone. 'I shall ask you, Miss Shorthouse,' he said, 'to permit me to see you home.'

'Do you think that needful, Mr Snelling?' the girl asked him, with a little flash of mischief in her eyes.

'I conceive it,' said Snelling clumsily, 'to be my duty to take you out of the way of undesirable acquaintances.'

'Not yet,' said Cecilia; and in the heat of the moment she did what she would not have done on reflection—she walked towards the trio of onlookers and shook hands with them all round. 'Good-morning, sir,' she said to Jousserau. 'Thank you once more.—Good-morning, William.—Good-morning, John.—You must come and see me when you can find time, both of you.' Then, with a demure little courtesy to the foreigner, she left the meadow without so much as a look or a word for Snelling. He, beating his corduroyed leg with his whip, and timing the blows with an emphatic motion of his foot upon the grass, looked after them until she had passed the gate, and then turned his face upon Jousserau. It would have been an exquisite consolation to have been able to flog his traducer, who not only spoke the truth about him, but was a foreigner into the bargain, and therefore doubly hateful and despicable. The fingers of his left hand seemed to itch for a grip on the little man's collar; but even in the rage of his anger and discomfiture, he had self-control enough to see how little a brawl would help him, and how little excuse the moment offered. He turned abruptly away and marched to the road, the bridle hanging loosely from his arm, and his horse tractably following him. He caught a glimpse of Cecilia as she passed the first bend of the lane; and throwing himself into the saddle, he jogged after her, repressing with difficulty the temptation to provoke a quarrel with his steed.

He was not accustomed to lose his self-control, but from the hour of Tobias Orme's visit with news of the boys, nothing had gone satisfactorily with him. He had discharged Isaiah, and found a hundred little tangled strings in business which without his confidential factotum's aid he had no power to unravel. Isaiah had of course taken his wife with him; and Mrs Winter had been so excellent a housekeeper that he found it difficult to replace her. The woman he had hired in her stead knew nothing of his habits, and he felt himself doomed to months of discomfort before she could learn them. The neighbours were formed into clans about him, some believing in the villainy charged against him, and others deriding the story. However warm his friends were, he met cool greetings enough to anger him a score of times a day. And worst of all, that pernicious young John was back again under conditions which made it imperatively necessary that he should be treated with at least apparent kindness. He hated him so that all the gall in his system—and there was much of it—seemed to flood his own heart whenever he looked at him; and yet he had to speak him fair and treat him softly, as if he loved him. It had been his one vile purpose to cow the boy into incurable dullness, and now his fear was lest he should frighten him into a mere momentary sign of it. Life was like a bed of thorns to him, and wherever he looked he saw or suspected an enemy.

Cecilia looked round as he approached her, and being already a little repentant in her own mind, stood still until he gained her side, when she walked slowly on again.

'I'm sorry, Miss Shorthouse,' he said, bending down from the saddle, 'to find you so mistook my meaning. I meant no impudence. It's clear you took offence, and I daresay you had a right to; but I give you my word as none was meant.'

'I was quite sure of that, Mr Snelling,' she answered; 'and I shall be thankful if you'll say no more about it.'

He sat upright and breathed a great sigh of relief. She heard it, and stole a look at him. Perhaps he cared for her. She did not know. Men had strange ways. She was a little sorry for him and the troubles he had spoken of, and was not well pleased with her own conduct of the morning. She thought she had been forward and unmaidenly. It was presumptuous of the stranger to have set her in his picture. It had been foolish and forward on her part to allow him to do so. She was in a compound mood, such as only women know by actual experience. In plain English, she had shot her bolt, had brought down her quarry, and, woman-like, regretted victory. None the less, she had had a sight of Snelling in a new character, and had made up her mind about him finally.

'It seems, Miss Shorthouse,' said he, 'that I made a mistake in riding back again; and now, with your good leave, I'll turn round again, though I'm loth to quit you.' This was the nearest approach to a love-like speech he had ever made to her, and he felt awkward and stupid when she returned no answer to it. 'I expect,' he added, speaking simply to relieve himself of this embarrassment, 'I may light upon your father in town.'

'He has gone to market,' said Cecilia.

Snelling turned his horse half round in the lane and looked down at her indifferently. 'He put my question afore you a fortnight ago, Miss Shorthouse?'

'Yes, Mr Snelling.'

'And when may I look to get your answer?'

'I have promised my father for to-night,' she responded, looking away from him, her face hidden by the sun-bonnet.

'I hope,' he said, 'as what has happened this morning'll make no difference?'

'I think not,' she answered, with her face still hidden. 'No; it will make no difference.'

On that they parted; and Snelling put his horse to his best speed to make up for lost time. Miss Shorthouse's acres shone just then as the one bright spot on his horizon. He felt that he had behaved with great want of tact, but congratulated himself on having smoothed away the effects of wrath and suspicion by apology. After all, he acknowledged, the girl had only behaved with proper spirit. She was free as yet, and he thought none the worse of her for refusing to obey the bridle before her time came. As Mrs Snelling, she would learn to yield him a natural and befitting obedience. So long as she was Miss Shorthouse, she had a right to set a value upon herself. He thought himself somewhat magnanimous in looking at things in this way, and rode on in fair hope.

He met Shorthouse at the market, as he had

anticipated, and the two dined together at an ordinary frequented by the better class of farmers, Snelling insisting on paying for the dinner, and ordering up after it a bottle of curious old port, with which they accompanied the after-dinner pipe in true barbaric fashion.

Over the cheering vintage, Farmer Shorthouse grew first passably confident, and then cock-sure, and over the final glass clapped Snelling on the shoulder. 'It's all right, my boy,' he said. 'It'll be "Yes" to-night for a fiver.'

'Let's hope so,' said Snelling; but though he took it very calmly and gravely, the father's opinion fortified his own.—'We'll see,' he added comfortably, not wishing to appear too anxious—'we'll see how it turns out. I'll ride over, if you like, towards nine in the evening.'

Having arrived at that understanding, they parted in pursuit of their separate affairs; and in due time Shorthouse, having finished his business, rode home. The bovine unsentimental man was always a little more disposed to be kindly on a market night than on ordinary evenings, because, with his weekly journey to the town, he allowed himself a something extra in the way of dinner, and comforted his heart with a glass of grog amongst his friends before starting homewards. He was a sober creature enough for the rest of the week; but on market nights he reckoned to warm himself like his neighbours; and neither he nor they—good easy folk—thought any harm of it. He jogged on, a little muzzy in his thoughts,—foolish and kind—thinking what a good fellow Snelling was, and what a nice girl was Cecilia, and how he himself would do his heart good at the wedding, and shine at Sir Roger de Coverley after it; and so in the golden evening sunshine reached his own gate, and, surrendering his horse, dismounted.

Cecilia was out of the way somewhere; but a substantial tea was laid, and a substantial serving-girl was there to see to her master's comforts. She tendered the boot-jack and his slippers; and the good man having made himself comfortable, sat down by the round of cold boiled beef and the teapot and made himself more comfortable yet. His meal over, he lit his pipe and strolled out into the garden, and there amongst the early roses was Cecilia. She nodded to his greeting, but did not seem very anxious to meet him.

'Come here, wench,' said the farmer; and she obeying lingeringly, he put an arm about her waist and gave her a vinously affectionate kiss. 'Hast made up thy mind yet?'

'Yes, father.'

'Well, what is it? Yes or No? No or Yes? Which is it? I'm game for a dance at the weddin'. And he began to foot it heel and toe, humming an old-fashioned dance tune, and keeping time with the stem of his long Broseley.

Cecilia was looking away to the rosy afterglow of the sunset over the hills, and the farmer's face was turned in the same direction.

'I hope you won't be disappointed, father.'

'Eh? It's a match, ain't it?'

'No, father. I've been thinking about it all day, and I can't marry Mr Snelling.'

'Rubbidge, my wench! Clear rubbidge!' cried Shorthouse.

'No, father, dear; I can't marry him.'

There was the noise of a crunching step upon

the gravel, and they both turned. Snelling had approached them unheard, walking for the most part on a moss-grown path. His face looked gray, and his eyes were full of a gloomy anger. 'Well and good,' was all he said. 'I've heard my answer, and I've got nothing to wait for.' He turned upon his heel and walked into the gathering shadows.

The two—father and daughter—watched him blankly as he moved away, and the shadows seemed to drape him round at first and then to hide him. But deeper and denser than the outward shadow rose the inward. He shook his fist towards his own house when once the hedge had altogether hidden him. 'I owe thee this wi' the rest, neww John,' he said; 'and I'll pay thee for it.'

(To be continued.)

THE AMERICAN BOARDING-HOUSE.

THE boarding-house of the United States is an institution peculiar to that country. It flourishes with more or less prosperity in every city, town, and mining camp from the State of Maine to California. Its destinies are invariably presided over by a female, usually a widow, who, when left to fight the battle with the world alone, and being possessed of the enterprise peculiar to the Yankee, sees in that avocation the best field to harvest a competency for her declining years. There is no doubt that many of them, when they first put out their signs, 'Gentlemen Boarders wanted,' or 'Furnished Rooms for Gentlemen only, with table-board if desired,' or 'Board and Furnished Rooms,' have an eye to the main chance, and place reliance in the saying that 'there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught.' But unless they are successful anglers in the early days of their career as landladies, it is seldom they fall victims to the 'grand passion' after they have graduated, as it were, in their chosen career. The reason for this is undoubtedly twofold. In the first place, they are bound to grow suspicious of men, because of the many dead-beats they encounter, and this causes them to become to a certain extent man-haters. In the second place, he indeed is a brave man who is anxious to link his fortunes with his landlady.

Boarding-houses are of all grades, from the elegantly appointed mansion, furnished with every care for comfort and luxury, where the successful business-man is offered an asylum with all home comforts for himself and family at an exorbitantly high price, to the board shanty in the mining camp, in which carpets are dispensed with, and all the furniture has been manufactured by the nearest carpenter. They differ from an hotel in many respects, but the principal feature is that of so-called 'home comforts,' which it is the delight of the landlady to parade before her guests, or boarders as they are called. 'Home comforts' is a great hobby with the thoroughbred landlady, and she never fails to call attention to the fact

that in an hotel you are compelled to live alone, as it were, amid strangers, while in her house you find pleasant society in the parlours, coupled with the assurance that she will impose on herself all the duties of a mother if you are ill. Of course, in some instances you do find these 'home comforts' to be actual, and not mythical; but as a rule the latter is the case. The idea of the average landlady acting in the capacity of a mother to the young ladies and gentlemen who are usually the occupants of city boarding-houses is a huge joke with the veteran boarder; while it is contemplated with a mixed feeling of joy and awe by the youth or maiden fresh from a real home, who has come to the city either to finish education or to engage in some of the many occupations offered there.

There is no doubt that the landladies do have their tempers very heavily taxed, and have trials to endure such as are not calculated to develop their motherly feelings towards their boarders; and she is a woman in a thousand who can keep boarding-house and also retain a genial sunny disposition. She is looked upon by many of the fast youths of the cities, as well as the no less fast men of the mining camps, as the natural prey of mankind generally. She is the first creditor who gets 'stood off' on pay-day; for many seem to think, as I once heard a man express himself when dunned for a long-standing board bill. 'Money!' said he. 'Well, that's a good joke. Why, I can board at an hotel by paying for it. If you, old lady, can't run your house without money, you had better sell out to some one who can.'

Many a time have I known men take the money they ought to give to their boarding-mistress, and with it tempt the fickle goddess in the gambling dens, with the usual result—returning home with empty pockets, and of course standing the landlady off till next pay-day. One who has observed the workings of this system must sympathise to a great extent with the victim who is compelled to feed and shelter such men to obtain a livelihood. If a woman would be successful in this business, she must be shrewd, a good judge of nature and character, and a good financier. It is the development of this latter characteristic which is to a great extent responsible for many of the funny paragraphs published about the boarding-houses and landladies. Remove them from the land, and I fear many a humorist would be at a loss for a target at which to hurl his jokes. The slang dictionary also would be despoiled of many words and phrases, such as 'boarding-house hash,' a term which in this country is applied to all the edibles served up, and not, as is often supposed, to any one particular dish, although there is one dish to which it may be more properly applied, that being a mysterious composition of finely chopped or minced meat highly flavoured with onions. It is very palatable, if a person can control his

thoughts while eating, and not let them wander to the kitchen, where in his mind's eye he sees the thrifty landlady chopping up the leavings of the boarders from many past meals. Then we have the term 'biscuit-shooter,' which, being translated, refers to the young woman who acts as waiter during meal-hours; and another, 'hash-house,' referring to the boarding-house itself; and many others of a like nature.

While the good financing of the landladies may be a fruitful subject for the humorist to joke on, it is, figuratively speaking, death to the boarders. Too often all the butter needs is legs, and it would walk off the table, for it is possessed of strength sufficient. The steak is generally the horror of persons with false teeth; while the hot buckwheat cakes are often more fitted for ammunition for a Gatling gun. But the event of the week is the Sunday dinner; that is looked forward to with a relish, especially by people of a sanguine temperament, because they always are able to hope that the one coming will prove better than the last. Then it is that the poultry is served; then the fowl which has outlived its usefulness as a source of profit to the farmer appears on the boarding-house table to tempt the appetites of the boarders, but not to satisfy them, for he must indeed be possessed of good teeth and digestive organs who can make out a meal. I always find myself speculating on the number of broods of chickens that particular fowl has raised, off which I am called on to make my Sunday dinner. And as if to add insult to injury, you are always invited to partake of 'chicken.' No matter how old and tough, it is always called chicken.

The inmates of the boarding-houses are, to a student of human nature, rare studies. There is the old gentleman who delights in discussing politics at the table, and is in his element whenever he can find some one to argue with. He regularly reads the daily papers, and insists on helping the digestive organs of his fellow-boarders by imparting his knowledge to them. He is ably seconded by the spinster who has fanatical views on the temperance question, which she delights in repeating day after day and meal after meal. I often think that this is another evidence of the good financing qualities of the landlady, who believes that when people are talking neither they nor their listeners will eat as much, and that with this end in view she hires these 'cranks' to talk as much as possible. Then there is the young man whose ambition it is to have people believe he is on the Board of Trade or Stock Board, his conversation being invariably on the subject of bulls and bears, puts and calls, short and long. The real estate agent, and life-insurance agent, too, find their way to the boarding-house table, and regale their fellow-boarders by talking 'shop' all through meal-times. The younger ladies, if the boarding-house happens to have any such within its precincts, discuss sealskin sacques, their last new dress, Mrs So-and-so's last new bonnet, &c.; while the married couples delight in telling of the time they 'kept house;' and the landlady, if she happen to be at the table, is not backward with her laments that butter has raised or flour gone up. Then the widow, if any such there happen to be, insists on recounting to the assembled company the many virtues possessed by the

dear departed. But life in a boarding-house must be experienced to be fully appreciated. It is most thoroughly American; no other nationality would ever endure it.

OGILVIE WHITTLECHURCH.

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE Rimington had gone many yards in the direction of the cliff the moon became obscured; but he was able to make pretty straight for where he had seen the man lie down. In a few minutes he espied him, lying like a log, a few paces on his right. He advanced, and was just stooping down to shake him to his senses, when the seeming inebriate jumped up, and, springing at him with all his force, endeavoured to throw him over the cliff.

On occasions like this, ideas rush through the brain with lightning-like rapidity, time, indeed, being almost a negligible quantity. But, though the thinking powers are at a maximum, the capacity for putting the thoughts into practice and profiting by the conclusions arrived at, becomes almost nil. The brain, so to speak, divides from the nerves, which, since they can no longer keep pace with it, it leaves behind, and rushing on through, it may be, an analysis of the circumstances, it may be a retrospect of previous events, leaves to the inferior organs, backed up by a sort of instinct, the practical task of saving the whole. Sooner or later, however, the normal condition of affairs is resumed, and all the faculties, mental and physical, act once more in unison. The time it takes for this to happen varies with the individual. It seldom exceeds a second or two, and its length may be said to be more or less a gauge of his practical character and fitness for responsibility. In plain English, it is nothing more or less than the time he takes to regain his presence of mind.

With Rimington, accustomed and trained to act promptly in emergencies, that time was almost inappreciable; but short as it was, it had sufficed for him to recognise Miller, able seaman in the *Maharanee*, to speculate on his motives, and come to the conclusion that he must either be the victim of a drunkard's frenzy or of mistaken identity. Soon, however, these speculations ceased, and all his energies were enlisted in the desperate struggle, on which, it seemed, depended his very life. Both men were strong, and at first the contest was fairly equal. Rimington, however, was encumbered by his thick greatcoat, and this told on him more every second. He felt that he was being slowly but surely forced nearer the edge of the cliff. So far, the struggle had been carried on in silence; now he shouted for help. With an oath, his opponent tried to put his hand over his mouth, and, in so doing, partially threw back his hood. Just before, he had been gathering himself together for a final throw; but when he saw Rimington's features, he suddenly started back, paused a second, and then saying, 'Great God! it's Mr Rimington,' made off at the top of his speed.

'Hi! Stop him! Help!' cried Rimington, giving chase, for he had no mind to let him off so easily.

'Hullo! What is it?' cried a voice from the direction of Rose Cottage.

It was that of a young man, who, seeing how things were, ran to cut off the fugitive. He judged his direction well, and at first it looked as if, between the two, Miller would be secured. The latter, however, had a good start of the stranger, and was greatly assisted by the darkness of the night. He was also a good runner, so that, although the chances seemed against him at first, he managed to give both his pursuers the slip.

The latter now turned to speak to each other. 'Hullo! Rimington,' cried Forward; 'I'm awfully glad to see you back.—But what on earth has been happening?'

'That's more than I can tell you,' replied the other. 'At least, if I can tell you what has been happening, I certainly can't imagine why it has happened. I walked home from the station; and just as I got to the door, I saw a man—tipsy, as I thought—close to the edge of the cliff. I went to see what I could do for him; but I soon found that the obligation was more likely to be on the other side—he very nearly did for me.'

'How?'

'Simply enough. He tried to throw me over the cliff. Indeed, I thought he would have done it, too; but luckily for me, just as I thought that it was all up, my hood got shoved aside, and he recognised me, started back as if he had been shot, and ran away. So here I am, all over mud, and very glad that it's no worse.'

'You say that he recognised you. Do you know the man, then?'

'Yes; I do, and that is the strangest part of it all. He was a seaman in the *Maharanee*, a man called Miller.'

'Charles Miller?'

'Yes.—Why, do you know him?'

'I do know something of him, and what made me ask was that I thought I recognised him as he was running across the common.—What are you going to do now?—Inform the police?'

'Well, I really scarcely know. It all seems so incomprehensible. He evidently did not wish to murder me—that is, when he saw who I was—because he could not have had a better chance. I can hardly believe that the man goes in for highway robbery. He certainly never tried to take my watch. But I suppose that the best plan will be to inform the police, as you suggest.'

'Approved,' replied Forward, 'with one amendment. I am going home, and the police station is on my way, so I'll look out for that. You go straight home.'

'It's very good of you.—Thanks, very much.'

'Not the least trouble in the world,' said Forward; 'good-night. There is something I want to tell you; but this business ought to be done as soon as possible; and I think that Mrs Rimington will tell you all about it to-morrow morning; so I won't stay.—Good-night again.'

'Good-night.'

The next morning, when he came down, Rimington found his mother awaiting him, but not Mary. 'Why, mother,' he said, 'where's that sister of mine? I thought that she was an early bird.'

'Mary won't be long,' she replied. 'Perhaps she knows that I have something to talk to you about.' Mrs Rimington spoke seriously, and her son saw that she had something of importance to communicate.

'What has happened?' he asked.

'Your friend, Ogilvie Forward, has proposed to Mary. She has accepted him, and I have approved of her choice. He spoke to me about it yesterday morning, and Colonel Forward was here in the afternoon.'

'Well, mother,' he replied, as soon as he had completed a very long-drawn whistle, 'you know him better than I do. Still, I have seen quite enough of Ogilvie Forward to be able to congratulate Mary from the bottom of my heart, as far as his character goes.—But what about his money?'

'Colonel Forward is very liberal about that. He has offered to buy and furnish a house here at Whitby, and is going to settle twenty thousand pounds on them, in addition to Ogilvie's present allowance, on the day that they are married. It might not be thought very much by some people; but our Mary's husband will be better off in this world's goods than her mother was; and if she loves him, and he will make her a good husband, what should we have to say against it?'

'It is hard to lose Mary, mother; but, as you say, it is her happiness, not ours, that we must care about.—What did you tell Ogilvie?'

'I gave him my consent, and I answered for yours. There was something else which he asked me to tell you; Mary, of course, knows it too. He is not really Colonel Forward's son. Who he really is, who his parents were, he does not know. The colonel adopted him from a workhouse in the south of England. Of course, it was right of him to tell us; but at the same time we know him and like him for himself, and I told him that it could make no possible difference.'

'No, mother; certainly not,' replied her son. Then he added, as if struck by a sudden thought: 'Did he tell you what his name was originally?'

'No, dear.—Why?'

'Oh, nothing. I had an idea; but it is much too improbable to be worth consideration. I suppose, though, that his Christian name is the same as it was before.—But never mind; here comes Mary.—Now, my lady, aren't you ashamed of yourself? Yes; it's no good blushing. Mother's been telling me what you do when I'm at sea. Who is going to fill my pipe in future, I should like to know? However, I suppose that you want to be congratulated; and, on the whole, I think I'll do so.—Now, go and make the tea.'

After breakfast, Rimington announced his intention of going to look up Forward. When he arrived at Colonel Forward's house, the bell was answered by Ogilvie himself, but looking so strangely disarranged and wild, that he could not help asking him if anything was the matter.

'Yes; something is the matter,' he replied, 'and it has made me the unhappiest of men.—But come in, and let me tell you about it.'

Old Colonel Forward was seated at the breakfast table, from which the remains of that meal had not been cleared away. Rising as Rimington entered, he shook him by the hand, saying at the same time: 'I suppose that Ogilvie has already

told you about our misfortune? Poor boy, it is hard for him to bear. For myself, it does not matter; but for your sister and him it is hard, very hard.'

'No, sir,' replied Rimington; 'I don't know what your trouble is; but it must be very great to affect you thus.'

'This, then, will tell you,' said the old man, putting into his hand a business-looking letter which lay upon the table. It was the announcement of the failure of a Mining Company.

Rimington read it through, and then put it down and looked at the colonel for further information.

'My whole fortune was in that undertaking,' he said simply; 'and now my son and I are penniless.'

'And now,' said Ogilvie, 'you know why I am the unhappiest man in the world. Yesterday, I would not have called the Tzar my uncle. Now —what is there left for me to do but to tell your sister that I have not enough to offer her a meal, let alone a roof to'—

'But, Forward, you don't think that Mary, you cannot think that she'—

'That she would turn me away if I came to her a beggar in rags? No; God forbid! But in honour I cannot now ask her to be my wife. You don't understand how I am placed. It's not as if I had a couple of hundred, or even one hundred a year left. Then, with my pay, we could live in India, a soldier and his wife; and my father would come too. That was my one hope when first this cursed letter came. But we shall not have a farthing—literally, not a farthing—except this house and the clothes we stand in. I must leave the army.—But she will wait,' he added passionately. 'Say, as her brother, that I may ask her to wait. My father and I are going out to Australia, and I will work as never man worked yet to make a home for him and her.—It can gain nothing to put off telling her; I will go at once.'

'Wait a minute,' cried Rimington, as Ogilvie was leaving the room. 'I can't tell what, but something says that there is yet hope. It is a very small chance; but the thought of it crossed my mind this morning, and I can't help thinking of it.—You were not always called Forward. What was your name before?'

'Whittlechurch.'

Without saying a word, Rimington burst out laughing. It was now Ogilvie's turn to look surprised.

'Why, man, you are a millionaire! There is a fortune waiting for you.'

'What?'

'I mean exactly what I say. There is a fortune waiting for Ogilvie Whittlechurch, and there are detectives scouring the country to find him—to find you.'

At this moment there was a ring at the bell, and the maid brought in a card: 'Mr J. PRYER, Detective Department, Scotland Yard.' At the bottom was written in pencil: 'To speak with Captain Forward on important business.'

'Why, here's the very man!' cried Rimington, laughing. 'He already looks on you as a millionaire, and shows it by giving you brevet rank.—Well, I'm off, and shall expect you at Rose Cottage in an hour's time at the latest, holding

your head up-with all the dignity of your new-found thousands.'

His first visit was to the police station, where some very startling news awaited him. Miller's body had been picked up at the foot of the cliffs, just under a well-known dangerous place, about half a mile from where the struggle took place. He must have doubled, to throw his pursuers off the track, and then, venturing too close, without a sufficient knowledge of the neighbourhood, have slipped and fallen. But the strangest part was yet to come. On the body had been found a cheque for the extraordinarily large sum of fifteen hundred pounds, signed Pedro Bersaño.

Then Rimington understood what had happened. He asked to speak to the chief inspector, who happened to be then at the station. They had a long talk in private, of which it is only necessary to give the last few words. 'So, taking it all together, sir, I don't think there is any case,' said the inspector. 'I suppose that the gentleman's death would be no advantage to this Bersaño now?'

'No.'

'Then, sir, I think that the best thing to do will be to leave matters as they are. You see you have no proof, and the man is out of the country by now. If the sailor had actually attacked your friend, the case would be weak enough; but as it stands, I call it hopeless.'

Rimington thanked the inspector and walked home.

His mother was sitting in the garden. He could see Ogilvie and his sister walking together by the sea.

'Georgie,' said Mrs Rimington, 'how long shall you have ashore?'

'Nearly three months.'

'I thought so; and that was why we've just settled that the marriage shall take place towards the end of November.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Not the least interesting episode in Mr Stanley's wonderful story of his last journey in the 'Dark Continent' is his account of the poisoned arrows used with such deadly effect by the natives against his followers. The exact nature of the poison used remained an enigma until he discovered in one of the villages several packets of dried red ants, and learnt that the poison was procured from them. The insects are dried, ground to powder, and cooked in palm-oil, and the mixture is applied to the points of the arrows. The noxious compound owes its power to formic acid, which exists in the bodies of ants, in certain caterpillars, and even in stinging-nettles. When pure, this acid has a most corrosive action on the skin, producing blisters which are difficult to heal. Its action was no doubt especially deadly to those whose frames were already much weakened by hunger and over-exertion.

The Corinth Canal, which was to have been completed last year, will not, according to the Report of the British Consul-general at Patras, be opened until November 1891. The reason of the

delay is found in some unforeseen difficulties which have arisen, one of which is the occurrence of earth-slips, which will have to be guarded against by protecting walls. The estimated amount of earth to be removed was eight million cubic metres; but it is now found that this must be increased to ten millions. The entire length of the canal is just under four miles, and no further obstacles are anticipated to the successful conclusion of the works at the time stated.

Mr Rodier of Tambred, New South Wales, seems to have hit upon a successful method of dealing with the rabbit-pest, and asserts that in a period of eight months he has cleared his part of the country of the creatures. His plan is to employ nets and ferrets in the ordinary way for capturing the rabbits; but while the females are destroyed, all the males taken are again allowed to run loose. The result is that the does are soon so reduced in number that the natural balance between the sexes is destroyed, and confusion reigns supreme. Moreover, the few young rabbits which are born are quickly destroyed by the bucks. It would seem that M. Pasteur's method of infecting food with the microbes of chicken cholera is effectual in so far that the rabbits are killed that partake of the food; but, contrary to his anticipations, the disease does not prove to be contagious to other rabbits.

The incrustation of steam-boilers has always been a matter of pressing importance to engineers, and many remedies have been proposed to obviate what is not only an inconvenience but often a source of danger. The incrustation is due to the mineral matter, chiefly lime, which is contained in all hard waters, and which is deposited on boiling, as we can see by looking into any kettle that has been in use for even a short time. A simple remedy has been tried by an Italian engineer, Col Potto, and it is said with complete success, in a boiler of twenty horsepower, containing one hundred and twenty-six tubes. He introduced into the boiler every week two kilos (about four and a quarter pounds) of sugar, with the result, that after four months' continuous working, only a very thin film of incrustation was formed, and this was easily removed by simple washing. Without the treatment with sugar, the same boiler had previously become incrustated in a period of six weeks. The method has the merit of simplicity and cheapness, and many will therefore be disposed to test its efficacy.

We are far behind our American friends in the matter of electric illumination, but it is to be hoped that our dilatoriness will at least enable us to benefit by the experience of others. But there are at last signs that the question is being taken up in this country in earnest. The London Electric Supply Corporation are establishing immense works at Deptford, near Greenwich, from which place the current is to be carried by cable to the metropolis. To show the vast scale upon which these works are projected we may mention that they will contain the largest dynamo-machines in the world. An ingot of steel weighing seventy-five tons, the biggest ever cast in Scotland, has just been produced by Messrs Beardmore of Glasgow. Out of this vast mass of metal is to be turned a shaft for one of these machines. This shaft is one of three, and will be twenty-six feet

long, and three feet in diameter, with a twelve-inch hole through its centre. When thus finished, it will weigh twenty-three tons.

Professor Hartley has found that a small quantity of ozone in a tube two feet in length—presumably containing air—gives a distinctly blue colour. He therefore is led to believe that the presence of this little understood medium may have an influence in determining the sky colour.

We have recently learnt from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the consumption of coffee in this country is gradually falling off, and although he attributes this to the rivalry of cocoa, there is clearly another reason which it is not difficult to discover. Few persons, we venture to say, know what genuine coffee is like, and what a delicious and healthful beverage it constitutes. It is mostly sold mixed with chicory, and, it is said, other things cheaper than chicory; and such coffee mixtures contain so little coffee that it is not justifiable to call them by that name. It may be said that buyers can guard themselves against such practices by purchasing the berry whole and grinding it for themselves. This is commonly done in well-ordered households; but the great majority of coffee-drinkers will not take the trouble to do so, or are often so situated that they are unable to do so. But even here the fraudulent trader steps in to render such a precaution abortive, for he manufactures the berries themselves in a manner so true to nature that they are difficult of detection. According to a German chemical journal, this nefarious industry is carried on by certain firms in Cologne, where the artificial beans are made by machines devised for the purpose. The material of which they are compounded is burnt flour or meal; but they can be distinguished from genuine coffee by the circumstance that they sink when immersed in ether, whereas the true coffee-berry will float in that liquid.

Execution of criminals by electricity, instead of by the hangman's rope, is now the law in the State of New York; and although, happily, no criminal has yet qualified himself for this new mode of death, some curious experiments have been made on dogs, calves, and horses, with a view to find out the point in the body to which the current can be most efficaciously applied to insure an immediately fatal result. The experiments were carried out at Edison's laboratory, and an alternating current was employed—that is, a current which changes its direction about three hundred times per second, and which is therefore different from a battery current, which has one constant direction. For each victim the wires were arranged differently, so that the charge might enter by the brain, the heart, &c.; and in every case death was instantaneous and, as far as could be judged, utterly painless. The bodies of the animals were in noway disfigured, and in the case of the calves, were taken away by the butcher who brought them, to be dressed for food. We may hope that at no distant day the electric current will be used generally in slaughter-houses. As to its more solemn employment in our gaols, we shall gain experience from the operation of the new law in America.

Hitherto, scraps of tinned iron have been a waste product of many trades, and it is not uncommon to see large quantities of this metal on rubbish-heaps. It is not worth casting, for it

is too hard and granular for any purpose, except, perhaps, the making of weights; and the modern weighing-machines are driving the old-fashioned weights out of use. But, according to the *American Manufacturer*, scrap-iron can now be turned to better account. The pieces are first of all cut into certain sizes, and are then fed into a machine which folds the metal upon itself, compresses it, furnishes it with a point and a head and turns it out a finished nail, which can be driven without breaking into the hardest wood.

Dr B. W. Richardson has recently called attention to the good treatment of the animals at the Home for Lost and Starving Dogs, Battersea, London. Any dog found wandering in the streets is taken to this Home, and kept for a certain time, in case an owner, or failing that, a purchaser, is found for him. Utterly vagrant and valueless dogs are put to a painless death in the lethal chamber devised by Dr Richardson, and no fewer than a hundred thousand have been so destroyed. Five dogs affected with rabies have been taken off the streets and destroyed here. Dr Richardson has contrived a lethal muzzle for dogs, which can be used in the streets by the police, and also a similar apparatus for horses. We presume that this latter would be used in cases of glanders, that terrible disease which is contagious between the horse and man.

A tunnel on the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway, Wales, has just been completed. It is two miles in length, and runs through such a mountainous country that it was impracticable to drive any shafts into it from above during the progress of construction. In spite of this, when the two headings which were driven from either end met, the one formed a perfect continuation of the other, and the levels did not differ to the extent of half an inch. The object of this railway is to connect the extensive coalfield of the Rhondda Valley with the port of Swansea.

Mr Julte has recently made a communication to the French Academy of Sciences with reference to a new process for hardening plaster of Paris, by which that comparatively friable compound is made so dense and hard that it can be used for flooring purposes. The plaster, of good quality, is mixed with one-sixth its weight of finely sifted and recently slaked white lime. This mixture is used like ordinary plaster, but with as little water as possible, and with great expedition. When thoroughly dry, it is treated with a saturated solution of either zinc sulphate or iron sulphate (white vitriol and green vitriol are the common English names for these salts). The first will cause the plaster to remain white, and the latter will by gradual oxidation give it the colour of iron rust, and an application of linseed oil will give this reddened plaster the appearance of mahogany. It is obvious that this method of rendering plaster hard, if as effectual as its author asserts, will lead to its employment for many purposes for which at present it could not be used.

The British Museum is now furnished with a complete system of electrical alarms, so that the occurrence of fire or outrage by dynamite can be immediately signalled to the firemen's room, while at the same time the police and gatekeepers are put on the alert. It will be remembered that in the abortive attempt to blow up part of the Tower of London by dynamite, a few years back,

the offender was caught through the prompt action of closing the Tower gates and subjecting every one within the walls to a searching examination.

In a paper read before the China branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Captain Moore, of Her Majesty's ship *Rambler*, gives an interesting description of the 'bore' or tidal wave which often occurs in Hangchow Bay. This 'bore' is caused by the tide in the bay meeting the current from the river, and it travels up stream at the rate of from ten to thirteen miles an hour. The height of the advancing wave reaches fourteen feet, and it is followed for some distance by agitated water in which no small boat can live. The rush of the wave is so strong that the *Rambler* was covered with spray as its waters broke against the broadside of the ship. A vast wall has been built by the inhabitants at the mouth of the estuary, to protect the country from the 'bore,' and it is strengthened in one place which is exposed to its full force by a buttress two hundred and fifty-three feet long and sixty-three feet wide. Behind this wall the boats are drawn up for shelter when the wave is expected. It will be remembered that on some rivers in our own country we have the same phenomena on a far smaller scale.

The fading and yellowing of photographs after they have reached a certain age has long been a reproach to that method of printing from the negative which is known as silver printing on albuminised paper, and to a great extent that method has of late years been superseded by others which are more permanent in their results. The last new method of this kind is that just introduced by Mr Valentine Blanchard, and which he calls the Platinum Black Process. In this system the picture is printed on a silver-prepared paper (not albuminised), and the image is changed to permanent platinum by after-treatment with a salt of that metal. From specimens which we have seen, we predict a great future for this process. It is especially adapted to the wants of amateurs, whose troubles in photography generally begin when they commence printing from their negatives.

According to a New Orleans paper, the mortality among the negroes of that city is double that of white persons; and the same may be said of other southern cities. The reason for this increased mortality among the blacks is said to be found in their neglect of hygienic laws, lack of comforts and conveniences in their homes, and unrestrained indulgence in vicious practices. On the other hand, the negroes of New Orleans seem to be singularly free from the attack of diphtheria; for out of thirty-three cases of that disease in one month three only were credited to negroes.

So much has recently been heard about the untold wealth of the ruby mines of Burmah, that we are apt to forget that another valuable product of that country is found in its forests of teak-wood. Now that we build our ships of iron, this wood does not perhaps command the importance which it possessed in past times; but it has so many valuable properties, that an unlimited supply of it would soon find for it new employment. For hardness and durability it has few equals, while at the same time it is easily worked, although, from the siliceous which it contains, it soon blunts the best tools. But this same siliceous

element renders it free from the attacks of insects; while nails and screws driven into the wood do not rust, this last advantage being probably due to the oil which it contains.

At a time when we are making a great addition to the number of our ships of war, criticism by a competent outsider is worthy of respectful attention. Admiral Porter, of the United States navy, has assumed this rôle in two papers which he has published on 'The Naval War of the Future,' in which he supposes, by way of illustration, that the English and French fleets have come into conflict. While the big vessels are busy with an artillery duel, their discomfiture is brought about by 'speedy little craft,' which entangle the propellers of the larger vessels with iron wires and render them helpless. Then the little torpedo boats come upon the scene and sink the iron-clads. In a word, the admiral does not believe that our expensive monsters will fulfil their promise; while dynamite projectiles and long-range dynamite guns will be more than a match for them. He instances the astonishing result lately produced experimentally when a shell containing only two and a half pounds of dynamite, propelled from a seven-inch gun with the comparatively small charge of twenty-three pounds of gunpowder, was fired against a seven-inch iron turret weighing thirteen tons. This structure was carried bodily a distance of twenty-five feet, and its iron plates were torn asunder.

Bromine, one of the elementary bodies, a dark-brown volatile liquid, which is obtained from sea-water and saline springs, and is a by-product of certain chemical operations, is coming into use as a disinfectant and deodorant. It has long been used in surgery for the treatment of foul ulcers, &c.; and now that it can be obtained at a comparatively cheap rate, it is likely to find a far more extensive employment. In a pure state, it is most corrosive, and its vapour is most irritating to the nose, throat, and eyes. But for general use it would be diluted with about eight hundred parts of water, in which state it is quite innocuous.

Mr B. Piffard describes, in the *Chemical News*, the simple preparation of a pigment which seems to possess the appearance and properties of Indian ink. An excess of camphor is allowed to remain for twenty-four hours in strong sulphuric acid, when the mixture presents the appearance of a reddish gelatinous mass. This is heated, when it effervesces, and fumes of sulphurous acid are given off, leaving a residue which is intensely black. Further evaporation causes the excess of camphor and the acid to be driven away, and the remainder forms a black pigment, which can be applied to paper or other surfaces in the usual way.

In a paper recently read before the Royal Institution by Sir James N. Douglas, it was stated that Faraday was first consulted by the Trinity House as to the capabilities of the magneto-electric light in 1858, and that experiments were made at the Nore with a view to test its efficacy as a luminant for lighthouses. It was then that Faraday—whose discoveries had given birth to the new light—reported that the luminant was not only fit for the particular purpose in view, but that it gave prospects of development the limits of which it was not possible to

foresee. These words are indeed prophetic, when we look around us and see the immense activity on every side which is due to various schemes of lighting by means of the dynamo-machine, which is the improved magneto-machine of Faraday's time. It is now possible to obtain a light of one hundred and fifty million candle-power, which, of course, is far in excess of any requirement. Sir James Douglas recognises the advantage of the brilliant light which electricity affords for salient headlands and isolated rocks at a distance from the coast, while oil and gas lights are more suitable for confined navigation. All are practically valueless in thick fogs; and the problem of penetrating such clouded atmospheres still awaits solution. It is proposed to use sound-signals in the shape of dynamite cartridges, which can be exploded by an electric current; but, unfortunately, fog is an impediment to sound as well as to light.

Telegraphic instruments which deliver their messages in the form of printed type were looked upon when they were first introduced as marvels of constructive skill, but they are now too common to elicit much remark. Machines which are constantly reeling out yards of 'tape,' upon which are plainly printed the latest news, and the last quotations from the Stock Exchange and various markets, are now familiar things in the halls of clubs and other places of public resort. As the printed tape accumulates, it is cut off in lengths and pinned on a board, so that all can benefit by the news it contains. If not so gathered up, it lies in a heap, and he who wants to consult it is in much the same position as the proverbial searcher for a needle in a haystack. But now that an improved apparatus has been invented by Messrs Moore and Wright, we may expect these difficulties to disappear. The 'Column' Printing Telegraph explains its own mission, which is to do away with the reel of tape and to print the words in column form, in the same way that a type writer presents it to the reader's eye. The instrument is wonderfully ingenious, and does its work with accuracy and despatch. Several Column printing-machines can be operated from one centre, as in the case of the older form of instrument.

A TRUE SNAKE-STORY.

BY DR A. STRADLING.

I LABEL mine so, because the vast majority of snake-stories are untrue—palpably and absurdly untrue to those who have studied anything of the nature or habits of the creatures to which they professedly refer. They pass muster, however, in many instances because so little is known of the manners and customs of reptiles in general and of serpents in particular; and it is extraordinary to note how even the best scientific works on natural history, whilst accurately describing the anatomical and physiological characteristics of a snake, will yet frequently perpetuate and lend authority to the most vulgar errors in alluding to their mode of life. Again, such is the terror which these 'creeping things' inspire, that in many cases where it is impossible to doubt the

bona fides of the narrator, ridiculously distorted and impossible versions of actual phenomena are given through hurried and horrified observation.

To most people, the very term 'snake' or 'serpent'—for their signification is the same—conjures up the idea of a creature fiendish in cruelty and aggressively inimical to man, gifted with a deadly venom, speed for pursuit, and unutterable malevolence. Yet the poor ophidian is only too desirous to shun notice—I believe there is absolutely no exception to this rule—where he has time and opportunity, though he is frequently surprised, and compelled to act on the defensive, owing to his want of hearing and defective vision. Probably no serpent can see anything distinctly at a distance of three times his own length, though they may be conscious of interception of light, or feel the vibration of an approaching footstep. Certainly, no words can exaggerate the awful power of the poisons of some of the more virulent species—I say poisons, because there may be as many separate and individual venoms as there are venomous kinds, for anything we know to the contrary; though, in considering this most mysterious attribute, we might pause to compare the effects of the tiny, almost microscopic hair-tubules of a tropical nettle, producing violent fever of the whole system, with, possibly, gangrene of the stung limb, or those chemicals which affect the human tissues when subdivided into millionths of a grain. But few know—and perhaps fewer still will believe—that of the whole number of serpent species known in the world, *less than one-eighth* only are venomous, and that one-fourth of these are never seen on land, being inhabitants of the ocean.

Snakes, moreover, seem to be deemed fair game for fiction and falsehood by common consent, and so generally is this fact recognised in America—where most of these monstrous anecdotes are concocted, or at anyrate first see the light of print—that the term 'snake-story' has passed into a byword and a reproach, an epithet which is well understood and acknowledged as a euphemism for that which requires considerably more than the proverbial grain of salt for its deglutition. When the rumour comes of a big fire, or an earthquake, or a great commercial disaster, the incredulous ones shrug their shoulders and say: 'Oh, it's only a snake-story!' Many of these absurd yarns which find a place in the columns of Western papers as pure jokes are quoted as sober facts by the press on this side of the Atlantic, and crop up in the 'Naturalist' department of magazines which devote a portion of their space to that branch of science, especially—and I write it with sorrow—in those which are published for the young. Boys and girls accept so confidently what they read, and form and retain such strong impressions therefrom, that any misleading statement is far more deplorable in their case than one which may appeal to those of more mature years. And they are such capital observers! Some of my pleasantest associations with this subject have arisen through the interest and enthusiasm displayed by young friends in connection with it; and nothing delights me more than the receipt of a letter from some youthful ophiologist—often quite unknown to me—asking for advice about the purchase of a pet snake, the method of its maintenance, or the

compatibility of such an institution with the extent of the writer's pocket-money or the prejudices of his immediate relatives.

Before relating my true snake-story, let me offer a sample of the other brand—the 'snake-story' which is not true. I clipped it from a paper published in the very country in which the scene of the other is located, Guiana.

A boa-constrictor woke up thin and hungry after a three months' nap, and set off to look for his breakfast. He was soon rewarded by the capture of an agouti, which he crushed and bolted whole, after the manner of his kind. His appetite being not yet appeased, he went still farther afield in quest of prey, and presently coming to a fence and essaying to pass through between the stakes, he was stopped midway by the lump in his body which was the outward and visible sign of the defunct but undigested agouti. As he lay in this position, another agouti happened to wander incautiously near his nose, and was seized, constricted, and swallowed in like manner. Agouti number two passes down the serpent's body to join its predecessor, but was stopped on the *other* side of the fence; and the state of affairs now was that the boa could neither go ahead nor astern, being jammed by his fore-and-aft inside passengers; and in that situation was found, caught, killed, and made into a 'snake-story.'

For the truth of what follows I can vouch, as all the collateral and corroborative circumstances, though not the main incident, came directly under my personal notice.

The wife of one of the overseers on the Enmore estate in Demerara had one morning laid her baby asleep in its cradle while she performed certain household duties. Enmore is—or was at the time of which I write—the largest sugar-plantation in that county, for so are the three provinces called which together make up British Guiana—namely, Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo. The estate has a station on the little line which runs through several small towns, still bearing their quaint old Dutch names, as far as Mahaica. The baby aforesaid was carefully screened from the blazing heat of the day within a cool green-jaloused veranda, and was lightly covered with a muslin net, to guard its slumbers against the disturbing influence of flies, marabundas, scorpions, spiders, and other small but unpleasant deer, of which this favoured land is the happy hunting-ground. It was three months old, was No. 1, and was the pivot on which the daily life and love of both its parents revolved. I regret to say I have forgotten whether it was a boy or a girl.

Picture to yourself, then, if you can, the horror of the young mother when, on stealing into the veranda to refresh herself with a peep at her unconscious darling, she beheld on the muslin cover a live serpent! She had not been long in the colony, but had already sufficient experience of its teeming reptilian fauna to recognise the blood-red, blunt-headed creature which lay on her child as a coral snake, reputed to be so deadly as to slay a man or horse with its bite in twenty minutes. It had apparently fallen into the cradle from the ledge of the Venetian shutter above, and its weight causing the muslin to bag down, it was unable to raise its body high enough to get over the edge of the wicker-work

and escape, as it seemed to be endeavouring to do.

Terror-stricken as she was, the poor girl by a desperate effort summoned up all her self-control and remained still, knowing that if the baby were disturbed it might by its movement provoke the snake to strike. After watching the ineffectual efforts of the latter to climb the side of the cradle for a few moments, which seemed like hours, an idea flew over her half-numbed brain. She crept gently forward, inch by inch, until by stretching forth one foot she could touch the rocker. Getting her toe underneath this, she slowly raised it until the basket was tilted considerably away from her, and was consequently lowered on the side towards which the intruder was directing its attempts at ascent. The plan succeeded admirably; the unsuspecting serpent wriggled its way up the now moderately inclined plane of the net, retarded in its progress only by the unstable hold afforded by the latter. Its head was already over the edge, and in another quarter of a minute it would have been upon the floor, when the treacherous rocker slipped from her foot, the snake rolled back lower than before, carrying the edge of the narrow curtain down in its fall, and the mother stumbled wildly to recover her nearly lost balance. It was too much for her; the awful tension snapped, and she called her husband's name with a hoarse cry.

Well that she did! He was nearing the house at the time on his homeward way to mid-day breakfast, and just caught sound of that agonised whisper as he crossed the muddy canal. A few seconds later he was in the veranda, reading his wife's bloodless face with wild questioning eyes. No speech could she force through her hot lips; no word spoke he, but he followed her outstretched finger as she pointed to the still swaying cradle. With one dash he seized the muslin and tore it off. Had this been done at first, no doubt all would have been well, but the free border being within the side, the light net slipped from under the weight of the snake, and the reptile fell hissing and writhing upon the naked body of the child, now crying and lifting up its hands towards its mother. There was no moment for thought. Like lightning he gripped the infant by the shoulder and threw it out on the floor, where it fell with a broken collar-bone, but saved!

And it was through being called upon to administer restoratives to the wife and to treat this injury—which may have been caused by the fall, or, more probably, by the frenzied grasp of his powerful hand—that I, in the absence of my friend, Dr D—, whose guest I was, learned the foregoing particulars within ten minutes of their occurrence. The snake was already despatched, and lay on the veranda boards with its head smashed flat by an unnecessarily tremendous stamp of the paternal heel. I may just say that youth and a good constitution, in which the Morayshire breezes were not yet dissipated by fever and ague, enabled the mother to throw off the nervous illness with which she was threatened; and that, although the condition of the child's shoulder and the pain attending it naturally caused the parents great grief, it recovered perfectly without any impairment of

the use of the arm. The fragments of the snake were gathered up and preserved in a glass jar of white rum from the factory 'still,' and long afterwards as he told the tale, the big black-bearded Scotchman's lips would go white with anger and his forehead bead as he shook his fist at 'yon devil' in the bottle. And I dare say that it moves him so to this day.

For I had not the heart to tell him that the creature was *harmless*, and that he had broken the baby's collar-bone over a poor worm who could do less injury than a mosquito. Ferreently do I hope that they have never learned it. I think the reptile could hardly have been recognised after its immersion in the coarse *canha*; but as it lay recently dead, there was no mistaking it for anything else than *Scytale coronatum*, a species of somewhat vivid colour, inhabiting tropical America and some of the West India Islands, but wholly devoid of venom. The error is typical of a very common one in popular nomenclature. The really poisonous coral snakes of these countries should properly be called 'corral,' as their name was originally derived from the Spanish by reason of their colours, vermilion, black, yellow, and white, being disposed in 'rings' around their bodies. (The intensity of their lethal power, by the way, is much exaggerated, the great viperine serpents of those regions, such as the rattlesnake, *fer-de-lance*, and bushmaster, being much more virulent.) But by corruption the term 'coral' has come to be applied to any snake which bears some degree of red in its coloration, and has carried a venomous reputation along with it. If there were anything in a name, one would be compelled to admit that this same *coronatum* should be the coral snake, *par excellence*, seeing that the whole of the upper surface of its body presents the brilliant hue of that gem. 'Corral,' however, it could not be, as the colour is plain without pattern from stem to stern. And if the declaration of its innocence forms a damp and depressing appendix to this tale, kindly remember, in extenuation of the circumstance, its exceptional character as that seeming paradox, a true snake-story.

THE ELECTRICAL TREATMENT OF SEWAGE.

THE subject of the best means of sewage precipitation and purification at a moderate cost is one that has agitated the minds of scientists for years. Various systems of chemical treatment have been propounded; but a distinct advance seems to have been made by Mr William Webster, F.C.S., who proposes to treat the sewage by direct contact with electricity, the sewage being resolved at once into its chemical elements, and precipitated in the form of sludge, and rendered innocuous at the same time. By permission of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Mr Webster has erected, at his own cost, at the Southern Outfall Station at Crossness, experimental works capable of treating the sewage at the rate of fifty thousand gallons per day, the process at present being only carried on intermittently; and the system was inspected in operation at the rate of about twelve thousand gallons per hour, on the 27th of March, by a number of representatives of the press.

The sewage is pumped from the main sewer into a shoot filled with iron plates, which, being connected with a dynamo, are transformed into electrodes. The sewage passes by gravitation between these plates, and the contact with the metal gradually causes the organic matter to rise in small flocculent particles. The action produced by the electric current splits up the water and sodium, magnesium and other chlorides, which are always present in sewage, into their constituent parts. At the positive pole, chlorine and oxygen are set free, and these elements are liberated in a nascent state, a condition in which they are intensely active, so that the organic matter in the sewage is rapidly oxidised and burnt up to innocuous compounds, and produces hypo-chlorous acid; the positive iron plate is attacked, and ferrous hypo-chlorite formed. A portion of the hypo-chlorous acids attack the organic matter, putrefying sewage having a strong affinity for oxygen. At the negative pole, ammonia, potash, soda, magnesia, &c., are obtained. The particles of matter gradually accumulate at the top, and are run off into settling-tanks, and afterwards the sludge may be pressed into cakes or otherwise disposed of. The effluent is then pumped off, and is perfectly clear and inodorous.

The relative merits of the cost of this in comparison with other systems is a point with which we cannot deal; but a distinct advance in sanitary science seems to have been made by the application of electricity to sewage purification. Any improvement on the system of sewage-disposal at present in force will be welcomed by the public; and the electrical system seems to possess peculiar advantages over chemical treatment.

RONDEL OF SPRING.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo! How wistfully
That clear soft note of spring breaks through
Our tearful Lent: hark!—one, two, three—
Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

To where old dreams their spells renew,
Thou art the 'open Sesame,'
And bringest wondrous things to view.

O sweet refrain! Time was when we,
From hearts no sorrow could subdue,
Gave back the call with childish glee—
Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

P. W. ROOSE.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE HOME OF THE MORTIMERS.

THE southern part of Herefordshire, with its cathedral city, and the ever-winding, ever-changing Wye, has for long been an object of attention to the health-seeking tourist; but somehow or other, the northern part of the county has been neglected; and yet, for historical associations, for its fish-abounding rivers, and its charming and varied scenery, where could a few weeks be spent to greater advantage? If you are interested in ecclesiastical architecture, a visit to the ancient Priory Church of Leominster will afford you magnificent specimens of late Norman and Early English styles; or at the villages of Yarpole and Pembridge, quaint country churches with detached belfries some yards distant from the main buildings. Should your tastes lie in the direction of history, the district abounds in the remains and sites of ancient British and Roman camps, for as early as the first century of our era the Romans fought with and conquered the Silures, by whom Herefordshire was then populated; and at still later periods the battle of Mortimer's Cross, the occupation of Leominster alternately by the rival Royalist and Parliamentary armies, and the visits of the two unfortunate Charleses, will afford food for reflection, and matter for any amount of mental picture-painting.

I wonder how many readers of *Chambers's Journal* have explored that much neglected but most engaging ruin in the extreme north-western corner of the county known as Wigmore Castle? It is more than probable few have ever heard of such a place—a place, withal, rich in traditions of the past, and closely connected with the lives of several generations of Mortimers. If you should ever be in the vicinity of Leominster, a town of quaint old streets, pay a flying visit to the home of the Mortimers. The distance is about nine miles, the road excellent, the scenery not to be surpassed. You can drive; and host Bedford of the *Royal Oak Hotel* will provide you with as good a 'pair in hand' as you can desire. Or, you can take the train to Kingsland Station,

on the Leominster and Kington branch railway, and walk the remaining five miles. Or, if your legs are muscular and your lungs sound, you can tramp the whole distance, an alternative much to be recommended.

It was one of those deliciously cool days in the early part of September that I chose for the walk to Wigmore. Providing myself with a trusty walking-stick, a pocket telescope, a local guide-book, and an Ordnance Survey map of the district, I left Leominster by the West Street and Bargates; and on arriving at the cross roads, just a mile out of the town, paused for a few minutes at Barons' Cross, the spot pointed out by tradition as the place where the barons of the royal army from the south and those from Leominster met for consultation on their way to check the advance of the opposing forces under Edward Mortimer from the north. A farther trudge of three miles through a really luxurious country, fruit-laden orchards, and field upon field of golden grain, only waiting the reaper's sickle, to my right and to my left as far as the eye could reach, with here and there a hopyard, where scores of busy fingers were deftly plucking the rich clusters from the gracefully climbing bine; the scene being interspersed by trees, upon whose leaves artist Nature had already begun to paint those rich autumnal tints which no Royal Academician has yet been able to put on canvas—and so I reached Kingsland, a charming straggling village quite a mile in length, with the church on my left dedicated to St Michael, and founded in 1290 by Edward, Lord Mortimer, to whom the manor then belonged. A mound near the rectory was pointed out to me as the site of an ancient castle, by the believing said to be the burial-place of King Merewald, or rather of his body, since his head is traditionally reputed to have been one of the grinning gold-bedecked skull relics on the altar of the Priory Church at Leominster.

Another half-mile, and I found myself reading the inscription on 'The Monument,' a stone pedestal erected in 1799 to commemorate the battle

fought on February 2, 1461 (erroneously stated on the stone to have been 1460), between the forces of Edward Mortimer, Earl of March, afterwards Edward IV., on the side of York, and those of Henry VI., on the side of Lancaster. The battle of Mortimer's Cross lasted from nine in the morning till sunset, the Lancastrian army being entirely routed, four thousand 'good men and true' being left dead and dying on the field. Owen Tudor, great-grandfather of Henry VIII., and many Welsh chiefs and Englishmen of distinction, were taken prisoners, some being executed at Leominster, others at Hereford. 'This,' says the inscription, 'was the decisive battle which placed Edward IV. on the throne of England; he was crowned king on the 5th of March following.' This latter statement is incorrect, as Edward was not formally crowned till the 28th of June. Standing with my back to the pedestal and looking northwards, the great 'West Field,' where the Lancastrian generals Pembroke, Tudor, and Ormonde had so skilfully disposed their forces on the eve of the battle, lay like a panorama before me. There in the distance was the entrance to the valley of Aymestrey, through which the forces of Mortimer advanced from Wigmore; and there on the plain of Kingsland I could in imagination see the scantily clad Irish soldiers under Ormonde fighting fiercely against the more disciplined warriors under Richard. And then I thought of the words put into the mouths of Edward Mortimer and Richard Plantagenet on the eve of the battle, in Shakspeare's play of *King Henry VI.*:

Edward. Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns?

Richard. Three glorious suns, each one a perfect sun;
Not separated with the racking clouds,
But severed in a pale clear-shining sky.
See, see! they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,
As if they vowed some league inviolable:
Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun.
In this the heaven figures some event.

I resume my tour, the road taking me over the very spot where the combat waxed fiercest; and there away on the right, among the trees, was just the faintest peep of Lucton School, one of those old educational institutions of the last century over which so many hard words have been bandied between the Charity Commissioners on the one hand and the local bigwigs on the other. Feeling just a little thirsty, I essayed a halt at an old wayside inn, known to artists and disciples of Izaak Walton as a real haven of rest and refreshment for the weary of the human kind. Landlord Roberts welcomed me, as I am told he ever welcomes all callers, and as most British landlords, out of London at all events, welcome touring callers generally. A 'cup' of real Herefordshire cider, the usual passage of words in true English style anent the weather past, the weather present, and the meteorological possibilities of the future, and I had once more put foot to ground in the direction of Aymestrey, a name made familiar to geological students in Murchison's *Siluria*. To the right is the church of St John and St Alkmund, containing an ancient monument to the memory of the founder, Sir John Lingen, the firm friend and ally of Edmund Mortimer. To the left are the famous Aymestrey limestone quarries; and as I cross the old bridge

over sparkling Lugg as it rushes in hot haste to join its sister Wye at Hereford, I find myself in a narrow gorge, where the steep tree-clad hill-sides remind me very much of the beautiful pass of Aberglaslyn in North Wales. Emerging from the valley, towering on my right is Croft Ambury, on the summit of which the brave British chief Caractacus encamped when retreating westwards before the victorious legions of the Roman general, Ostorius Scapula. Caractacus had made a bold stand on the arrival of the Roman forces in Siluria, and had been driven from camp to camp, until, as a final attempt to stay the onward rush of 'the foreigner,' he strongly intrenched himself on the top of a hill near Brampton Brian, just away to my left, called Coxall Knoll, where, however, he was again defeated, his wife and daughter being taken prisoners on the field of battle, and he himself compelled to flee into the north, where he was treacherously given up to the Romans, and conveyed in triumph to Rome.

Wigmore reached at last, in every respect a characteristic English village; and there, high up on a curious eminence, is the parish church, with the quaintest of ivy-covered towers. A guide-book informs me that this church existed before the reign of Stephen, and that Sir Hugh de Mortimer, lord of Wigmore (who flourished in that reign), made a grant of the benefice of Wigmore to the canons of the adjoining priory of Shobdon, afterwards monks of Wigmore Abbey. Turning to the right through the fields, there, majestic even in decay, is the once mighty home of the regal Mortimers. Crossing the moat, the traces of which are very perfect, and passing under a low-arched gateway covered with a mantle of rich ivy, I found myself in the courtyard, with the ruins of the keep and banqueting hall on a mound in front. Some of the outer walls and towers of the castle are in a good state of preservation, and give evidence of the extent and importance of the place when the Mortimers swayed the fortunes of the English crown. Just inside the entrance, on the left, an interesting discovery was made in 1870. The then tenant of the farm, of which the ruins form a part, found that at a particular spot the place sounded hollow; and on making excavations, steps were come to, leading to a strong door with massive hinges. Passing through the door and down two or more steps, a room was discovered, to the walls of which were affixed two very massive iron staples. Among the rubbish were tiles of very good workmanship, one of which had on it the *fleur-de-lis* of France, quartered by the royal arms of England (Edward IV.). From the appearance of the room, it must have formed one of the dungeons of the castle. The view from the keep is extensive towards the north and north-east. Hill and dale, verdure-clad valleys and fern-topped hills; miniature orchards and cosy-looking farm-homesteads; and about a mile from the castle can be plainly distinguished the spot where Wigmore Abbey once stood, and in which several of the Mortimers were buried. All that now remains of this is the old Grange of the Abbey, a fine timber building, and a perfect example of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth century styles of architecture. The outer portions of the Abbey remain, but are divided to

meet the requirements of a modern farmyard. The old Abbey barn is pointed out to visitors as one of the finest specimens of Abbey barns in the country. It has a large and lofty timber roof, some of the beams being of immense size, and surpassing anything of the kind at the present day. A copy of the abbot's seal is still extant.

The walls of the keep of Wigmore Castle are in a good state of preservation; and the banquetting hall must have been of fine proportions. The earlier history of Wigmore Castle and the Mortimers is somewhat clouded in the mists of myth; but it is probable that the castle was a stronghold of considerable importance during the disturbed times of the numerous Welsh incursions into the Marches. A Ralph de Mortimer married Glwady's Dhu, daughter of Llewellyn of Wales. A Roger Mortimer fought for Henry III. at the battle of Northampton; and at a later date we find a Roger de Mortimer, a minor, placed by Edward II. under the guardianship of Piers Gaveston. This Roger de Mortimer was made Lord-lieutenant of Ireland in 1316. In 1322 Roger was imprisoned in the Tower for joining in the conspiracy against Piers Gaveston and Hugh Le Despenser, the king's favourites; but he escaped to France, where he lived in criminal intimacy with Isabella, wife of Edward II., whom he persuaded to return with him to England in 1326, and to dethrone her husband. The queen created Roger de Mortimer, Earl of March; and in recognition of the honours and favours conferred on him, he sumptuously entertained the queen and the young king her son for some days at his castles of Ludlow and Wigmore. Roger, Earl of March, was executed at Tyburn in 1330. Edmund de Mortimer, great-grandson of Roger, married Philippa Plantagenet, daughter of Lionel, Duke of Clarence; and it was by this marriage his descendants became entitled to the crown of England, his son Roger de Mortimer, fourth Earl of March, being declared by the parliament of 1385 heir to the throne. Edmund's second son espoused the daughter of Owen Glendwy'r; and his daughter Elizabeth was married to Henry Percy, better known in history as Hotspur. The fifth Earl's daughter, Anne, was married to Richard Plantagenet, son of Edmund Langley, Duke of York, grandson of Edward III. The frequent intermarriages of the Earls of March with the reigning family were the causes of endless troubles and conspiracies; but the decisive battle of Mortimer's Cross, where the Lancastrians were so disastrously beaten and the Mortimers placed on the throne, ushered in for a time a somewhat more peaceful era.

I could not help thinking of those days when might rather than right ruled, when every man's hand seemed uplifted against his brother's, as, standing on one of the fast crumbling walls of the old keep, I gazed around on the ruined towers, and the grass-grown spot where once stood the noble banquetting hall in which the first Earl of March entertained Isabella, the faithless wife of Edward II. Times have indeed changed since then, and so have the men with them. The Mortimers and Warwicks, kings and king-makers, have gone the way of all flesh. Where five hundred years ago within were 'sounds of revelry by night,' is now heard but the bleating of the timid

sheep, or the laughter of the happy excursionist. Where, four centuries since, were heard without the clash of arms and the angry shouts of contending armies, is the lowing of contented cattle, or the monotonous whirr of the peaceful reaping-machine as the golden grain falls gracefully to the ground ready for the empty garner.

But the day was waning, and the sun was already preparing to dip his ensign in the west in honour of the rising of the night's monarch in the far south-east, so I somewhat reluctantly descended the hill, giving the ruined home of the Mortimers a parting look before emerging on to the road which was to take me back to Leominster. The shadows of evening had already been curtain-like drawn over the surrounding landscape as I retraced my steps past the old inn at the cross roads, and on over the battlefield of Mortimer's Cross; and as I paused for a moment to look at the pedestal which records a great day's bloody work, fancy conjured up the men who had done their parts in the fearful contest, and I thanked the fates which had cast my lines in more peaceful times and more pleasant places.

I have been much indebted for information concerning the Mortimers to a little work, *The History of Wigmore and the Adjacent Neighbourhood*. It may interest my readers to know that I have already called the attention of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments to Wigmore Castle, and that an official visit to the ruins is in contemplation.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TOBIAS had taken a day's holiday without troubling his employer with the formality of asking for it. St Monday was a familiar of his. He had booked for Birmingham by an early train, had slunk furtively into the bank, and there presented his cheque with a manner so shy and guilty as to draw upon himself the suspicion of the cashier, who narrowly examined the document before rendering it into coin of the realm. The fat man trembled with anguish at the thought that he might be seized and that Snelling might deny his signature. When the ten golden sovereigns were shovelled on to the counter, he took them up with shaky fingers and carried them out into the street in his moist hand. His pockets were never very trustworthy, and the last had given way that morning, so that he was compelled to carry the remnant of Saturday's wages in the lining of his hat, where half-a-dozen penny pieces, conspicuous among the scattered silver by their size, galled his baldness. He made his way straight to the great emporium of ready-made clothes, whose portals he had so often entered in fancy, and there ordered new raiment. It was not an easy thing to fit Tobias's figure off-hand, but the shopman made an approach to success; and in the space of half an hour he emerged upon the street in a new suit of gleaming black, a new cheap silk hat, new boots considerably too large for him, a new false front

with high shirt collars, and a new cravat of violent colours. He bore his old discarded garments folded into a neat brown paper parcel under his arm, and made by instinct for the nearest place of public refreshment. There he took a glass of rum-and-water, and left his parcel in charge of the barnmaid on duty, whom he charmed by the sesquipedalian fluency of his converse and the affability of his manner.

Mr Orme knew nothing of the Philosophy of Clothes, but he felt that his new garments made a new man of him, and as he rambled through the sunshiny streets, his bosom dilated with the thought that his exterior aspect defied criticism. He determined to spend the day in sightseeing, and made a virtuous resolve against the enemy Rum. It would not be dignified to take too much of that seductive liquid whilst the gloss of newness remained upon his clothes. He would have at least one day of respectability, and he thought with inward sighings how well he could decorate *en permanence* the life upon which his resources only permitted him to linger for a few brief hours. To be always idle—always to have money at command, and to be at no employer's beck and call—these were things unattainable, but his being groaned for them. The Present, at its splendid best, bore the dim shadow of the Future.

His ideas of holiday-making were not the most brilliant in the world; but he rode about for hours on the tops of different omnibuses, and ate shrimps at lordly leisure from a brand new Turkey-red handkerchief. At certain happy moments he wondered what people took him for, and felt like a nobleman at large. In the course of time this enjoyment palled upon him. His money burned in his pocket; the gilded signs of public-houses called him with urgent, almost audible, appeal. What was a poor Tobias, with his wrecked nerves and Rum-drowned conscience, to do, even though habited in the most respectable raiment and animated by the best intentions?

The luckless money, fruit of treachery, lasted a week. The new garments found their way to the pawnshop, and the old, pocketless, frayed, white at the seams, bagged at the knees, and oily at the shoulders and elbows, once more enshrined their owner's figure. Mr Orme was not entirely devoid of grace, and was ashamed to go back to his employer. The produce of the pawned garments helped him to drag on through a week's dull repentance, and then he was without resources. He wandered about asking for work, but finding none, and was on his last legs, when somebody offered him a berth for a day or two in the capacity of broker's man. If he could have relied upon the position for a permanence, it would have come very near to his picture of the Ideal Life, and as it was, it came in as a welcome relief from thirst and hunger and the dread of downright starvation. He accepted the work with alacrity, and was at once despatched upon his business.

He was taken by his new employer, the broker, to Castle-Barfield, and there a trap being chartered, the two were driven for a mile or so along the identical route Mr Orme had travelled a little more than a fortnight earlier when he had paid his visit to Snelling. Half-way along that road the trap made a turn to the right, and then,

after a mile's drive along an umbrageous lane, pulled up before a farmhouse, passably well to do in aspect. Here they alighted; and the broker, bustling up to the gate and along the path, tapped at the open door with the crook of his walking-stick. A middle-aged woman answered the call, and a solemn child appeared in her rear.

'What do you want, master?' the woman asked.

'Two hundred and fifty-two pounds, thirteen shillings, and fivepence,' chanted the broker, 'for judgment, costs, and expenses granted in the suit of Robert Snelling *versus* Henry Day.'

'My man ain't at home, master,' the woman answered. 'Thee can come in, since thee'st got to. We've been expecting thee.'

The broker walked into the house, signalling Tobias to follow. The woman dusted a chair with her apron and drew it a little forward; then she sat down with an immovable expressionless face, and suddenly breaking into tears, threw her apron over her head and rocked herself to and fro. The solemn child ran to her, and taking one of her hands, kissed it, and stood staring with round black eyes at Tobias and his employer.

'That's the judgment, missis,' said the broker, drawing a folded paper from his pocket and opening it. 'You'd better take a look at it.' The woman drew away her apron, ceased her tears for a moment whilst she looked at the document, and then covered up her head again.—'That's a copy of the docketment,' pursued the broker, addressing Tobias, 'and that you keep.—You know your duty, I suppose? You leave the house when you're paid two hundred and fifty-two pounds, thirteen shillings, and fivepence in cash, and not before. You claim five bob for every day or part of a day you wait here, and you see that nothing is took away from the house.'

Mr Orme, fascinated by the dark eyes of the solemn child, nodded in answer, but said nothing. The function he had entered upon had a little while ago seemed altogether desirable; but now that he had actually begun with it, he thought otherwise. He was a poor creature, and good for very little, but he would never have had the heart to claim his own by any such step as this. There was not much room in him for pity; but a crying woman was a terror to him, and to keep one in company for an indefinite space of time was a disagreeable occupation.

The broker went about the house and premises as if the place belonged to him, and passed audible comments on the furniture, afflicting Tobias with a feeble sense of vicarious shame. When he had examined things to his heart's content, he went away, leaving his subordinate still fascinated by the child, who scarcely removed her eyes from his face, and seemed to regard him with a grave and understanding scrutiny which settled more and more into disapproval. It was not long before the disapproval found words. The woman had ceased to cry almost as suddenly as she had begun, and drawing her apron from her face, wiped her eyes, and began to move about the room, arranging and dusting mechanically.

'I don't like him,' said the child decisively. 'He's got a red nose. What has he got a red nose for, mother?'

'It's indigestion with some of 'em,' the mother answered; 'but with the main part it's drink.—The child's chokeful o' questions,' she added in a commonplace tone of explanation to Tobias, 'and her niver knows how to rest till her gets her answer. You musn't mind the child. You'll git used to her, maybe.—Lydia, you shouldn't ask sich questions afore strangers. What d'y'e think folks'll think of a little gell as asks questions about people's noses?'

Tobias travelled with a thoughtful forefinger over the feature thus brought in question, and cast a sidelong downward glance upon it, but said nothing. By-and-by the woman of the house produced a great roll of stocking and began to knit, with the same expressionless countenance she had worn at first, until without warning she began to cry again, and hid her head beneath her apron. This was too much for Mr Orme, who rose fretfully and walked to the doorway. A single step landed him in the garden; but he came back in a mighty flutter lest the door should be closed against him, and his possession of the house and its chattels be thereby made null and void. But finding that no notice whatever was taken of his movements, and not being bound by any very rigid sense of duty at the best of times, he potted out again a moment later, and from that time forward made a series of timid excursions into the open air, until he became persuaded that no attempt would be made to lock him out. A swift and furtive examination of the back premises showed him that there were three separate means of ingress to the house on that side; and deciding that if need were, he could scutter back again before all of them could be closed against him, he ventured to stroll about the garden.

The weather was bright and pleasant, and not too hot. The yellow-banded bees went buzzing from flower to flower, pointing no moral of industry for Mr Orme, but fretting him with nervous fears of being stung. He went gingerly about the moss-grown paths with a constant frightened eye turned backwards to mark whether or not the feeble house garrison was preparing a barricade against him. In the course of some half-hour he gathered courage from immunity, and having lit a pipe, went ballooning along the garden paths in a state of beatific idleness. By dint of nearly half a century's pursuit of rum-and-water, his life's chief good, he had almost obliterated any original powers of thinking which nature may have bestowed upon him; but an obscured process of memory and sensation still did duty in his mind. He noticed that he was here at the instance of Mr Robert Snelling, and mused muzzily on that fact as on a strange coincidence. He began to cast his own possibilities up and down in his mind; and by dint of a good deal of thumb-and-finger counting, he arrived at the conclusion that five shillings a day represented one pound fifteen shillings per week. If that gorgeous income should endure for but a fortnight, he would be able to redeem his clothes and to enjoy at least another week's drinking. Fired by this prospect, he walked more briskly, and even dared to extend his journey to the end of the garden.

There he observed a curious thing, the significance of which he did not for a moment under-

stand. This was no particular shame to him, for a keener and more observant man than Tobias might have gone by without giving it a second thought. But there, in the far corner of the garden, the surface-earth for a rough square of some four or five yards had been dug away, and a shining black bed, irregularly quarried, lay exposed to the daylight. The shining black bed consisted obviously of coal, and Tobias's first idea was that the bankrupt household kept a queer sort of open-air coal cellar. He had neither fancy nor invention; but for once a habit of poking his nose into other people's business served him as well as either of them could have done; and after a moment's investigation, he satisfied himself that the open-air coal cellar was of mother Nature's making. In point of fact, it was neither more nor less than the cropped-up edge of a coal-seam.

An anonymous philosopher has remarked with a profundity as real as it is apparent that a good many things go to everything. It had happened, something like a year before, that Mr Orme had been employed to set up in type a pamphlet of sixteen pages octavo which dealt with the position and formation of the Great South Staffordshire Fault. Now, the Great South Staffordshire Fault is not a moral failing, but neither more nor less than a great outcrop of stone which puts an end to the Great South Staffordshire coal-field. It had been a moot-point for years amongst practical mineralogists and engineers as to whether the coal-bed were simply interrupted by this fault or actually closed in, determined and ended by it. Trial shafts had been sunk beyond it with results disastrous to the fortunes of the speculators, who had in some instances encountered live sand, and in others had sunk until they had come upon signs of the absence of coal which were regarded as final. The history of these endeavours, with certain philosophisings upon them, had made up the subject-matter of the pamphlet which Tobias's industry had helped to give to the world. He had not only put it into type with his own fingers, but, with the assistance of the office boy, had acted as his own proof reader. When the pamphlet had been sewn and cut, he had preserved a copy of it amid the archives of the ramshackle old printing office, and often in moments when work had become more than usually distasteful, he had beguiled his stolen leisure by studying its pages. So far as a knowledge of the author's views could carry him, Tobias was an authority upon this question. Once, indeed, he had discoursed with so much learning and fluency on the subject to three or four practical men whom he had found refreshing themselves in a wayside public-house in the neighbourhood of Stratford-on-Avon, as to carry astonishment and conviction to their minds, and to leave them under the impression that he was quite a shining light of science.

At first, he hardly dared to think of what the discovery of this curious hole in a farmer's back garden might mean. Even if his own crude ideas were true, and the little bared shelf of coal before him really indicated immeasurable riches, the wealth was none of his. Yet, for all that, he was staggered by his own conceptions. Here, perhaps, lay millions upon millions of pounds, and he perhaps was the first man intelligently to

discover that enormous store. Perhaps? It was almost a certainty. What should bring a man with the sheriff's bailiff in his house for a trifle of two hundred and fifty pounds, when he had such treasure as this upon his own land?

'The fool's got coal,' Tobias gasped, 'and he doesn't know it.'

He did not know how much the discovery had excited him, but he was actually beginning to perspire and tremble, when a farm labourer came lumbering down the garden path with a battered iron bucket in one hand and a pick and shovel over his shoulder. The man gave an uninterested glance at Mr Orme, and stepped into the hole, which on its shallower side was little over a foot deep, and began lazily to peck at the surface and to shovel the fragments he struck off into his bucket.

'Would you mind telling me, my friend,' said Tobias ingratiatingly, 'what that is?'

'What what is?' asked the yokel, staring up from his task.

'That—ah—that curious shiny black stuff?' said Tobias.

'Got eyes in thy head, hasn't?'

'Why, yes,' said Tobias tremulously. 'Under ordinary circumstances, my friend, I find my ocular arrangements sufficiently satisfactory. But are you sure it's coal?'

'O' course it is,' the man answered.

'Ah! Yes. Quite so. Precisely. And will it—will it burn?'

'Yo' can sit on the back kitchen fire and have a try at it.'

'Really?' said Tobias. 'Indeed? Ah, yes. Quite so. Precisely. And is it what you would call a good coal, my friend?'

'Good enough, for all I know,' the man answered.

'And will you tell me, my friend,' asked Tobias, 'how you happened to light upon it?'

'They started to dig a well a week or two ago,' answered the man. He had lazily filled his bucket, and taking it up together with his pick and shovel, he stepped out upon the garden path.

Mr Orme tremblingly intercepted him. 'Can you inform me, my friend, as to the proprietorship of the land in this neighbourhood?'

The man, to whom this query might as well have been addressed in Greek, simply stared at him and made a motion to get round him.

'No, no, my friend,' said Tobias eagerly. 'Don't go for a minute.' He held his shaky hands out towards him, and would actually have laid them upon him, if it had not been for the man's look of ill temper and unwieldy strength.

'Is Mr Day the owner of this land? Is it his own property, his very own? Has he the right to dig into that coal?'

'It's his own land,' the man responded, 'and was his feyther's and his grandfeyther's before him.' With that he pushed by, and Tobias made no further effort to restrain him.

'The fool's got coal,' he gasped again, when the man was out of earshot, 'and he doesn't know it.'

The mystery of the Great South Staffordshire Fault was solved, and he was the discoverer. There were millions below his feet, millions, millions! His head began to whirl, and his hands shook as if he had been smitten with

a palsy. His knees were loosened beneath him, insomuch that he found it necessary to sit down on an old disused beehive near at hand. His bemused mind seemed to grope in its own recesses with a blind and greedy avarice. Was there nothing for him in all this?—no means of enriching himself? He was an old man—he was getting to be very old. He had to work for a living, and there was nothing before him but the workhouse: a cold and cheerless habitation for one who, like himself, had cultivated a lifelong fondness for rum and society. There were tears of senile pity in his eyes for the poor old man who had to work for his living. He had always felt that to be hard, but he had never felt it to be so hard as now. Millions upon millions, and he to have found them, and still to be poor! He tugged at the ring of gray hair which surrounded his baldness in a frenzy of impotent desire, and then all on a sudden became aware that he was feeling very sick and cold, in spite of the warm summer sunshine which poured upon him. He got up and staggered along the path towards the house with his feeble knees still trembling and his face all blanched, except for one rubicund spot upon his nose, which on this novel background stuck fiery off indeed. The woman of the house cried out at him as he entered at the doorway.

'Lauks-a-mercy! what's the matter with the man?'

'I am unwell, ma'am,' sobbed Tobias; and indeed the ghastly pallor of his face and the cold sweat which had gathered on his forehead gave warrant to the statement. 'A little brandy, a little rum—anything.' He clasped his stomach pitifully with both hands, and stared appealingly at her with his features twitching.

The woman without a word ran to a cupboard, and laying hold of a great stone jar, poured out a glass of whisky.

Tobias seized it greedily and emptied it. The colour flowed back to his face, and heaving a tremulous sigh, he set the glass upon the table.

'What is it, master?' the woman asked him, kindly enough. 'Bee'st better? You looked like death a minute ago.'

'Thank you, ma'am,' he answered; 'I am a little better. I am subject to that kind of attack. A malady contracted in early youth, almost in infancy.'

'It is to be hoped it does not come on often,' the woman answered.

'It does not frequently happen,' said Tobias, 'that the attack is so serious as it was upon this occasion.'

He was beginning to feel like himself again, and there was a new illumination in his mind. It was at Snelling's instance that he was here, and Snelling was a man of capital. He had a hold already on the owner of the land, and he would give fifty pounds to know this news. Fifty? He would give a hundred. Tobias sat quite dazzled by this sudden prospect of wealth; but by-and-by his mental eye grew used to it. The capitalist who knew of his discovery first of all could make a gigantic fortune, and a hundred pounds was a poor recompense for the original finder. His thoughts swept on to two, three, four, five, and the mental barque almost came to shipwreck when it struck a thousand.

The woman of the house having cast two or three inquiring glances at him, being moved thereto by his wild looks and an occasional moan or muttered exclamation, withdrew from the room in pursuit of some household duty, taking the child with her. Moving on tiptoe, Tobias made a stealthy raid upon the whisky jar. His nerves wanted steadying; he must give himself the power to think. He filled the tumbler almost to the brim with the real spirit, and gulped it down in a thievish haste and fear lest he should be discovered. The potent drink brought tears to his eyes and set him coughing; but it seemed to fill his blood with refulgent colour, and to strike a thousand bright and victorious fancies into his mind. He was his own man again, and more. The potentialities of wealth inspired him. In all his sordid shabby life he had known no moment of exultation comparable to this. His thoughts soared fearlessly. He would claim a partnership. The sense of power and triumph grew unbearable, and he felt that he must put his project into instant execution.

He marched, erect and vigorous, from the house and into the road, and there a momentary confusion seized him. He was not quite certain of the direction of Snelling's house, but he had never felt so prompt and daring. It almost seemed to him that whichever way he took it could not fail to lead him to his destination. He struck out courageously, and walked on encircled by radiant dreams. But he had drawn his inspiration from a treacherous fountain, and was in a while stupidly surprised to discover that whilst the radiance remained, the reason had vanished from his mind. That was all right, however. Everything would have been all right if the summer sun had been a little less powerful.

ROCK-PICTURES.

PAINTED or engraved rocks occur to puzzle the antiquary in every quarter of the globe. They are found in Siberia, in Africa, in Australia, in our own Northumberland. The most curious and interesting pictured rocks are, however, to be found in Mexico and South America. Those of Mexico have been described so fully and so often, in their connection with the history of the civilisation of that country, that it is unnecessary to do more than refer to them here. In South America, however, especially in British Guiana, very curious and striking specimens of this rude art, which are not so well known, are to be found. Various explanations of them have been given. After a very careful investigation of the subject, Richard Andrée, in his work entitled *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, comes to the conclusion that they were the work of idle moments and bear no meaning whatever. Other travellers and writers on the subject disagree entirely with him. It will be best to give some account of the specimens of rock-pictures now found in Guiana and the Amazons, in order to see what may be inferred from them concerning their origin.

There are two kinds of pictured rocks—the painted and the engraved. The former do not deserve much consideration. The painting upon them is done in a red pigment used by the

Indians for personal adornment, and as this pigment is not able to withstand the wear and tear of the elements for any considerable time, these paintings are probably of comparatively recent date. The rock-engravings, on the contrary, belong chiefly to a date antecedent to the European invasion of South America. They are divided into two classes—the deep and the shallow engravings. The deep engravings have apparently been cut in the rock by some sharp stone instrument, similar to the implements in use in the Stone Age. The shallow, which are only from one-eighth to one-half of an inch in depth, are mere scratchings. It is supposed that they were produced by rubbing with loose stones or wet sand. As a rule, the deep engravings are not found in the same districts with the shallow. They are apparently the work of a different people and a different age.

The most remarkable of the shallow engravings occurs on the Corentyn River below the Wanitoba cataracts in Guiana. The rock on which it is pictured is called the Temehri rock, from a Carib word signifying painted or marked. This representation is remarkable on account of its dimensions, for the same figure occurs repeatedly in the shallow engravings. It is a long rectangular figure, with a pattern of lines crossing with geometrical exactitude from side to side. It lies on the slope of a rock with a very smooth surface, and it is thirteen feet long by five feet seven inches in width. Above this oblong figure is depicted a semicircle marked out in two lines, with distinct radiating lines filling up the curve of the semicircle. As is usual with these shallow engravings, the marking is very indistinct; under certain lights it is impossible to discern the form clearly until water has been poured over it. In photographing this engraving it was necessary, first, to trace it out with white chalk. Another curious figure occurring a little lower down on the same river is an upright line with several volutes springing from it on either side. Forms of this description occur repeatedly. They are for the most part very indistinct; sometimes only the trained eye of the Indian can spy them. One feature in these engravings which can hardly be without some significance is that they always face east.

The deep engravings are far more varied in character. The artists have depicted, roughly enough, it is true, but unmistakably, men, monkeys, snakes, sometimes alligators, lizards, beetles, as well as combinations of curved lines. These combinations are often most elaborate. The so-called 'Greek' pattern is also found. The attempts to depict living creatures are odd enough; they bear a remarkable likeness to the early attempts at art found to-day in Old World nurseries and schoolrooms. Thus, a straight line represents the body; transverse lines at right angles to this serve for the upper parts of the arms and legs, as far as the elbows and the knees. Ascending lines mark the rest of the arms with fingers branching outwards; descending ones with radiating toes depict the legs below the knee. A heavy dot represents the head. In the case of monkeys, another line was added for the tail. Two drawings of far more elaborate design are described by Sir Robert Schomburgk. One of these is a wondrous combination of lines

wrought into a pattern that might serve for architectural ornament, or, diminished, would be most effective in embroidery. The other is far more interesting to us. It is a drawing of a large ship of European build, with a smaller one above. It was discovered on the Rio Negro. Rough as it is, it clearly represents a Spanish galley of the time of Columbus or his immediate successors; and the drawing appears naturally enough to be connected with a famous incident in the history of the Spanish exploration of South America. Francisco Orellana, the first European to advance beyond the mouth of the Amazons, found himself in need of a vessel by means of which he could descend the main stream and gain the Atlantic. Undeterred by the difficulties that lay in his path, he set to work to build himself a ship. This daring enterprise he carried out successfully, and surrounded by the Indians who accompanied him on his journey, he built his ship in the middle of the great South American continent in 1540. Is it unreasonable to suppose that on their return home the Indians should have chronicled the astonishing event in their rude fashion, or, perhaps, have attempted by this representation to show their friends at home the shape of the strange vessel built by the white man?

The question of the origin and intention of the rock engravings now presents itself. So far, no satisfactory answer to it has been found. The Indians when questioned invent half-a-dozen replies quite unworthy of attention. It is a characteristic of the Indians that they will never acknowledge their own ignorance. They always make up an answer to every question. Some will tell you with supreme indifference that the women made them; others declare that they were done by Makenaima Moomoo (the Son of God) when He was on earth—a reply suggested clearly enough by the Gospel story of the early missionaries to South America. André's idea, the result of careful thought and comparison, that they were idle scribbling, is rejected by other explorers for reasons sufficiently sound. In the first place, they are often high up in almost inaccessible positions. Then, they could only be accomplished after patient and wearisome toil; and those who know the Indians well think it unlikely that they would work thus without a purpose. Moreover, the figure found on the Temehri rock, and constantly occurring among the shallow engravings, is very much like a design noticeable in the Mexican pictures.

It has been suggested, and with a fair show of reason, that these pictures have often been made to commemorate some event in the history of the Indians, and as they are frequently found above cataracts, it is not unlikely that they often are, as it were, memorial or biographical inscriptions. Near Lake Superior, an example of picture-writing occurs, which, though far more easy of interpretation to the uninitiated than those of the South American rocks, is doubtless of the same nature. On this rock are depicted five canoes, containing fifty-one men, a kingfisher, a man on horseback, a land-tortoise, and a figure made up of three circles arched over by three semicircles. The reading of this is simple enough: Fifty-one men went on an expedition in five canoes; their leader rode; his ally bore the

name of Kingfisher; in three days—shown by the heavens arching above the circular suns—they reached land—signified by the tortoise. Whether there is a further connection with religious observances is uncertain. One of the few superstitious rites practised by the Indians—that of rubbing the eyes with the juice of red pepper—is performed before the engraved rocks. A key to the mystery—if it be a mystery, to which view of the matter André would not give in—may yet be found. No such art is practised to-day among the Indians of Guiana.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

By FRED. M. WHITE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'BUT it is such a pretty scheme, Heath. The place has been my envy for years; and now to let such an opportunity go by would be almost like flying in the face of Providence.'

Colonel Sandhurst spoke very warmly; in a way, indeed, which was quite a contrast to his usual calm judicious utterance. He had his long neatly clad limbs planted very widely apart before the fireplace of Mr Heath's private office; while the latter gentleman sat at a desk stabbing a blotting-pad with a penknife, as if he were slaughtering his client's arguments as they cropped up, hydra-headed, before this legal Hercules.

'It is a pretty scheme,' said he, with a certain dry irritation. 'I've seen plenty of them in my time—mostly failures. And I don't mind telling you in all candour that I hope this will be one.—Why can't you leave Mrs Charlesworth alone? Here you have one of the most beautiful places in Sussex, a handsome almost princely income to keep it up, and yet nothing but the possession of Fernleigh will content you.'

'But don't you see there is no house on my property down here?—three thousand acres in a ring-fence with Fernleigh and its five hundred right in the centre. It seems very hard'—

'It is a great deal harder for my poor client, Mrs Charlesworth, to turn out of her old home.—Oh! of course as mortgagee you have a perfect right to foreclose, and I am a great fool to allow sentiment in business.'

'But if the woman can't afford to live there, what right has she to stay?'

'Cannot you understand that if this long-delayed Chancery business was concluded, she would have ample means? I wish you would abandon this plan, Sandhurst; I do indeed. If you only knew how attached the poor little woman is to her home; how happy she is there with her daughter, and her blind boy—there, hang it, you couldn't do it! Of course I am a weak-minded old man, but'—

The Colonel pulled his long moustaches in some perturbation of spirit. Usually speaking, he was a kind-hearted individual enough, and really felt very sorry for Mrs Charlesworth's unmerited misfortunes. But at the same time it is very annoying, as most landed proprietors know, to have a long stretch of some one else's property exactly

in the centre of your own. And, moreover, the Bartonsham estate was celebrated for its preserves, while the unhappy owner of Fernleigh had no sympathy with the pursuit of either foxes or pheasants. Colonel Sandhurst had no personal antipathy to his neighbour; nevertheless, when an opportunity offered for a heavy mortgage, he jumped at the chance. And now that more than two years' interest was in arrear, and the Colonel in a position to foreclose at any moment, the temptation was too strong to be resisted.

'I do not see why I should drag a lot of sentiment into the matter,' he said reflectively. 'Of course I am very sorry, and all that kind of thing; but if I don't have it, some one else will, you see.'

'I am afraid so,' the lawyer groaned parenthetically. 'I see that plainly enough.'

'Very well, then. Again, if it comes to a sale, I shall probably be run up to a fancy sum by one or more of the lady's friends.—Come, I will make you a proposition. My mortgage is for seven thousand five hundred, and for this the property is legally mine. But I don't want to appear grasping. Suppose we call it a sale, and I give you another two thousand five hundred for your client. I call that a fairly generous offer.'

Mr Heath dug his knife three times in rapid succession into the blotting-pad and dropped it with a sigh of defeat. Of course it was a generous offer, an extremely generous offer, and yet beyond the folded blue papers and red tape and tin boxes, there was before his mind's eye a picture framed by a long avenue of ancient fruit-trees: the vision of a gentle-faced little lady with a blind lad leaning on her arm, and the last words she had said to him were ringing in his ears now. They were such simple words, too: 'If I lose this,' she had said with a wistful glance, 'I lose all hope—not for myself, but for the children.'

'I should like to refuse it,' observed the lawyer. 'I should like, metaphorically speaking, to throw your mortgage in your face and snap my fingers at your legal rights. It all comes of this atrocious sentiment; and the worst of it is that your offer is so magnificent, that, speaking as a man of business, I dare not refuse it; only you must give us a week to think it over.'

Colonel Sandhurst smiled benignly, and expanded, as a man will who is conscious of having done a generous action. 'Fernleigh is a beautiful old house,' he observed complacently, 'and will be the very place for Frank and his bride. The old soldiers are pretty tough in a general way; but hard service begins to tell after fifty, and I should like to see my boy settled before long. Ethel Morton is an extremely nice girl, and will make the lad a good wife.'

'Provided always, as we say, that the lad is willing. I wouldn't set my heart too firmly upon that match, if I were you, Colonel. Captain Frank is no longer a boy, to be commanded into matrimony.'

'He was always a very obedient son, though; and by Jove, sir, one to be proud of. Of course you heard all about that Victoria Cross and the fearful wound he received; but he will be here next week to answer for himself. In his last letter he says that the six months at Madeira have quite set him up again. If anything had happened to him'— Here the speaker paused

and hummed a fragment of operatic music with a great show of palpably assumed gaiety; while Mr Heath looked out across Castleford's principal street, deeply interested in the facetious conversation of two cabmen in the sunny sleepy square below.

'Would you like to go over Fernleigh?' he asked suddenly, his mind still dwelling uneasily on the old topic. 'It would ease my client's mind to know that she is not in the hands of an investment-seeking ogre; and, as a matter of fact, I don't believe she knows the name of her principal creditor.—What do you say to running over one day this week?'

'Well, I don't know,' said the gallant warrior hesitatingly; 'it seems almost like an intrusion, and in anything but the best taste. You see I'—

'Yes, I see you haven't pluck enough to face Mrs Charlesworth. But, as you are bound to meet some time, the sooner the better. I am going out there this afternoon, and will mention it.'

The Colonel nodded slightly with a perplexed smile on his lips, but he did not answer, for the simple reason that Mr Heath was right. There was a momentary silence between them, in which the humorous conversation of the cabmen could be distinctly heard.

'I mean to remain in the neighbourhood till this matter is settled one way or another,' replied the ex-dragoon at length; 'and Frank will probably join me at the *Green Dragon* later on. And if it is a question of another thousand you will not find me obdurate.' With this parting magnificence the colonel extended his neatly gloved hand, and took his way down the dark stairs, and thence into the High Town with the air of a man who has discharged a delicate commission in an eminently praiseworthy fashion.

But if he felt on such excellent terms with himself, not so Mr Heath. The worthy solicitor was fain to own himself beaten, and handsomely beaten at that, for it is really hard to quarrel with a man who insists upon making a total stranger a present of such a good round sum as three thousand and some odd hundreds of pounds.

Mr Heath felt genuinely sorry for his old friend and client, Mrs Charlesworth; a sympathy none the less keen because at one time, many years ago, there had been the dream of a home over which Margaret Hay was to have held the undisputed sway and sovereignty. As the practical business man gazed out through the grimy windows, memory was very busy with him, jumbled up strangely with business instincts and vague shadowy plans for Margaret Charlesworth's welfare. The old bachelor's heart was still green enough to realise the poignant sorrow which the loss of her home would be to the only woman who had ever caused his pulses to beat the faster. And as he drove along the deep country lanes an hour later, he seemed more strongly to realise what a wrench it would be. In the valley, lay Fernleigh, its twisted chimney stacks above the belt of immemorial elms, where the rooks were busy, and doves crooned in the peaceful silence of the afternoon. But a stone's-throw down the road between high hedges, where violet and foxglove and dogroses were blooming, were the

gates, moss-grown and rusted, but still beautiful, for they had come from the foundry of Quintin Matsys, carried hither more than two hundred years ago by some art-loving Hay, who had followed the profession of the sword, as gentlemen did in those days. Beyond the gates lay a short circular sweep leading to the house, a gray stone building with pointed gables richly carved with birds and flowers, as one sees them occasionally in districts where the soldiers of the Commonwealth failed to penetrate; while on either side of the smoothly shaven lawn, with its spreading copper beeches, was a sloping bank topped by a thick laurel hedge, beyond which lay the gardens, each enclosed by high stone walls.

And if Mrs Charlesworth loved one part of her fair demesne better than another, it was the garden. There appeared to be no serious attempt at order, as one sees in such places nowadays, for the mossy paths were overgrown with eglantine and tulip and York roses, shaded by espaliers and arched bowers of the filbert and golden pippin, with just enough neatness in its elegant disorder to show the hand of care. There was a fragrance in the air, a scent of sweet brier and lavender, mingled with mignonette half-hidden under the fallen petals of the apple blossom. The same now as it might have been a century since; the same as its sorrowing mistress first remembered it, when as a tiny child she rode on her father's shoulder and plucked the sunny peaches on the ripe south wall; the same as when her whitening hair was a tangled net of gold and her violet eyes stirred sleeping hearts in vain. For Fernleigh had been her own home before Vivian Charlesworth had distanced all rivals and won the heart of Margaret Hay; a place to see and love, but a place to leave with lingering and regret.

Mr Heath walked his horse along the drive, under the shadow of an arching belt of chestnuts in the full glory of leaf and flower, past the open hall door with a cool dim vision of polished oak and blue china beyond. In the green court, wall-flowers flourished on the stone buttresses, there were ferns on the stable roof amongst the stone-crop and celandine. There was no helper in the yard, so the visitor put up his own horse, and having done so, mounted a short flight of steps, and pushing back a little rustic gate under two cropped yew-trees, entered the garden. Walking there under the apple boughs was the mistress of Fernleigh, a book in her hand, the other resting on the shoulder of a boy some twelve years of age.

There were gray lines in the soft bright hair under the white lace cap, a subdued sadness in the fair face, otherwise untouched by the ruffling hand of time; and yet a pleasant beautiful face, for beauty at fifty is something we like to gaze upon again. As she looked up, her eyes fell upon Heath with a pleased smile of welcome. 'This is very good of you,' she said. 'You guessed where we should be found. I thought Vivian had had enough music, so we came out here, and brought *Vanity Fair* with us.'

'Which character do you like best, Mr Heath?' asked the boy eagerly. 'George Osborne or Major Dobbin? We prefer the Major.'

'Being unpractical people, naturally,' answered the lawyer.—'Perhaps I have a sneaking affection for him myself; though, professionally speaking,

I dare not say so openly.—So that is the last hero, Vivian?'

Vivian turned his wide blue eyes in the speaker's direction—those sightless eyes, that seemed, none the less, to read the very soul of those they encountered—and a slightly puzzled expression crept into his face. 'Why cannot you say what you think?' he asked.

'Because we do not dwell in the palace of Truth, my child.—And now, run away to your music while I talk business with the mother, though it does seem a sin to bring red tape into this pure atmosphere.'

The boy walked slowly away down the path, touching a leafy spray here and there with outstretched fingers. For a moment they both stood watching him; the one tenderly, almost yearningly, the other with a shade of sadness and pity in his honest gray eyes.

'John,' exclaimed Mrs Charlesworth, suddenly turning to her companion, 'if it were not for him the parting would not be so keen.'

'Keen enough to break your heart,' returned the lawyer gruffly. 'You cannot yet realise it, Margaret. I know your feelings, perhaps better than you comprehend them yourself. When you love every inch of the ground'—

'I do—that is true enough. And the thought of it all keeps me awake at nights, it haunts me as I walk here by day. Cannot you understand what it is to love every tree and leaf and flower—to have a tender association or wistful memory attached to each single foot of soil? There is everlasting youth for me here, but still'—

John Heath at this moment was seized with a sudden fit of coughing, a circumstance which perhaps accounted for the unusual dimness in his eyes. Conscious of some feeling of inherent weakness, he became more dry and business-like than usual; his habit when touched. 'If this wonderful memory of yours would enable you to remember where your grandfather hid that precious assignment, it would be the better for all parties concerned. Allowing that the deed cannot be found, Miss Morton takes the whole of the funded property. But if we can only discover it, the fifty thousand pounds at present invested in consols goes to you, and the Kingswell estates besides.'

'It never will be found; indeed, I almost doubt if it was ever executed,' said Mrs Charlesworth wearily. 'It is all so strange and puzzling.'

'Not at all. When you married your cousin, Vivian Charlesworth, who was a great scoundrel, if I am any judge'—

'John, he was my husband, and he is dead.'

'And a good thing too,' exclaimed the lawyer hotly.—'Well, you know how angry your grandfather, Martin Hay, was about that, though you were his favourite grandchild. By his will he left everything to your cousin Mary, who afterwards married Wilfred Morton. Of course you remember how the old gentleman used to boast that he never altered his mind; and when his feelings changed towards you, he refused to make a new will. But by deed he assigned to you the income arising from the London property, and the Kingswell estates. There is no doubt whatever about that. The assignment was given into the custody of your father, and held by him up

to the time of his death. And it is my opinion that when Vivian Charlesworth got hold of the title-deeds to this place and tried to raise money on them (as he did), he must have found it somewhere, and laid it aside for future use.'

Mrs Charlesworth followed this story with a vague idea as to her legal adviser's meaning. Then, with some faint show of interest, she inquired if Heath knew anything of this unknown relative who seemed determined to take the full measure of her legal rights.

'All I know is that she is young, and is, moreover, being well advised—that is, from a purely business point of view. You see they have everything on their side, and plenty of money to prosecute the suit. If they refuse to accept my offer of a compromise, Fernleigh must go.'

The listener caught the full significance of these last words, and her breath came a little more quickly. She looked up at the blue sky above the apple blooms, and away down the dim green avenue to the house beyond. How bitterly hard it seemed, doubly hard standing there in the full fresh beauty of the summer afternoon, hallowed by the sweet recollection of a thousand such, a maze of pleasant memory, back to the dim remembrance of childhood.

John Heath waited to allow the whole force of the declaration to strike home before he resumed again. 'Believe me it is best to tell you this plainly, though it is painful enough to me. I have had a long talk with your mortgagee this afternoon, and he has made what I consider to be a handsome offer. Of course he can take the whole place as it stands at any moment; but he will do better than that: he will buy the place for three thousand five hundred over his claim.'

'That is very generous,' said Mrs Charlesworth with an unsteady smile. 'Would not that sum invested at five per cent. bring us in a hundred and seventy-five pounds a year? Three people can live on that.'

'A great many people live on less. And besides, if I am any judge of Miss Gladys' character, she will be no weight on your hands. —Margaret, you are singularly blessed in your daughter.'

'I am blessed in both my children, John. Now I suppose you will want to bring my generous creditor over here soon? I wish I could feel sufficiently grateful, but I am rebellious as yet. And if you can forget business for a time, perhaps a cup of tea?'—

'Not this afternoon, thank you; I must be in Castleford by six. I will let you know when the colonel is coming.'

They walked down the garden path side by side; and as Heath brought his trap round, Vivian stole from the house to his mother's side. He seemed by some subtle instinct to feel her presence near him, as he could tell the footsteps of those he loved. 'Mother, are you unhappy?' he asked.

'I, dear? Why should you think that?'

'I don't know; perhaps it was my fancy. Some way, it seems lately that you and Gladys are so much quieter after Mr Heath comes.'

Any reply was prevented by the sound of the lawyer's approaching carriage wheels. They walked by his side to the gates, and afterwards

stood for a long while watching him as he drove away. Presently, Vivian lifted his hand, and laid it gently on his mother's cheek. 'You feel happier than you did, mother?' he said.

Mrs Charlesworth turned from the contemplation of the peaceful landscape, and bending over the boy, kissed his brow tenderly. 'Much happier, Vivian, almost quite,' she replied, and as she said these words, the tears lay on her cheek unseen.

ERRONEOUS PRACTICES.

ARISTOTLE characterised man as an imitative animal, and there is no doubt that an involuntary tendency to imitate forms part of the human constitution. We are also told that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and so it is when we diversify what we copy so as to improve upon it—otherwise there would be no progress—not when taken in its literal sense of mere servile following, as in yawning, for example, which we do simply because we see or hear somebody else doing so. 'Follow my leader' is an excellent game so long as the fogleman knows what he is about; otherwise, it may lead to a series of deplorable mishaps and disasters, and where those in the rear follow blindly, we invariably find that 'one fool makes many.' Applying this school-boys' game to the more serious walks of life, certain erroneous practices are perpetuated day after day, year after year, by successive generations of so-called rational beings, for the simple reason that they are content to tread with their eyes shut in the footprints of those who have gone before. Let us give a few examples of this blind discipleship, and see where they land us.

Why is it that in our places of divine worship alone the speaker continues to be placed at an elevation above his audience? We can understand this having been done in the old days, from mistaken notions, and when the study of acoustics was in its infancy; but since we now know that the loudness or intensity of sound depends upon the density of the medium in which it is produced, not upon that in which it is heard, and that the density of the air in a building decreases as we ascend from floor to roof, there is no longer any excuse for such a misapplication of science. The old three-decker of our grandfathers is certainly, except in a few village churches, a thing of the past; but the remedy is as yet only half complete. We pointed out, in the *Journal* for December 11, 1886, that this speaking from a height, with the head lowered, had been ascertained to be the cause of clergyman's sore throat, and compared the case with that of a barrister addressing the judge and jury seated above him. But we are a conservative race, and require oft-repeated admonition before we can make up our mind to relinquish any old custom, be it ever so baneful and injurious.

The popular custom of pouring spirits into the boots, with a view to prevent the effects of cold, was the cause, in 1807, of the death of Alderman Hankey. Feeling his feet damp and cold, he was induced to pour a glass of brandy into his shoes, in which state he walked home; and shortly after his arrival he was seized with inflammation of the bowels, which in a few hours proved fatal. This practice supposes the internal and external application of spirits to produce the same effect; but

a little consideration will show that whereas the former excites general warmth and restores the circulation in the extremities, the latter has an opposite result. Evaporation produces cold, and the lighter or more spirituous the fluid, the more quickly does it evaporate, and the greater is the degree of cold generated. This can be demonstrated by wetting one hand with spirit, the other with water, and holding them up to dry, when that covered with the spirit will feel infinitely colder than the other. Or the bulbs of two thermometers may be similarly treated. This practice greatly enhances the danger arising from wet feet; and if spirits *are* to be employed as a remedy, they ought to be taken internally. We might with quite as much reason take a table-spoonful of mustard, instead of applying it externally in the form of a poultice.

The writer nearly lost his life through the practice, obtaining in some houses, of turning off the gas at the meter when the household retires to rest. Knowing that the gas supply would shortly be cut off, on reaching his bedroom he lit the candles, leaving the gas jet alight, whose subsequent extinction escaped his notice, so that he omitted to shut it off. On waking next morning he found the room almost filled to suffocation with gas, the servants having turned it on again at the meter when they went down. Had he not been in the habit of sleeping with the window open, he would not, in all probability, have survived to sound this note of warning. That this is not a solitary experience, the following extract from the *Times* of January 1883 proves: 'Mr Hyman, a monetary agent, residing in Belgrave Road, Birmingham, retired to rest on Thursday evening somewhat earlier than usual, leaving a gas jet burning in his room. Some time afterwards the servant turned the gas off at the meter, according to the custom of the house. In the morning the servant, as usual, turned the gas on at the meter, when it of course escaped through the open jet into Mr Hyman's bedroom. About half-past eight the family were startled by hearing groans proceeding from the bedroom; and on hastening to Mr Hyman's assistance, they found him lying on the bed in an unconscious state, with the room filled to suffocation with gas. Medical assistance was at once procured; but in spite of all efforts, death resulted in less than half an hour.'

The arguments adduced on the other side—namely, economy and the improbable danger that would accrue from the falling of a gas chandelier—hardly weigh against the risk to human life.

One bitter cold day last winter, a lady, accompanied by her little boy, was making a friendly call upon a medical man, and on entering the warm drawing-room told her son—as most mothers would, from their having been similarly admonished when children—to take off his overcoat, or he would not feel the benefit of it when he went out again. 'Excuse me,' interposed her host; 'but that is a mistaken idea. Let the little fellow keep it on, and get all the warmth he can into his body; for if he start off with a good stock of warmth, he will remain warm.'

We are not prepared to offer an opinion one way or another on this point, but can affirm that ever since that visit the doctor's advice has been

followed in that family, and that no ill effects have resulted. When we indulge in the luxury of a warming-pan for our bed, or place our boots in front of the fire before starting out on a frosty morning, we are carrying this theory into practice, having learnt by experience how much easier it is to keep warm than to get warm, especially if our circulation be at all sluggish.

These few examples suffice to illustrate the doctrine that we desire to inculcate—namely, how necessary it is in even the simplest matters of every-day life to exercise the reason with which we are gifted, and to do nothing, however trivial, without pausing to consider and ask ourselves whether there be no better way of doing it; thus endeavouring always to act up to Ward Beecher's estimable counsel: 'The philosophy of one century is the common-sense of the next. We should so live and labour in our time, that what came to us as seed may go to the next generation as blossom, and that what came to us as blossom may go to them as fruit. This is progress.'

IN A WELSH COPPER MINE.

'HAVE you ever been into a copper mine?'

'No.'

'Well, I am going down to report upon one in Wales; so, if you care to go with me, be at Euston to-night for the ten train.'

The opportunity of accompanying such a mining expert as my friend X, whose knowledge of lodes and veins has been gained by a study of nearly every important mine in both the Old and New Worlds, was too good to be lost; and so I took my seat in one of the carriages which formed part of the auxiliary Scotch mail at the hour appointed, bound for a little station amongst the Cambrian hills, whose name appeared on the tickets which were to frank us thither, as a string of consonants seemingly chosen from the alphabet in a broadly catholic spirit.

A blowing of whistles, a waving of green lights, a hissing puff, a slight jerk, and the mail is under way, and gliding out into the dusky summer night. Faster and faster is the pace; a rattle, a roar, and a flash of brightness as suburban stations shoot by—a moment's pause at Willesden, and then a brave run to Rugby. But that classic town, sacred to the memory of a noble name, and dear to all lovers of plucky, sturdy Tom Brown, is hidden in Stygian blackness, so on for Stafford.

'Change here, gen'elmen, for Wyllynttrrwch.'

A dismal post-midnight prowling about a semi-dark bleak platform for an hour is not calculated to impress drowsy travellers favourably with this important railway centre; and its long array of signal-lights is cheerfully lost sight of as the locomotive 'Actæon' steams past them for Shrewsbury. A faint grayness is showing in the eastern horizon, and the Severn gleams cold under the hint of day-dawn; but the quaint town slumbers on as we crawl away from its silent shadows, and gathering speed, rush swiftly Westward ho.

Again that dolorous cry, 'All change;' and we rouse ourselves, and turn out for half an hour's wait at another junction. But the night has gone now, and day is driving rejoicingly along the steel-blue heavens; and a lovely panorama of swelling hills, of wooded knolls, and rolling

pastures, is around, from which white wisps of mist curl up and ascend—as incense to the rising sun; whilst birds begin to chant their morning madrigals, and the scent of the hay is strong on the sweet fresh air. Now, indeed, the journey is thoroughly enjoyable as ‘the Local’ winds its way along the twisting valley, crossing and re-crossing its brawling stream, with many a dive through gloomy cutting and tunnel, and pausing at each tiny roadside station, at one of which two of its passengers at last joyfully alight.

For real appreciation of the memory of those old Romans who introduced the bath into these islands, commend me to the morning tub after an all-night railway journey, whilst the fragrance of frying salmon steaks ascends from the kitchen below, as the crystal water leaps and trickles from the useful sponge. Sure, never is dressing such a pleasure as when fresh linen is donned, and you hasten to breakfast after a two hundred miles’ dusty, sleepy run over steel rails.

‘Is the luncheon aboard, Morgan?’

‘Oh yes, sir; he’s all right.’

‘Very well, then; off you go!’

The little round-shouldered Jehu shouts something in an unknown tongue, shakes his reins, waves a decaying whip, and the wagonette rolls away up the village street.

Once beyond the gray-slated houses, the road begins to ascend, and we soon wind past the wooded park of the Squire’s lovely place, and come out on to the bare wild moorland. Here a thick-set cart-horse is waiting in charge of a round-faced boy, who has deemed traces or chains a superfluity for draught purposes, thus necessitating a halt, whilst the mine-captain who accompanies us, a general factotum yclept Samson, and our Jehu, after much difference of opinion, rig up an arrangement of ropes by which ‘Bessie’ is finally moored as leader to the team. Stiff collar-work and no mistake, under a hot sun, and we do not push the poor beasts, but frequently stop to ‘let ‘em wind.’

At a dip in the road where it crosses a narrow dingle or green hollow, there is much shouting in their native tongue between Jehu and the boy who is riding postillion, which ends by the latter ‘voiding his *selle*,’ as the old romancers term the act of dismounting, and the former explaining, ‘He say he won’t ride ‘e mare no furdur, for she sweateth so he’s gotten wet to his legs.’

The aneroid shows a rise already of twelve hundred feet, and we have yet that peak ahead to cross, so whip and shouts go to work again.

Close on our right, beyond a wire-fence, is a long deep cutting like a narrow quarry, where our guide tells us much lead was got some fifty years ago. On the opposite side of the road the ground falls away steeply, and goes sheer down some five or six hundred feet to a narrow valley, whose further side is pierced by the tunnels or adits and the shaft of a disused mine, whilst a crushing-mill and silent water-wheel stand melancholy beside a noisy streamlet just below.

‘You see lead is so low-priced, they have stopped working these years past,’ says the mine-captain.

‘Probably, they did not know how to get the silver out thoroughly and economically—the cause of loss in many a lead mine,’ opines the engineer.

‘Whoa then, mare—we be at top o’ t’ ridge

here;’ and Jehu claps on his brake with much bustle and contortion of limbs.

Whilst Samson shoulders the provisions and a stone jar, and the captain argues and arranges with the driver as to a place of meeting, we gaze at the magnificent view around. Away to northward, Cader Idris (the giant’s chair) cuts the skyline with a range of lesser magnates on either flank; and between, a deep green valley, where the salmon-river gleams like a twisted cord of silver; then hillocks rising into hills, which raise their heathered crests to our very feet. Behind us, a dipping expanse of moor, where a little lakelet reflects the sailing clouds; and beyond, more mountain peaks. To right, the moorland rises in a billowy ridge to break out of sight in lessening heights across the English border. To left is a deep narrow gorge like a great rift in the hillside, where a torrent plunges and foams in many a cascade to the narrow valley a thousand feet below, where the pine-woods wave a welcome to its glittering waters.

‘This is the way, gentlemen.’

We step off the heather, and follow him over the edge of the ravine, stepping carefully down the loose stones and shingle of a path which is cut zigzag fashion down the face of the precipice, until we reach a platform where the rock-wall curves back a yard or so above the stream. In this cliff is an opening like a tunnel; and a shrill whistle brings out of it two stalwart miners, brown and muddy, for we have reached the mine, and this is adit No. 1.

Whilst we are drawing on great boots which come up to the knee, and donning canvas overalls, the engineer is quickly and carefully noting the direction of the strata and opposite face of the ravine, putting questions now and again to the miner beside him. Then, having got his dial, measure, and other gear, he leads off up the adit, and we follow, each with a candle gripped in a ball of clay. Water is dropping from the roof and sides of the gallery, and flowing in a muddy stream ankle-deep over the floor; and touching here and there the slimy walls, a deep brown mud stains our jackets.

‘This be the fust lode;’ and the miner points to a dark-green band some six feet long which crops out in the rock.

The engineer examines it, and passes on to where a hollow overhead is filled with timber, and remarks: ‘That’s stouped.’

‘Yes; we’ve got some fine stuff fra there,’ rejoins the guide; and we proceed.

‘Here’s the winze.’ He stands on one side; lowering his candle, tells us where to step, so as to avoid falling into a pit eighteen feet deep which has been sunk in the floor of the adit after the lode. This is now full of water; and an amused smile passes over X’s face in the yellow candle-light as he hears how there is a splendid vein of copper there, and answers:

‘I have often noticed in mines I am asked to report on that the finest lodes are always where I cannot get at them: they are usually under water.’

Another belt of greenish rock brings us to the end of the drift, and we return to daylight.

‘Well, gentlemen, I don’t think it is much good going into any of the other workings. I can see exactly what the mine is.’

However, in response to entreaties, we make our way to adit No. 2, and penetrate into its chilly recesses and examine the spot where another lode is said to crop out. This is but three feet in width at most, and varies from a foot in thickness to a few inches at either end—or, as miners term it, it 'pinches out.'

'It is just the place to lose money,' says the engineer as we stand alone waving the candles overhead. 'You see, this is no vein or lode, but only a series of patches of copper here and there. I knew it was no good the moment I saw the dip and run of the rocks on the opposite side of the stream. There is copper certainly, but it is only in detached bits or pockets; and fathoms of worthless rock would have to be got out to get at them; and then they won't yield enough to pay for the cost of reaching and getting. There are no true lodes here; this is not the right formation for them. It is just one of those mines which bring mining generally into disrepute. Folks put in capital and lose it in trying to find metal where none is, and then they say all mines are swindles. If investors would only look at the thing rationally, and take good advice, there would be fewer mines floated and fortunes lost. You must do the thing systematically now, and go to work where science indicates a likely spot, and give up the rule-of-thumb business, and not trust to the creeds and assertions of so-called practical miners.'

As we emerge from the tunnel, a pile of ore is shown which has been got out, and the captain triumphantly points to it as a proof of the genuineness of the undertaking.

But the engineer shakes his head, and points out that if the quantity was sufficient, yet the quality is not good enough to pay for getting and for carriage.

'Then you are not going to report favourably on the mine?' growls the Welshman.

'Certainly not. I shall advise my clients not to put a single sixpence more into it, for it can never pay.'

'There's copper there, I tell you. Why, we have got tons of it out.'

'I should like to see it,' replies the engineer, lighting his cigarette.

'What do you think of it, John?' quoth the captain hotly, turning to the mine-ganger.

'Oh, she'll pay ferry well indeed; and I would work her myself on tribute,' rejoins the miner; 'and if I was the owners, I would no let my heart be pricked by what the gentleman there will say.'

'Look here, John,' answers the engineer coolly. 'You be as good as your word. You work it on tribute; you find your own powder, charges, fuses, and steel, and you take half the value of the ore you get, the owners the other half, and you will soon see what my opinion on the mine is worth. I will do this, too, for my part: I will undertake to buy every ton of copper you get at one hundred pounds; and as the market price is only eighty pounds, you will clear twenty pounds extra profit.—Come now, that's backing my opinion fairly, is it not?'

But the stalwart wielder of the pick deigns no reply, and with a muttered malediction, disappears into the mountain-side.

'Poor chap!' quoth X, as once more Jehu

whipped up his team and we began the nine miles' return journey to the inn at Wyllynttrrwh. 'It's rather hard lines for him and his mates, for I expect my report will close the mine, and they will have to find work elsewhere. But what can I do? I must tell the truth, and say there is no chance of making the thing pay. The fact is, this district is not rich enough in ores, and it is no use hoping where there is no hope.'

So ended the inspection, from which great things had been hoped; and we who had entered the village in the early morning the objects of interest and friendly attentions from the inhabitants, who saw in us the harbingers of work and prosperous times—for it was soon told abroad what our errand was—departed by the evening train, regarded by the loafers and gossips as quasi-traitors, who would not honestly recognise in their lofty hills vast stores of ungotten wealth.

Perhaps, after all, one can excuse the native disgust, for the result of our visit was certainly to prevent a supply of English gold being hopelessly lost in a Welsh Copper Mine.

'COUNTING-OUT' RHYMES.

EVERY one, we imagine, is familiar to a greater or less extent with those rhymes used by children in many of their games, commonly designated 'counting-out' rhymes. In Scotland they are sometimes known as 'chapping-out' or 'titting-out' verses. They are used to determine who is to take the first turn at being 'it' in 'Hide and Seek,' 'Blindman's Buff,' and such-like games. When we hear children repeating these seemingly absurd and meaningless rhymes at their play, it never fails to carry our memories back to the happy days when we, too, could glibly rattle off the same or equivalent verses of doggerel.

In a work recently published, *The Counting-out Rhymes of Children*, by H. C. Bolton (London: Elliot Stock), the author has succeeded in gathering together a remarkable and interesting collection of children's rhymes relating to the subject of his volume. This collection, along with the compiler's remarks thereon, is worthy of more than mere passing attention, not only for the number of rhymes and variations given, but also for the examples of similar rhymes in different languages. This latter is abundant evidence of the world-wide observance of the custom among children of all nations.

Various examples are given of the different modes of 'counting-out' in different countries. The following method is, however, the one in most frequent and general use amongst all children. 'A leader, generally self-appointed, having secured the attention of the boys and girls about to join in the proposed game, arranges them in a row, or in a circle around him, as fancy may dictate. He (or she) then repeats a peculiar doggerel, sometimes with a rapidity which can only be acquired by great familiarity and a dexterous tongue, and pointing with the hand or forefinger to each child in succession, not forgetting himself (or herself), allots to each one word of the mysterious formula:

One-ery, two-ery, ickery, Ann,
Fillicy, fallacy, Nicholas, John,
Queever, quaver, English, knaver,
Stinckelum, stanckelum, Jericho, buck.

Having completed the verse or sentence, the child on whom the last word falls is said to be "out," and steps aside. In repeating the above doggerel, the accent falls on the first syllable of each polysyllabic word. A very common ending is :

One, two, three,
Out goes she ! (or he) ;

and the last word is generally said with great emphasis, or shouted.

'After the child thus "counted-out" has withdrawn, the leader repeats the same doggerel with the same formalities ; and, as before, the boy or girl to whom the last word is allotted is "out," and stands aside. The unmeaning doggerel is repeated again and again to a diminishing number of children, and the process of elimination is continued until only two of them remain. The leader then "counts out" once more, and the one of them on which the magic word falls is declared to be "it," and must take the objectionable part in the game.'

When the youngsters are in a hurry to commence their game they frequently simplify and shorten the proceeding by repeating something like this :

Red, white, blue,
All out but *you* !

and the child to whom the word 'you' is appor- tioned is '*it*.'

These rhymes, seemingly composed of senseless words strung together so as to form a musical or alliterative jingle, when subjected to close examination and analysis, are in many instances found to be corruptions of words and phrases which originally have had a distinct meaning and reference to definite subjects. Both in the Old and New Worlds, as well as among both savage and civilised peoples, the same custom obtains in an almost identical form to a greater or less extent. Even in the lonely islands of the Pacific Ocean we find the same practice in operation ; but in this instance it is not only the children who use the rhymes in their games, but the adults have somewhat similar formulas which they repeat when engaged in the heathen incantations connected with their idolatrous practices or drunken orgies. Here we have, in all probability, a clue to the origin of these 'counting-out' rhymes. As is well known to students of both sacred and profane history, the custom of deciding disputes or making selections for numerous purposes by the 'lot' was a prevailing custom among all nations. In Jewish history, we find the 'lot' frequently resorted to when any difficulty arose. Again, among heathen nations the 'lot' was a favourite resource for determining the selection of a required victim for sacrifice, and also for finding out the guilty person from a number of suspected individuals. It is more than likely that, in connection with heathen rites particularly, the priests were possessed of mysterious forms of words, which they used on such occasions ; and in some instances the mode of selection may have been practically identical with the harmless method now universally adopted by children for 'counting-out.' This, however, is a subject requiring more attention than we can at present bestow upon it. The now meaningless and unintelligible expressions in children's rhymes may be the relics of superstitious formulas used by the heathen votaries of bygone days.

A great many of these rhymes are evidently of common origin, but, through course of time and change of scene, have got so changed and transmogrified as to be scarcely recognisable. One of the most common and widespread examples among English-speaking peoples is that beginning, 'Onery, twoery,' of which the following is one of its most frequent forms :

Onery, twoery, dickery, davy,
Hallabone, crackabone, tenery, navy,
Discum, dandum, merry come time,
Humbledy, bumbledy, twenty-nine.
O-U-T, out !

Somewhere about one hundred different variations and versions of this rhyme alone are given. The following is one of several versions from Scotland (Aberdeen) :

Eenery, twaery, tuckery, tayven,
Halaba, crackery, ten or clayven,
Peen, pan, musky dan,
Feedelan, fadelam, twenty-one.

From a work on the Gypsies by Mr Charles G. Leland, we have a specimen of a gypsy magic spell ; it is as follows :

Ekkeri, akairi, you kair-an,
Fillisin, fallisin, Nicholas ja'n ;
Kiri, kari, Irishman,
Stini, stani, buck.

This, on comparison, will be found to be almost identical with the first example we have given of a counting-out rhyme ; 'ekkeri, akairi' being the equivalent in Romany for 'Onery, twoery.'

Another very familiar form is that commencing 'Eeny, meeny,' &c. This is a great favourite among American children, the commonest version being :

Eeny, meeny, miny, mo,
Catch a nigger by the toe ;
If he hollers, let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, mo.

This example gives evident proof of adaptation to American ideas ; but the preliminary and concluding 'Eeny, meeny' are of obvious German or Dutch origin. Such as :

Enc, tene, mone, mei,
Pastor, loné, boné, strei,
Ene, fune, herke, berke.
Wer? Wie? Wo? Was?—(N. Germany.)

An almost identical form comes from Cornwall, beginning :

Eena, meena, mona, mite,
Basca, lora, &c.

Some of the transmogrifications of words are very interesting, the 'Pastor, loné' of the German rhyme given above, we find in Cornwall as 'Basca, lora ;' while in America it is changed into 'Pestalony,' 'Pisky larry,' 'Barcelona,' 'Pennsylvania,' 'Butter lather,' 'Tuscalona,' &c. One of the most amusing transitions is in connection with the rhyme :

One is all, two is all, zick is all zan,
Bobtail nanny-goat, tittle, tall, tan ;
Harum, scarum, Virgin Mary,
Singleum, sangleum, jolly, oh, buck.

Here we have a very good illustration of the evolution theory of modern scientists. The first form of 'bobtail nanny-goat' changes to 'bobtail billy-goat,' 'bobtail dominicker,' 'bobtail vinegar,'

and at last, through course of time and altered conditions of existence, the despised 'bobtail nanny-goat' ultimately develops into the highly respectable form of 'Baptist minister!'

A curious and exceedingly interesting example comes from New England, thus :

Ain, tain, fethery, ip;
Arte, slatur, debbery, dick;
Aintic, taintic, fethertic, bumpit,
Ain-bumpit, tain-bumpit, gee-kit!

This is said to have been derived from the language of the Plymouth Indians in counting up to twenty, and the words are commonly believed in the States to be neither more nor less than a string of numerals in use by the aboriginal inhabitants of the continent. This, however, is a mistaken idea. The words are in reality a distorted version of modern Welsh; and similar words are said to be used in several parts of England and Wales by shepherds for counting their sheep, and also by women in telling their stitches while knitting. On comparison, this will be seen to be an unquestionable fact, as the following lists will show. The distorted form of Welsh is designated *Anglo-Cymric* :

Numerals.	Indian.	Anglo-Cymric.
One.....	Een.....	Aina.
Two.....	Teen.....	Peina.
Three.....	Tether.....	Para.
Four.....	Fether.....	Peddera.
Five.....	Fitz (or fip).....	Pimp.
Six.....	Sather.....	Ithy.
Seven.....	Lather.....	Mithy.
Eight.....	Gother.....	Owera.
Nine.....	Dather.....	Lowera.
Ten.....	Dix.....	Dig.
Eleven.....	Een-dix.....	Ain-a-dig.
Twelve.....	Teen-dix.....	Pein-a-dig.
Thirteen.....	Tether-dix.....	Par-a-dig.
Fourteen.....	Fether-dix.....	Pedder-a-dig.
Fifteen.....	Bompey.....	Bumfit.
Sixteen.....	Een-bompey.....	Ain-a-bumfit.
Seventeen.....	Teen-bompey.....	Pein-a-bumfit.
Eighteen.....	Tether-bompey.....	Par-a-bumfit.
Nineteen.....	Fether-bompey.....	Pedder-a-bumfit.
Twenty.....	Giget.....	Giggy.

This peculiar mode of counting was doubtless taught to the Indians by some of the early settlers, and in time the origin of the mode was forgotten, and it came to be looked upon as of pure Indian origin. So we find the children of the States seizing upon the peculiar words to form their doggerel rhymes, and in so doing unconsciously adopting words practically the same as those used by children in the old country, just as the latter had got theirs from the strange words in use by the Welsh shepherds. We notice the peculiarity of the different versions in being evidently designed for counting on the fingers. When the ten fingers are exhausted, eleven becomes 'one and ten;' twelve, 'two-and-ten;' and so on till fifteen is reached, when sixteen becomes 'one and fifteen,' &c.

Nothing shows the world-wide prevalence of the fashion of these 'counting-out' rhymes so much as the fact that we have examples in twenty different languages, numbering in all eight hundred and seventy-three different versions. America, Japan, Italy, France, Syria, Germany, Turkey, Greece, and other foreign countries furnish specimens, and many other countries could doubtless add considerably to the list. Of English rhymes alone, no fewer

than four hundred and sixty-four examples are given, and the list is undoubtedly very far from complete.

The whole forms a very interesting study in folklore; and Mr Bolton is still prosecuting his inquiries for adding to his collection, and any communications on the subject addressed to him at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, U.S.A., will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged.

A SONG OF YOUTH AND AGE.

WHEN on the dimpled cheek of Youth
Health's blooming roses blow;
When songs of rapture, hope, and truth
From lips of beauty flow;
When youthful feet right gaily bound
Where thorn nor tare appears,
How joyously the days go round,
The weeks, the months, the years!

The Youth beholds with fearless eye
The lofty hill of Fame,
And hopes upon its summit high
Ere long to carve his name.
Joy thrills his heart; in every sound,
Fame's 'bugle-call' he hears,
And merrily the days go round,
The weeks, the months, the years!

The lady of his love must prove
A queen of beauty rare;
No vain coquette, but wise in love,
And true as she is fair.
Amid the tender stars at night,
He sees her dear eyes shine,
As, with a trusting fond delight,
He worships at her shrine!

When on the furrowed cheek of Age
Care's hollow wrinkles show,
The old man turns his life's last page
With trembling hand and slow.
Dark lower the skies; in every sound,
Death's mournful dirge he hears;
And wearily the days go round,
The weeks, the months, the years!

The Old Man sees through tear-blurred eye
The lofty hill of Fame,
Where cherished hopes in ruin lie,
Where none may mark his name.
One little lonely nameless mound
At every step appears,
As mournfully the days go round,
The weeks, the months, the years!

The lady of his love, alas!
Hath closed her gentle eyes,
With but one tiny tuft of grass
To show him where she lies.
'Old wife of mine!' he whispers low,
'Above thy grave I see
The star of Faith, whose beams I know
Shall guide me soon to thee!'

FANNY FORRESTER.

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CONCERNING GIRLS.

MANNERS VERSUS LEARNING.

IN the last century, education was looked at from a standpoint very different from what it is now. Ignorance was not considered a disgrace, and to be uncertain in his spelling was no bar to being a gentleman. In the education of the girls especially, books seem to have borne a very small part, Dean Swift declaring, in his usual dogmatic way, that 'not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand can read or understand her own natural tongue.' Certainly in his generation, needlework and deportment were the chief things taught them. Dignity of manners was judged to be of more importance than book-learning; but as women are more adaptable than men, more capable of catching the prevailing tone of thought, they could hold their own in society in spite of their ignorance, as long as they were finely mannered and not hoydenish. Grace of carriage, therefore, good-breeding to make home peaceful and pleasant, piety to rule her private conduct, formed the ideal of perfection in woman. Thoroughness or exactness of knowledge was not thought compatible with these good qualities, and learned ladies were dreaded accordingly. The *Spectator* tells that 'a lady at court having accidentally made use of a hard word in a proper place and pronounced it right, the whole assembly was out of countenance for her;' showing how a woman who knew more than others of her sex was regarded, if she 'had dared to read and dared to say she read.' Dancing being the only physical exercise then allowed to girls, was much prized, both as a healthful exertion and a training in elegance and grace; and the dances of the period were nearly all in very stately measure. Most of us middle-aged people must still remember a few old-lady friends whose beautiful, attractive presence and gracious manner were at once the dread and admiration of our childhood.

In the present day, things are much changed. The girl's education is as thorough as the boy's.

No smattering of knowledge now contents us for them, but examinations as stiff and exhaustive are given to them as to their brothers, and with as good results. Along with this high mental discipline, the physical training goes hand in hand; so that what with boating, swimming, calisthenics, cricket, lawn-tennis, the physique of this and future generations should go on improving at a rapid rate. The idea that a beautiful girl must be pale and delicate-looking, and that, to be interesting, she must be ready to faint at the least exertion or motion, like the heroines in the old novels, is now quite exploded.

But in gaining all this mental and physical excellence, care must be taken that we are not losing the well-bred courtesy that used to sit so beautifully on our grandmothers, or the loss will be greater than the gain. In avoiding the ignorance of the past, there is the danger of going to the other extreme, of making learning of too much importance, or rather of making it all-important, forgetting that for the proper application of its other faculties are required; that a girl crammed with knowledge is only like a locked bookcase full of books, unless she has the power to use it for good and to give pleasure to herself and others. And what will give her this power? Only a proper training in which good manners or good breeding, as the essayists of the last century were fond of calling it, holds its proper place; and a greater injustice is done to a girl in leaving this part of her education incomplete than if her book-learning should not be exact and precise. It is only in childhood that this can be really acquired, that the easy courteous demeanour can grow to be second nature; and it is then also that the brusque boyish manner, so much to be deprecated, is formed.

The discipline to be undergone for this part of her education is also a great gain to the child, as great almost as the result, keeping in proper check, as it does, many propensities fostered by the emulation in the schools, and strengthening very opposite qualities. The one training places self in the foremost place, fosters self-will, want

of reverence, boldness, independence of character; all of which may not be evil qualities, but would be greatly improved by being controlled by the courtesy and graciousness of manner, which, while perfectly self-possessed, is thoughtful for others, full of deference for the old, and purely womanly in type. There is no true reason why an advance in learning should mean a decay in manners; the opposite ought to be the case; a true enlightenment ought to mean culture, and culture—refinement both in thought and observance.

Woman in the past has been the helper and consoler of man, and though other paths in life may now be opening to her, making marriage not so imperative, yet her real place and chief purpose is to be his *alter ego* and helpmate. Woman's influence is the most powerful of the great forces that affect men. It pervades everything. It is calming, soothing, elevating, and stimulating. While aiding men to do their duty, it makes them content in doing it, and keeps alive in them the love of social intercourse. To have this influence in the future, as she has had in the past, woman needs all the intellectual improvement she is at present gaining; but, added to it, she requires the grace and good breeding of the olden time, to make her a woman of high culture and noble aspiration, yet of loving womanly sweetness. It as often happens that such a one can uplift a husband to the dignity of her own character, as that a husband can uplift a wife to his own rank.

The tendency of the times has been to raise women more and more to an intellectual equality with man, and with this growth the sentiment has risen in their minds that the conventions of the world are against their complete development; that the rules of society have been formed for the comfort of the man without regard to the good of the woman; thus generating in many a feeling of bitterness and rebellion against a few of those existing customs. As woman's ambition has been roused by her new position, and her faculties awakened, a number of the sisterhood have protested against the old-time notion that she ought to steal through life unheard and unremarked—that it is a reproach for her to be talked of; and these, rushing to the other extreme, have been led to court notoriety, to despise conventionalities, and to adopt a hostile manner towards the other sex, while assuming a brusque demeanour that is not at all pleasing or attractive. As some writers have striven to set class against class, others lately have been trying to array sex against sex. Nothing could be more absurd. However close the relation between sisters, between mother and daughter, or between any two women, it can never be so strong as between husband and wife; and the tie between father and daughter, mother and son, or brother and sister, is usually the more binding because of the difference of sex.

Educating the one sex without any consideration of a probable affinity to the other, is therefore not advisable, still less the setting of them up in opposition. But as time goes on, the antagonism on the man's part towards learned ladies, as well as the bitterness on the woman's side for her treatment in the past, is dying out. It is in the woman's power to decide if

her kingdom is still to exist—if man is to be after all under her sway, as of old—if she means to fight the battle of life by his side, or as his rival. Her cultivated, bright intelligence will have to be put forth—not to lift her up above her every-day employments, but to throw a grace over her common acts, and to make her a centre of holy influences and innocent cheerfulness.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE two boys were living in clover, and enjoying all sorts of privileges and immunities hitherto foreign to their experience. They were inseparable companions, and were both getting rarely tanned by summer sunshine, and rarely strong on an unlimited diet and a life spent almost entirely in the open air. On that particular day on which Mr Orme made his great discovery, John, under Jousserau's guidance, had got out his sketch-block, and with borrowed water-colours and brushes was dashing away victoriously at landscape, with a whole new world waking into wonder and beauty about him. At intervals, Master Will would take up his post behind the aspiring artist, and look on with a never-failing approval. Between whiles, he was ruining his garments and strengthening his limbs in the great schoolboy art of bird-nesting. He was back from one of his excursions with an empty starling's nest; and Jousserau, who had an unusual tenderness for all feathered creatures, was complimenting him on having chosen a season for his excursions when he could rob the parent birds neither of their eggs nor of their young. Master Will was listening quite unrepentantly to his sermon, when, from a field or two away, there rose upon the perfumed summer air an amazing shrill sweet piping of a child's voice, singing a hymn-tune, at first scarcely discernible for what it was. The singer had changed its time and its measure, and led it the giddiest heated race imaginable. Jousserau lifted his hand and turned to listen.

'There's Lydia,' cried John.

'Hush!' said the artist, and the boys stood quiet. 'What a wonder!' said Jousserau in his own tongue when the song had finished. 'Is it a bird? A child? An angel? What is it?'

'It's only a little girl we know,' Will answered. 'She's got a pretty voice, and she'll sing for anybody.—Lydia!' he called, 'Lydia!'

There was a shrill cry in answer, and a second later a tiny figure was seen impetuously climbing the gate of the meadow; and the solemn child came fluttering over the grass with a quick dancing step, to which her hands kept a flickering time, as though she moved to some inward inaudible music. She paused before the trio, and Will and John shook hands with her in schoolboy fashion. She went through that function gravely, looking at Jousserau meanwhile.

'Whose pretty child are you?' said the Frenchman in his quaint accent.

She made no answer to this inquiry, but offered her hand to him with an air of staid decorum. He took it smilingly, and drew her towards him;

and she, allowing her serious glance to wander all over him with an air of scrutiny, at length settled her regard upon one of the fine gold earrings he wore. When she had looked at it for some time, she touched it with a forefinger, as if to assure herself of its reality; and then walking gravely round the camp-stool on which he sat, inspected the earring on the other side and touched that also.

The artist's smiling bright face followed her motions attentively. 'Well?' he said.—The child folded both hands behind her and shook her head.—'You do not like—them?'

'No,' said the child decisively. 'Women wear earrings, not men.'

'And princesses,' returned Jousserau in his own language, 'are born to be obeyed.' He took a purse from his pocket, slipped the rings from his ears and put them away. 'Now?' he asked.

'I like you better,' the child answered.

'À la bonne heure!' cried Jousserau. 'Was it you who sang just now?'—The child nodded.—

'Will you sing again?' She nodded once more; and drawing a step or two away, still keeping her hands behind her, struck up with that wonderful sweet clear pipe of hers the air of an old Huguenot hymn. Charles Wesley's pious hand had gathered it into the hymnology of his people, and its lovely passionless strain was as familiar in the Black Country of England as in its native Pyrenees. Jousserau heard it with a strange emotion, for his mother had sung it to him many a time in his childhood as she dandled him on her knee. When the little songstress had brought her tune to a close, he drew her towards him and kissed her with glistening eyes. 'So pretty child as you are,' he said, 'must have a *bon ami*.—What is *bon ami* in English, young John?'

'Sweetheart,' responded young John, having cudgelled his brains for a moment.

'Ah, yes!' cried Jousserau. 'Sweetheart.—You have a sweetheart, pretty child? No?'

'Yes,' she said, gravely and lingeringly.

'True?' said Jousserau. 'Who is he?'

The child stretched out a hand and took hold of young John. 'John is my sweetheart,' she said with perfect simplicity and gravity. 'He has been away for a year; but now he is come back again, we shall be married when I grow up.'

'Luckee dog!' said Jousserau, with an accent so quaint and a look so comic that the two boys burst out laughing.

At this point another voice arose from a little distance, this time an adult male organ, purposely gruff and surly: 'Wake up here! Wake up, I say! What brings a man lying in the road, stoppin' up the traffic? this way? Dost want to get run over by the first wagin as comes this way?'

'That,' explained Lydia, with her customary gravity, 'is the old man from father's. He has gone to sleep in the road.'

The boys scoured off to see what was the matter, and in a second or two were heard shouting to Jousserau, both together: 'It's Mr Orme! It's Mr Orme!'

At this Jousserau ran also to the gate, and beheld Isaiah Winter in the act of stooping over Mr Orme, with both hands under his armpits. Isaiah was red in the face, and was tugging with

all his might, but unavailingly, to raise the disreputable rotund figure.

'The man's either very ill,' said Isaiah, relinquishing his task for a moment, 'or else he's stone intoxicated. He smells powerful strong o' liquor; but that's such a regular usual kind o' thing with him, it's nothing to judge by.—Lend me a hand, Mr Jousserau.'

Jousserau vaulted the gate, and by his aid Isaiah succeeded in bringing Mr Orme to his feet.

'Run away, you boys,' said Isaiah, 'and take the little gell with you. This is no wholesome sight for children.—Come up, you good-for-nothing. What brings him here, in the name of wonder?'

Mr Orme being vigorously shaken to and fro, opened one eye and gazed uncertainly about him. By-and-by, Isaiah came within his sphere of vision, and he smiled. His ordinary smile, as has been said already, was piteous and almost lachrymose; but now for a brief instant he twinkled with an actual jollity, though he went out with a startling suddenness, and falling back unexpectedly on Jousserau, gave the small man as much as he could do to balance him.

'There's a barn close at hand,' said Isaiah; 'we'll put him in among the clean straw and let him have his sleep out.—Come along, you temperance lecture!' So saying, Isaiah took Tobias firmly by one arm, whilst Jousserau guarded him in a similar fashion on the other side, and between them they marched the degraded old wreck along the lane until they came to the outbuilding of which Isaiah had spoken. The doors were open, and there were piles of clean straw within. They laid their burden down here, and were about to leave it, when Jousserau observed the dirty clay bowl of Mr Orme's constant companion protruding from the waistcoat pocket.

'Not safe,' he said, and confiscated the pipe at once.

On this hint they rifled the worthless old gentleman in a search for matches, and he, waking up under the operation, protested blandly. 'Don't give yourselves any further trouble, gellmen,' said Tobias; 'I am not worth it.' On this reflection he wept, and said that he was a dreadful moral lesson, and that he hoped that his friends would take example by him. Then he cleared with marvellous quickness, and said that he was a millionaire. 'Help me up,' said Tobias, 'and I'll tell you something.'

Isaiah, not quite understanding the request, which was very indistinctly mumbled, but thinking that he understood Mr Orme's gesture, tugged him to his feet.

'You'd like to know,' said the sordid spectacle, clinging to him, 'but you won't.' He put on an aspect of great cunning, and steadying himself with difficulty, winked twice with painful elaborateness. 'You won't know anything. If you want to know anything, shouldn't throw man's hat over the hedge. That'll cost you thousands, Mr Winter. Hundreds thousands.'

'Let go o' me,' said Isaiah disdainfully. 'What are you chattering about?'

'Chattering about?' echoed Tobias thickly. 'I'll tell you,' with an air of sudden confidence. 'Coal, my good friend, has been discovered on this side the Great South Staffordshire Fault. On this

side.' He tried to emphasise the word by a stamp of the foot, and in doing so, lost his equilibrium altogether. He and Isaiah releasing their hold simultaneously, he fell back upon the straw, and continued, unconscious of his change of posture: 'It's in Farmer Day's back garden, on the surface.—The owner of the land,' he explained elaborately, as he peered for Isaiah's face among the rafters, 'is unscientific; he is unaware of the value of his discovery.'

Isaiah was in a state of prodigious excitement at this intelligence. It was obvious that the little wretch was absurdly drunk, but in spite of that fact, the amazing intelligence he gave might still be true. He seized him by the coat and dragged him into a sitting posture. 'What's that you say? There's coal in Farmer Day's back garden? Why, the man's a bankrupt, or next door to it; and if that's true, he's got a fortune. Say it again, you scandalous object; say it again.'

'No,' said the scandalous object, shaking his head with an aspect strangely compounded of regret and cunning; 'you might have known all about it, Mr Winter, if you'd treated me properly. But you assaulted an elderly man, Mr Winter, an elderly and defenceless man. I am constitutionally timid—it took him a mighty effort to achieve the word—and your conduct shocked me, shocked me. Mr Winter, I shall tell you nothing; I shall keep my news for Mr Snelling. Mr Snelling is a gentleman, and he and I are going halves.'

Isaiah once more deposited Mr Orme upon the straw, and beckoning Jousserau from the barn, made his way into the lane.

'What is it?' Jousserau asked. 'I do not understand.'

Isaiah explained to him as they went along; and the little artist had no sooner understood, than he caught the infection of Isaiah's excitement. 'He is scoundrel, that fat drunken Orme,' he cried. 'If the coal is there, it is to Mr Day. Is Snelling so much villain he would buy the poor man's land and say nothing?'

'Mr Snelling's a pretty smart man of business,' Isaiah responded. 'Nobody would think the worse of him for doing that.'

'I should,' Jousserau protested.—'Look at that.' He held out his nervous little brown right hand. 'That is all I have; that feeds me, clothes me, helps poor friends, does all. You shall chop it off here,' marking the wrist with a vivid forefinger, 'before I will be so base. Oh no! Justice is the greatest thing.'

'Perhaps you're right,' said Isaiah phlegmatically. 'I'm going to do the straight thing, anyhow. I've got a few cool hundreds at the bank, and if that little fellow's news is true, I shall put 'em at the farmer's service. I've got two or three cool hundreds.' He walked on energetically, and Jousserau kept equal pace with him.

'Tell me,' said the Frenchman, 'if there is coal beyond this—what do you call it?—Fault—is it everywhere under our feet?'

'Most likely,' Isaiah answered.

'Then it will spoil this side, and make it black like the other? Everywhere the dark cloud, everywhere the smoke, the noise, the dirt?'

'Yes,' said Isaiah; 'it'll stretch the Black Country for miles and miles.'

'Then I will hope it shall not be true,' said Jousserau.

'A bit o' dirt's cheap bought,' said Isaiah philosophically, 'if you can feed a million people out of it. Look at Brummagem—it lives on coal. Look at 'Hampton, Bilston, Wedgebury, twenty others—coal keeps the lot of 'em. I can remember many and many a hundred acres growing nothing but grass and thistle, as is covered now with streets and houses, with thousands of happy and contented people in 'em. It's a bit black, to be certain, but what's that matter? It's wholesome. If you'll look at it, Mr Jousserong, you'll see as we're a pretty stalworth set o' people. There's no harm in a bit o' dirt.'

They were at Farmer Day's gate by this time, and Isaiah entering with a rapid step, caught sight of the farmer himself as he passed the kitchen door, and gave a loud 'Hallo!'

'Hallo!' cried Day in answer, appearing in the doorway.—'Oh, it's thee, Isaiah. Come in, lad. There ain't much to ask a friend to nowadays, but what there is, thou'rt welcome to.'

'I'll tell thee what,' returned Isaiah. 'If what I've heard is true, I'm the welcomest man thee'st clapped eyes on this twelve months.—Where's that coal-hole o' thine?'

'Coal-hole?' returned the farmer. 'What coal-hole?'

'I've heard,' said Isaiah, 'that you've found coal on the surface in your back garden.'

'We've lighted on some coal, to be sure,' the farmer responded. 'We was digging for water there. It appears to me,' he added drawlingly, 'as somebody must ha' laid in a boat-load in old time. It's most likely been there so long it's got growed over and buried and forgot. It's all growed and welded into one solid lump.'

'Let's have a look at it,' said Isaiah. 'Come along. Wheer is it? Bring a pick with you.'

'Go round,' said the farmer, with no touch of the excitement which consumed the other. 'I'll meet thee at the back-door.'

A minute later they were standing above the exposed coal-bed. Isaiah bore the pick, but he made no use of it. He looked in silence for a full minute, and then stepping into the hole, took up a fragment from the bed and broke it in his fingers.

'Farmer,' he said, 'you came to me a week or two ago to borrow two hundred and fifty pounds.'

'Well?' said the farmer.

'Same mind still?' demanded Isaiah laconically.

'Yes, lad; more than ever.'

'All right,' said Isaiah. 'You can have it, and a couple of thousand to the back of it.—There's a fortune here.' He raised his hand high, and threw down the lump of coal he had taken up a minute earlier. 'I'm standing here,' he said with a solemn face, 'for all I know, or thee knowest, above uncounted millions. The Bank of England couldn't buy what this means.'

The farmer fairly gaped at him, and without the slightest warning, broke into blubbing tears. He was so surprised at this, that his own amazement checked him, but he could do nothing but stare at Isaiah like a man distraught.

'They put a bum-bailiff i' the house this morning,' he said, when he had recovered himself a little. 'That was Bob Snelling's doing. I thought he'd ha' been better-hearted than run

an old friend to ruin for two hundred pound. Fifty he's counted for costs, and I've paid him a hundred a'ready. There's a mortgage falling in for fifteen hundred in ten days. I reckoned on going back to the plough-tail, or turning bailiff for somebody. I dar' not think about th' old woman and the little wench.—D'y'e think it's true, Isaiah?'

Isaiah fumbled in his pocket and drew out a cheque-book, greasy with long repose there. He stopped to dust his coal-smear'd thumb and finger upon his trousers, and then fluttered the leaves of the cheque-book. 'Come indoors,' he said, 'and I'll show thee whether I think it true or no. I'll take the mortgage here and now, and I'll lend you five hundred to go along with. You give me a paper saying I'm your partner, halves and halves, and we'll work this thing together.'

The farmer shook hands with him, almost frantically, and Jousseran, who was as excited as either, shook hands with both.

'Who's that?' Day asked Isaiah, drawing him on one side and speaking in a whisper.

'He's a lodger o' mine for the time being,' responded Isaiah, 'and as good as gold, though he is a foreigner; and what's more, he hates Bob Snelling like poison.'

'Then he's a friend o' mine,' said Day.—'Young man, I'm pleased to mek your acquaintance. Come indoors.' He had betrayed himself once already, and having had time to think about it, was profoundly ashamed of his own emotion. He went rolling into the house, therefore, with a dogged and inexpressive countenance. 'Missis,' he said, addressing his wife, 'the money troubles seem to be all over. Mr Winter will tell you all about it.'

NATIONAL HABITS OF HOARDING.

FROM the earliest times till now, a love of gold has filled the breast of man alike savage and civilised, being implanted there as an almost ineradicable instinct. This 'gold-hunger' has impelled men in every age to deeds of 'high emprise,' has shaped their thought and coloured their lives. The savage values gold; for its possession gratifies one of the rudimentary feelings of his nature—the passion for personal adornment—a purpose to which gold has been applied, so soon as discovered, by nearly every nation. From being thus the object of universal desire, it acquired a constant value; and as it was eagerly coveted, there was danger as well as difficulty in retaining it securely; hence it came to be hidden and stored in out-of-the-way places. As far back as the remote Homeric times, gold, according to Mr Gladstone, was hoarded up. Large quantities of it were unearthed by Pizarro and Cortez in Peru and Mexico, access to it being forced from the natives under threats of torture or death.

In the absence of the precious metals, the North American Indian lays hold of 'wampumpeag,' which consists of black and white shells made into beads strung into belts or necklaces. These wampum beads are collected by the Indian chief,

who regards them with the affection of a miser for his glittering hoard; and for security, they are placed in forest glades, by lonely lakes, or deep below the wigwam fires.

The same love of fiery animated the Goths and Celts as they rolled their gold into spiral finger-rings, or welded it into uncouth-looking necklets, armlets, and bracelets, which they wore on their persons. The ancient Egyptians were fond of like ornamentation, and they concealed their valuables in well-sheltered spots. In ancient Greece it was customary to hide coined money in the temples, and to bury it deep in the ground. Many coins found in a good state of preservation establish the existence of extensive hoards in these far-back times. The natives of Calabar appear to bury their treasure as a dog hides his bone in the earth, for they have no other place of security in which to deposit it.

But an immense amount of hoarding occurs even with nations who enjoy the means of safe-keeping which banking affords; among such are the various tribes and peoples of which India is composed, that country being par excellence the land of hoarding. In China there are in existence very stringent laws against hoarding.

The precious metals have possessed in many respects a greater importance among eastern than western nations, serving as materials for the fabrication of articles of ornament or luxury. Unlike the western, the eastern races have yielded to the tyranny and exaction of their rulers; and pitiable would have been the condition of the latter races had there not been some form of property the possession of which could be concealed without impairing its value. In a word, it is oppression which has primarily led to hoarding; or, as Sir Charles Trevelyan phrases it, the system of hoarding arises from habits induced by ages of misgovernment. These habits and their corrupt source are thus described by an old writer on Hindustan: 'The rajahs never allow their subjects to rise above mediocrity. The Mohammedan governors look upon the growing riches of their subjects as a boy on a bird's nest: they eye their progress with impatience, and come with a spoiler's hand and ravish the fruits of their labours. To counteract this, the Gentoos bury their money underground, and often with such secrecy as not to trust even their own children with the knowledge of it; and it is amazing what they will suffer rather than betray it. Their tyrants use all manner of corporal punishments, but that often fails; for with a resentment prevailing over the love of life, they frequently rip up their bowels or poison themselves, and carry their secret to the grave.' The period referred to was one of insecurity, when wars, by disturbing peaceful pursuits, swelled the number of those subsisting on spoil. It was the time, too, of the warlike Mahratta, the Pindaree robber, and the Mogul tyrant emperor. A necessity was thus laid on all who had no desire to be despoiled, to hide their hoards; and these were representative of the most condensed form of value in which wealth could be expressed; while the place of deposit was a guarantee for the ultimate safety of the hoards.

But though British law has supplanted native rule to a great extent, and the fear of personal as well as material danger no longer exists,

hoarding still continues, the hereditary habit being too powerful to be readily broken up after enduring for centuries. An attempt was made by the British government in 1882 to get hold of hoards by offering high rates of interest for them; but it turned out a failure.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of gold hoarded in India; but it was approximated before the Royal Commission on Bimetallism at one hundred and thirty millions sterling, which was the amount imported during the last fifty years, and is exclusive of the hoards for centuries past. The silver was computed at about one hundred and seventy millions. This yields for both gold and silver a sum of three hundred millions, which represents nearly one-third of the value of the total amount of coin (£1,000,000,000) estimated by Dr Soetbeer to be in circulation in the world.

The form which the hoarding takes is that of bullion or coin, and frequently the metal is made into ornaments, partly used for the purposes of adornment, and partly kept as a hoard. As a rule, the native prefers it in the form of ornaments for his family, because it is a hoard; and it is also a source of gratification to them to possess these ornaments. The simplest form of jewel or ornament worn by the natives is the thick gold or silver wire twisted into bangles or bracelets. The latter are made by the silversmith, to whom the poor Hindu betakes himself when he has saved a few rupees. These are soon melted and beaten up into the necessary article of ornament and hoard. Silver is also hammered into brooches and torques in imitation of knotted grass and leaves; while armlets, anklets, and such-like are freely fabricated. Solid or hollow gold lumps, in the form of cubes and octahedrons strung on red silk, appear as another form of stored wealth. As may be supposed, the gods of India, which are many, absorb much of the molten gold and silver of the country. One notable design is called *Swami*, and consists of an ornamentation of figures of Hindu gods in high-relief, beaten out from the surface, or fixed by solder or screws. In Southern India, there are vast stores of gold and silver in the temples. The poor people have no strong-boxes or safes in which to place their valuables, and so they generally put their hard cash and ornaments within brass *lotas* or *bahagunas*, and then bury them underground somewhere in the room in which they sleep, preferring for this purpose the ground below their beds, or disused wells and other out-of-the-way places.

Jewelry stands high commercially in India, for it always commands a ready sale. A jewel there is a veritable 'joy-giver,' as the origin of the word implies. It is reckoned the most solid kind of wealth; and fortunes are never counted without estimating the value of the stock of jewels. They perform a great matrimonial function, the poorest bride having her dowry, often equal in value to several years' of the bridegroom's income. One of the greatest boasts of the jewelry owner is, that his hoards are not taxed, for he may be possessed of jewelry worth one hundred thousand rupees, and yet pay no income tax, for the simple reason that the hoards yield him no income.

But hoards take also the form of coined money

and bullion or bars of gold as well as jewelry. At the present time, it is believed that ten millions of British sovereigns are hoarded in India, chiefly in the Bombay Presidency, where the impression on them of St George and the dragon appears to be valued on religious grounds. There are also vast quantities of the native coinage stored, the mohur being the principal coin in hoards. It is of gold, and of the weight and fineness of a silver rupee, its value being about thirty shillings. This hoarding absorbs all the gold that pours into India, and very much of the silver, although the latter is the circulating medium. As the natives get wealthy, they prefer gold. A wealthy man will prefer ornaments of gold for his family rather than silver; and the very poorest classes use ornaments made of some base metal, neither gold nor silver, but in which there may be some silver.

Gold is also distributed in connection with ceremonies. It is a custom among the natives of India to give you what is called 'pawn,' which is the signal for you to leave after an interview, and some gold is used for ornaments bestowed in this way. In Delhi alone it was estimated that one hundred pounds a day was used in manufacture connected with 'pawn.'

In the courts of the native princes of India hoarding takes place on a vast scale. The Maharajah of Burdwan died lately and left a large hoard. It proves that anterior to 1835 there was much hoarding, when it is stated that the Maharajah had withdrawn from his store two hundred and thirty thousand pounds of silver, which was in the form of Sikka rupees, none of which have been coined since 1835. A letter was submitted to the Royal Commission on the subject of the Maharajah's hoard. A description was given of the several treasure-houses in the estate, their dimensions, and their contents: 'One large room measuring about forty-eight feet in length, fourteen feet six inches in breadth, and thirteen feet nine inches in height, where gold and silver ornaments, and ornaments set with precious stones, are kept. These articles are in *almirahs* and boxes of all descriptions, and also some gold plates and cups, *thalees* and *katorahs*, as well as washing-bowls, jugs, &c.' Other two rooms contain silver domestic utensils, forks, spoons, &c., and, strange to say, English dinner and breakfast sets all of silver. Two of these rooms were under lock, and the doors bricked up. There are four other rooms, one containing ornaments of gold, silver, and precious stones, gold ornaments and throne; other two containing the reserve treasury, which included the estate collections and government securities and debentures; while the other is thus described: 'The fourth room measures about twenty-two feet six inches in length, fifteen feet in breadth, and twelve feet three inches in height, where there are two large-sized vaults prepared for hoarding the current silver coin; and since the year 1267 B.C., some money was from time to time put in and taken out by the Maharajah Mahtab Chund Bahadoor for the expenses of an emergent and extraordinary nature, such as the late Maharajah Aftab Chund Bahadoor's marriage, Lala Bun Behari Kapur's marriage, and buying landed properties. When he died, one lac was left in one of the vaults.' In another apartment the ornaments belonging

to different gods of the family were kept, and silver *thalers*, *sapais*, &c., for the religious purpose, the room being locked and sealed. It was the custom of the Burdwan Raj family to confide the custody of these valuables to the Maharanee for the time being; but the vaults were never inspected save in presence of the Maharajah. When sums were withdrawn, only relations and trustworthy servants were admitted into the room and vault. Treasurers and dewans used to be present outside the room or apartment, where the sum drawn was sent out (female guards being placed in the passage), for the purpose of weighing, counting, and bagging it before it was sent to the mint.

Other instances of hoarding were given by an officer of the Indian Post-office in 1886, who stated that a native prince was then hoarding gold at the rate of forty to fifty thousand pounds a year; and on the death of two native princes recently, it was believed that they had left four million sterling each. One of these princes took a loan of half a million from the government of India in 1877, when he must have been in possession of a large hoard himself, for it is a point of honour with a family not to break into a hoard, which is treated with the sacredness of a family picture. When the prince in question had to make a payment to the government of India for a purpose in which he was interested, and was asked when he could make the payment—a payment of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds—he said: ‘At any moment.’

Hoards are only drawn on in extreme cases, and it is such calamities as war, or the great famine in Madras or Bombay, that will bring them out. During these famines, bullion or ornaments were taken out of the hoards and sent to the Bombay Mint, to England, or impledged with the native banker or money-lender. But unless under very special circumstances, the gold and silver of which the hoards are composed are drawn in without any intention of returning to circulation again.

In these days of gold appreciation and silver depreciation, the absorption of gold on so vast a scale becomes a serious question. It may well be asked, What prospect is there of an early termination of this gold-hunger and hoarding? We fear some centuries must elapse before any serious diminution of it takes place. Much will depend on the growth of western civilisation and ideas among the natives of India, and such a change in the disposition and habits of the people as will lead them to place their means in investments which will yield a certain rate of return. Already they are to a slight extent reaping remuneration from cotton mills and other industrial investments; while the permanent institution of Post-office savings-banks bids fair to be largely taken advantage of by them.

Quitting the semi-civilised nations of the East, we now turn to the habits of the less hoarding and more civilised western nations. It has been remarked generally, that thrifty people like the French, Swiss, Belgians, and Dutch hoard coin more than the Scotch and English. The Irish were addicted to hoarding bank-notes; but the practice prevailed in former years more than now. In Italy, large quantities of gold and silver were hoarded from 1862 to 1865, because paper money

was then declared legal tender, or forced on the country. In 1881–83, the gold standard was established in Italy, and the gold necessary to effect this change was drawn to a great extent from hoards. In France, a great deal of hoarding has existed for a long time, especially among the peasantry, who are the most parsimonious in Europe. Many causes have contributed to the formation of this habit, not the least being the insecurity arising from the unsettled forms of government in France. Lately, however, these hoards have been extensively drawn on in connection with the payment, at the close of the Franco-German War, of the French indemnity of eighty millions sterling. Of this amount, one half was paid out of French hoards. An ex-governor of the Bank of England, in his evidence before the Bimetallism Commission, estimates the contributions from hoards as equal to two-thirds of the amount of the indemnity. In illustration of peasant-hoarding, he related how one of the leading French bankers told him that at the time of the siege of Paris he left Paris to go and look at his estate in the neighbourhood. He went up to one of the peasants and told him that he had just come out to look after his affairs, and that he was very anxious to pay his people their wages, but that, under the circumstances, he had no money. The peasant said: ‘If forty thousand francs [sixteen hundred pounds] are any good to you, I have got them in a stocking under my bed; and I will go and fetch them.’ They were in gold coin. These hoards the French government wisely attracted by offering inducements to the peasant classes in the way of preferential allotment of the *Rentes*, or through premium on the price paid.

Hoards are not common in Germany; but there is a large war-hoard lying at Juliusthurm, in Spandau, belonging to the government, of one hundred and twenty million marks, or six millions sterling, which goes under the name of the German Empire War Treasure.

In Great Britain, civilisation is too far advanced, and the love of interest on capital too great, to allow of habits like the foregoing making headway. Any hoarding there may be consists for the most part of those coins—jubilee, token, and current ones, as the case may be—which have found their way into museums and coin-hunters’ cabinets.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

CHAPTER II.

By dint of long morning lounges in the County Club, of which select institution he was a member, Colonel Sandhurst succeeded in killing the three heavy days which divided him from his son's company. Not that he was altogether a martyr to boredom, for there were many delicate plans to be finally settled; last, but not least, the master-stroke of inviting his ward, Miss Ethel Morton, and her aunt to be his guests for a few days, and thus bring the heiress in immediate and close contact with Captain Frank Sandhurst, his reputation and his Victoria Cross. This latter coveted trophy had been won some twelve months before in one of the recent South African wars.

The diplomatic old soldier stood in the elegant

private sitting-room devoted to his use, consulting his watch impatiently, for it was approaching the hour of seven, and the expected travellers were due; it having been so arranged that they might travel down from London together, and thus cement the friendship. It was therefore a considerable disappointment to the Colonel when the ladies arrived by themselves, the recalcitrant swain having failed them at the last moment.

'He will be here by the mail,' Miss Morton explained, when the preliminary greetings were over. 'It was some tiresome business at the War Office, I believe he said. Perhaps the Commander-in-chief required his opinion upon some important matter. But really I am so hungry that I can't sympathise with you over the terrible affliction.'

Colonel Sandhurst pulled the bell with more than necessary violence, while his fair visitor looked out on the broad street below with languid interest. She was a pleasant, merry-looking blonde, with fair hair, and kindly blue eyes full of mischief; but withal sympathetic and true as steel to her friends. Miss Cramer, the aunt in question, was a gentle placid nobody, who was only too glad of the opportunity to efface herself on every occasion, the sort of easy-going old lady who, if properly clad and regularly fed, asked nothing more from her fellow-creatures. If asked what she lived for, she would have shaken her head smilingly, and declined the solution of so solemn and unnecessary a problem.

Over his soup and glass of brown sherry, the colonel succeeded in recovering his lost equanimity. The dinner was well served, the Wye trout and ducklings delicately cooked, and the colonel was but mortal. By the time the peaches had arrived, his brown face beamed with hospitable smiles. 'Beautiful neighbourhood,' he observed patronisingly, 'and salmon-fishing excellent.—Now, if there was only a house on the Bartonsham property, we might make a pleasant summer here.'

'I suppose the people *are* civilised?' Miss Ethel returned, helping herself to some grapes. Miss Cramer had long since dropped into one of her waking trances. 'Let us go and sit out on that pretty balcony among the flowers, and study the Castlefordian in his native lair, as we used to do at San Remo. Besides, I know you want a cigar.'

They took their chairs out on to the balcony in the fading light, looking north to an old church with tall gray spire; and immediately before them, beyond the elms where the noisy rooks were swinging, rose the square cathedral tower. The Colonel lay back and smoked his tobacco with a feeling of perfect tranquillity and contentment.

'Yes,' he continued, 'it is a great pity there is no house at Bartonsham. In that case we might stay here till the autumn, and learn something of the county. They say the Wye tour is as beautiful as the Rhine.'

'Why not build a house?' asked the listener, toying with a rosebud.

'Ah, but you see I have a better plan than that. It is so long since you were here before that you probably forget Fernleigh.'

'Indeed, I do not; that is, if you mean that beautiful place on the Lugwardine Road. I believe I coveted that house more than any one I ever

saw. When I get old and careworn, I shall like to have just such another place to call my own.'

'Perhaps there are more unlikely things than that, because, you see, I am in negotiation for the purchase of that very house.'

'Indeed!—Do you mean to say the owner is actually selling it?'

In spite of his jubilation at this outburst on Miss Ethel's part, the gallant Colonel's conscience gave him a sharp twinge. It seemed very strange that he could not help being conscious of a certain guilty feeling of remorse for the part he was playing. 'Yes; but not from choice. It appears that there is some law business pending in which the owner is interested. I never had any head for that kind of thing, consequently I did not pay much attention to Heath's explanation.'

'It seems very hard,' said Miss Ethel sympathetically, as she watched the golden points of flame. 'Having a pet lawsuit of my own, I can feel for the luckless owner. But then men do not feel the same sentiment in these things as women do.'

'But you see the owner happens to be—a lady.'

'And you are actually going to turn her out?—Colonel Sandhurst, I am ashamed of you! Really, you should!—'

But any further scolding for the Colonel was interrupted at this moment by the rattle of wheels below and the sound of a well-known voice giving orders to an hotel servant. In less time than it takes to tell, Colonel Sandhurst was grasping his soldier-son's left hand, the right being supported across his breast by a silk bandage. The Colonel's lip quivered slightly, his eyes glistened as he looked into his boy's face. Miss Ethel gave a rapid sign to Miss Cramer, fortunately awake, and together they left the room, closing the door behind them; and a full hour had elapsed before they were missed by the serenely happy father.

The next morning being perfectly fine and breakfast over, the Colonel proposed a walk, a proposition declined by Miss Morton on the ground that she had a vast amount of business in the way of shopping to do. So the Colonel, nothing loth, started off with Frank Sandhurst to explore the lions of the town. They passed through the Close, under the ancient elms shading a smooth shaven lawn, into the Castle Green, where erstwhile a border fortress stood, with the silver Wye at its feet and the smiling landscape beyond. A pleasant spot to pass an hour in the leafy shade with a glimpse of the old moat, and white swans floating on the water, and the air laden with the fragrance of the hawthorn. For a time they sat in silence, this old war-worn warrior and his gallant son, watching the flowing water as it hurried downwards to the sea.

'It is good to be in England again,' Frank observed at length. 'After that broiling climate out there, the sight of a green field and cool stream makes it seem like home.'

'No place like England, after all,' rejoined the Colonel. 'And, talking about home, I hope you have made up your mind to stay. If I let you have the place here with the house I am buying, don't you think you might cut the army, and settle down in the usual fashion?'

'By which you mean matrimony, of course.—To tell you the truth, I have never given the

matter anything but the most vague consideration. Naturally, I shall marry some day; that is, if I can find some "fair impossible she" who is rash enough to care for me.'

The Colonel stole a side-glance at the speaker's manly figure and handsome bronzed features, and thought that such a contingency was by no means so remote as the modest youth would imply. 'You have not seen one up to now, then?'

'Well, n-no,' Frank returned doubtfully. 'I was never much of "a squire of dames." There was one girl I met out yonder; I very nearly forgot her. Yes, perhaps if I had had more opportunity, I might—Dad, she was the nicest girl I ever came across—one of the nurses, you know.'

'An hospital nurse!' said the Colonel coldly. 'Not precisely the wife a Sandhurst would generally choose.'

'More fool the Sandhurst, then,' Frank replied as coolly. 'And as a matter of fact I may mention that if it hadn't been for that same lady—as she was a lady, too—you and I would not be sitting here to-day.'

'That is always the way with you romantic boys—every little service rendered and paid for in the usual way is magnified into a great debt of gratitude.'

'If life is worth living, then I owe mine to her.'

'And probably would lay it at her feet, after the good old-fashioned lines laid down in ancient comedy,' returned the father, pulling his long moustache in some irritation. 'And regret it ever afterwards.'

'She had a beautiful face,' Frank continued, speaking as if to himself; 'a perfect face; fair, with glorious violet eyes. Fancy her coming all the way from England to nurse a brother who was wounded! He died, you see; and she stayed on to do all the good she might. Then she found me unconscious, and at death's door, and nursed me to life, God bless her! because I was something like her lost one. Under Providence, I owe my health and strength to her.'

'It was nobly done,' cried the Colonel, catching some of his son's enthusiasm. 'I should like to hear the name of this angel of mercy.'

'That is precisely what I can't tell you. I did ask her more than once when I was getting better; but she never would disclose her identity. "Call me Gladys," she would say; "it reminds me of my dear brother;" and Gladys I always called her afterwards.'

'Um! You seem to have done considerably well for an invalid,' said the Colonel grimly; 'fortunately, that kind of romance soon wears itself out. And besides, I have formed other plans for you.'

'That's uncommonly kind of you,' returned the younger man as grimly. 'Let us be candid.—Who is the lady you have chosen?'

'What do you say to Ethel Morton?'

Frank burst into a laugh so spontaneous and full of merriment, that the Colonel was compelled to stroke his moustache to hide a half-smile, though his face preserved the same look of judicial gravity.

'My dear father, you can't be serious? Consider how long we have known each other, and how well we understand the weaknesses of each

other's disposition. Besides which, there is another Richmond in the field.'

'Oh, indeed,' cried the Colonel ruefully. 'That's the first I've heard of it.'

'It didn't take me long to find it out. You don't suppose that a really nice girl like Ethel can go through the best part of two London seasons without admirers?—Cresswell told me.'

'Oh, it's Cresswell, is it? Now I come to remember, he has been uncommonly civil to me the last month or two.'

'That's the gay Lothario. We had a talk about Castleford a few days ago, more particularly touching the salmon-fishing. He seemed to be very much inclined to run down here for a week or two. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he turned up at any moment.'

When a man has been nursing a pet scheme for some years, till it becomes almost a part and parcel of his existence, the sense of defeat is very humiliating. And so the Colonel found it at this moment. Not that he altogether despaired; but then Sir Edwin Cresswell was a gentleman of fortune and irreproachable social position, such as no guardian would have the right to dismiss on politic grounds.

'I might have anticipated something like this,' he replied in much perturbation. 'That is the worst of having girls to deal with.' So saying, Colonel Sandhurst rose from his seat and strolled townwards. Not that this unexpected contretemps affected his opinion respecting the purchase of Fernleigh; though he felt somewhat sore, and not a little inclined to be quarrelsome even with his much-beloved, who walked alongside with a grave face, at the same time observing a discreet silence.

'So the Morton scheme is postponed *sine die*?' he asked, as the Colonel made a pause at length on the club steps.—'No, thank you; I am not going into the club this morning. If you don't mind, I will look up Ethel, and give her my assistance in the proposed raid upon the local tradesmen.'

Frank Sandhurst stood for some moments before his hotel door, idly smoking, and contemplating the passers-by. In a small country the contemplation of human nature is apt to pall, even with the most enthusiastic student of his fellow-men; and Sandhurst, after a few moments, felt his interest in Castleford affairs to be rapidly fading. A native of the sunny South grinding popular tunes upon an ear-piercing organ, and the gyrations of some merry children, were not calculated to rivet attention; but presently, when a slight elegant figure in deep mourning emerged from a chemist's shop opposite, and walked rapidly towards All Saints' Church, the young gentleman's languid interest quickened into something like emotion. 'If that isn't Gladys, my eyes greatly deceive me.' Saying these words, to the extreme astonishment of a passing stranger he dropped his cigarette and started in pursuit of the rapidly vanishing figure. Turning along High Street, she proceeded in the direction of High Town, where Frank arrived just in time to see her disappear into a passage between two shops, on the lintel of one being a brass plate bearing the legend, 'Heath and Starling, Solicitors.'

'Well, I'm in luck so far,' murmured the discomfited youth, as he gazed blankly at the dim

portals beyond which the peri had flown. 'Mem. To cultivate my old friend Heath's acquaintance without further delay. It wouldn't be a bad dodge to leave my card and ask him to call round at *The Dragon* after dinner.'

It was not until some time after the meal in question that the lawyer made his appearance. He found Sandhurst and Miss Ethel seated on the balcony, the Colonel being engaged to take a hand at whist with a trio of old military acquaintances, a class of gentlemen who abound in the majority of cathedral towns. At this apparently deep stroke of diplomacy to engender confidence and hasten the consummation of love's young dream, Mr Heath smiled to himself, but what he said was that it was a beautiful evening and delightful after the hot afternoon.

'Why haven't you been to see me before?' Ethel demanded. 'I can't come to you now, as I used to in the old days, and upset the inkpot over your cleanly engrossed parchments.'

'Do you remember that?' the lawyer asked. 'What a memory, to be sure! The trouble we used to have with you two. It makes me feel quite old when I see the captain here, who was only a boy yesterday.'

'I was very nearly calling upon you this afternoon, only I did not like to disturb you,' Frank replied.—'Mind, I am not asking out of an impertinent curiosity, but I should like to know who the young lady in black is—the one who paid you a visit this morning?'

'This is a chapter out of an unwritten romance,' Ethel explained. 'The wounded hero present before you; the gently nurtured girl who braves a foreign clime to nurse the prostrate warrior. The brave soldier recovers, and seeks his nurse; but she has disappeared. In plain English, Frank thinks in the fair visitor of yours he has discovered the girl who, he maintains, saved his life.'

'There is not a doubt of it,' said Frank, with a warm flush upon his cheek.—'Have you any objection to tell me her name?'

'Not in the least, my dear fellow. That was Miss Charlesworth, the only daughter of my very dear friend and client, Mrs Charlesworth, of Fernleigh.'

'And her name is Gladys?'

'Perfectly right. Gladys Violet, to be correct.'

'Then it is a romance,' Ethel cried enthusiastically.—'Is it a fact that she went to Africa to nurse a wounded brother?'

'Perfectly true, my dear,' Mr Heath replied more gravely. 'It was impossible for Mrs Charlesworth to go, so she went almost alone. Conventionally speaking, perhaps it was not quite'—

'Oh, bother conventionality!' was the abrupt reply. 'It was a noble thing to do. How many girls would have dared to do the same?—The name seems familiar to me. I fancy Colonel Sandhurst told me something'—

'That he had bought Fernleigh, perhaps?'

'Oh yes; I remember now.—Mrs Charlesworth has got into difficulties over some wretched law business, and is compelled to sell her house. What a pity it seems, and such nice people, I hear!'

'It is a very old story,' Mr Heath observed bitterly. 'There is a large sum of money in dispute, which is claimed on a young lady's be-

half by her friends. You see, Mrs Charlesworth's grandfather, Martin Hay'—

A sudden exclamation from Miss Morton cut short the conclusion. 'Why, you are talking about my very own case. If I am right, then Mrs Charlesworth and myself must be related.'

'You are the Miss Morton, plaintiff in this action?' asked Heath helplessly. 'Why did I not guess as much before? Of course, Martin Hay was your great-grandfather, and but for the missing assignment'—

'Oh, I am tired of hearing about that wretched document; in fact, reprehensible as it seems, I have not taken the slightest interest in the proceedings. Do you think there was any such paper?'

'Certainly, because I once had it in my own hands.'

'If it can be found, I have no right to any of this money?'

'Not a penny of it. But as it can't be found, and there seems to be no prospect of its turning up, you are legally entitled to all.'

'Legally? But what about morally? And I have more than enough now.'

Frank, who had been listening in lost amazement to this, to him, inscrutable mystery, at this point asked for an explanation. In a few words Mr Heath told the whole story, touching briefly but clearly upon the strong attachment Mrs Charlesworth had for her old home. For a time there was a dead silence between them.

'Ethel, what do you think of it?' Sandhurst asked presently.

It was too dark by this time to see the girl's face. She did not reply for a moment, and when she spoke there was a strange catch in her voice, as if she enunciated her words with difficulty. 'I think,' she said slowly—'I think that, if I have a voice in the matter, Fernleigh will not change hands just yet.'

THE MILK-INDUSTRY IN CHESHIRE.

THE county of Chester has long been conspicuous as a chief centre of the milk-industry in England. The total area of land and water in the county is 705,493 acres, and in 1887 it contained 103,587 cows and heifers in milk or in calf. Of permanent grass, exclusive of heath or mountain land, the county contains 363,021 acres, of which 254,864 acres are in pasture, the remainder being mown every year for meadow-hay. Lancashire, Somersetshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire have each a larger number of cows, and are noted for the production of milk; but they have a much larger area than Cheshire, and not so many cows in proportion. Derbyshire is less extensive, and contains fewer cows, but has taken a prominent place in the production of milk, and now furnishes a large proportion of the metropolitan supply.

In Cheshire, the milk-industry includes the making of cheese, butter, and condensed milk, besides the sale of sweet milk, which has greatly increased in recent years. Within the past twenty years the trade there, as in other counties, has undergone a quiet revolution. The sale of milk

to towns and cities has enormously increased ; while the making of cheese and butter has been largely transferred to factories. In other days, the dairy-farm showed a busy round of cheese and butter making ; and the work was all performed, or at least carefully superintended, by the farmer's wife or other female relative. The farmer himself worked or superintended on the farm outside ; the matron was uncontrolled in the management of the cowhouse and dairy. Often the duties of the wife were heavier, more monotonous, and less attractive than those of the husband. No doubt the work was well managed, and it was a point of honour to produce a most excellent article ; but the toil was hard, and the work altogether sloppy and uninviting. It also required constant attention, often interfered with other family duties, and was considered to be only indifferently remunerated. To become the wife of a dairy-farmer required a certain amount of courage ; and for similar reasons it was not easy to obtain dairymaids with sufficient activity, as girls disliked the constant confinement and drudgery.

A change in the system began twenty years since, and has extended gradually to all the milk counties. Cheese-makers were threatened with strong competition from America, where the factory system had been established, apparently with good results ; and it was judged necessary to try the same method in England. A meeting of landlords and tenant farmers, members of the Derbyshire Agricultural Society, was held in 1869, when a Committee was appointed, and a guarantee fund formed, with a view to the establishment of one or more cheese factories. One was constructed at Derby, and another at Longford, in the same county ; over the portals of the latter were inscribed the words, 'This is the first Cheese Factory erected in Great Britain.' Advocated though it was by able agricultural writers, the system did not spread rapidly ; but in three or four years, twenty or thirty factories had been established, chiefly in the midland counties. In 1881 there were twelve in Derbyshire alone ; and a number have been added since. Among those lately erected is one at which the milk of three to four hundred cows is made into cheese. Another is designed to turn out all kinds of dairy produce. Milk is bought by weight, not by measure, and the cream is at once removed by a Laval separator. The separated milk is sold in cans to dealers, or retailed at the rate of one penny per quart, along with new milk sent out to the towns and villages of the district.

Nothing in connection with the milk-industry is more remarkable than the great increase in the sale of milk itself. Facilities for this have been afforded by the opening of railway communication ; and in other respects the carriage of milk has been made more safe and easy. One recent improvement has been the power to artificially destroy animal heat and odour by refrigeration ; in consequence of which, milk may be carried any reasonable distance and delivered perfectly sweet. Some figures connected with Derbyshire will serve to illustrate the great increase in the sale of milk. The quantity passed along the Midland Railway in 1872, chiefly to London, was estimated at 940,000 gallons ; but in 1880 it had

reached five and a half million gallons ; and in the twelve months ending with October 1888 the quantity was 8,393,292 gallons. It is carried by fast and by slow trains ; and, where necessary and the traffic is sufficiently important, special trains are run for the conveyance of milk. The consumption of milk in London is enormous, but the demand is capricious ; and arrangements must be made with a view to have an adequate supply without waste. On a hot day in summer any quantity of milk can be sold in London. A general holiday, or any great public event that keeps working-people at home, and gives them leisure for a good breakfast, will increase the demand ; and for a similar reason, the consumption is large on Saturday and Sunday. Vast quantities are used by vendors of ices with their barrows at the corner of every street. With a view to keep matters in hand, maintaining a sufficient supply, and yet not having a quantity of sour milk on hand, wholesale dealers have begun to work their traffic in conjunction with a cheese factory, which they usually manage to establish near a railway station, and within easy communication by telegraph. The probable wants of their customers for the day can be ascertained early ; and if more is wanted, a telegram can get it sent by the next train ; while the cheese-making for the day can be regulated to suit the quantity of milk on hand at the factory. The increased sale of milk is beneficial to all concerned. The railway company finds the traffic so important and remunerative, that milk-vans have been provided, and even special trains run for its conveyance. For London, with its four millions of people, it is of vast consequence that milk can be so easily brought a distance of a hundred miles and upwards, especially now that, in counties nearer the city, so much space is devoted to market gardens and the production of other perishable commodities. To the farmers, also, it has been a decided benefit, and one farmer in Derbyshire candidly confessed, some time ago, that 'it had been the only thing that had kept him on his legs.'

The manufacture of cheese and butter will probably be increasingly done in factories. Their progress hitherto has not been rapid, nor have they been always financially successful. Cheese made in the factories at first was by no means perfect ; and the price, though higher than the average, was considerably under that of the best makes. By experience, however, the management has been perfected, and now the quality is so satisfactory that the produce of certain factories takes a high place at Cheese Exhibitions. The character of the system may be illustrated by some statements regarding a Cheshire factory conducted on the co-operative principle. There are twenty-four farms represented, including five hundred to five hundred and fifty cows. The largest contributor has one hundred and fifty shares ; the smallest has only four. On the formation of the Company, a suitable site was selected, not more than three miles from any of the farms ; a long lease was obtained, and suitable buildings were erected. The whole number of people required to deal with the milk of five hundred and fifty cows consists of two men and two women, with an additional man to look after the pigs, of which one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty

are kept in the height of the season to consume the whey. Milk is sent in from all the farms, and is weighed on its arrival, ten pounds weight generally corresponding to a gallon. The evening milk is placed in a cheese-vat as soon as it arrives, and is prevented from setting by the action of a stirrer, which is worked by a small water-wheel. The morning milk having been added to that received the previous evening, cheese-making begins for the day. In private dairies, the milk is scarcely heated except by adding the warm milk of the morning to that which has been kept from the previous evening; but in factories it is raised to eighty-four degrees or even one hundred degrees when the rennet is introduced. A little over ten pounds of milk is required to make one pound of cheese, except in autumn, when the milk has a greater body, and eight pounds will suffice.

A weekly return shows the quantity of milk received from each contributor morning and evening on each day of the week, the total number of pounds received at each meal, and the number of pounds of milk used at each making of cheese. Every contributor is supplied with a pass-book, having lines for the days of the month, and divisions for the morning and evening milk. On the cover is a particular request that the book be sent to the factory at the end of each month to be compared with the milk ledger. Payments are made monthly to the contributors at the rate of sixpence a gallon; and the balance, after making allowance for depreciation and working expenses, is afterwards divided according to the quantities supplied from each farm.

The plan of cheese-making at the factories differs in certain specific points from the ordinary Cheshire method; and as one result of the new system, the cheese matures more rapidly. It is ready for the market in five or six weeks, and has sometimes been sent out within fourteen days after it was made. Cheshire cheeses usually weigh about twenty-five pounds, and are generally, but not always, flat-shaped, as that kind suits best for the market in London, Birmingham, Newcastle, and other places. Another great point in favour of the factory system is the saving of labour, anxiety, and risk of failure at the different farms; and the quality of cheese, which is usually made on the Cheddar plan, is more uniform, though it does not equal the highest quality of home-made cheese.

One milk-industry in Cheshire is the manufacture of condensed milk. At one factory, which takes large quantities of milk from farms within a radius of eight miles, about one hundred and twenty hands are employed. The milk is bought by weight, 10·30 pounds being the standard per gallon; and the factory can deal with six thousand gallons per day, and works all the year round. In summer, when milk is abundant, the factory presents a very animated scene. Carts in quick succession come driving up to the weighing-house, the cans are emptied into a large receiver, the weight entered, and a sample of the milk taken, so that the quality may be ascertained. When milk is below the standard in quality, a complaint is made, and if no improvement follows, the milk is refused.

The condensation takes place with or without sugar, according as the article is required for

keeping or for immediate use. The milk that has been received and weighed is conducted by pipes into tanks, whence it passes into milk-cans, placed in water heated to a temperature approaching the boiling-point. After remaining about twenty minutes, it passes into large coppers with steam-jackets, where it is kept for a short time, and sugar is added if required. The milk is then passed into vacuum pans, where the proper proportion of water is discharged as steam, and condensed in coils of pipes, over which water trickles. At this point in the process, great care is required, and samples are frequently inspected. When the proper degree of condensation is reached, the fluid is run into a series of cans, which are made to revolve slowly in running-water. The making of the cans, soldering, filling, and closing, are chiefly done by girls and boys, who are supplied with very ingenious machinery for the work. As a rule, the whole process of manufacture is completed at dinner-time, after which the whole apparatus is thoroughly cleansed, preparatory to the work of the following day. The churns are cleansed by subjecting them to a jet of steam. No work is done on Sundays; the milk of Saturday night and Sunday morning is retained at the farms, and either churned for butter or made into cheese. On the third of each month, payment is made to each contributor for the previous month's milk.

A not unimportant contribution to the total supply of dairy produce is furnished by the wives of working-men. In Derbyshire, according to a recent Parliamentary Return, there are 4053 garden allotments attached to cottages held by labourers and working-men at an average rent of £5, 3s. 7d. including the cottage. Many occupants of these cottages keep pigs and poultry, and some of them keep cows. Labourers who live in villages adjoining the park at Chatsworth are permitted to pasture their cows within the park for twenty-one weeks from May till October, at a charge of three pounds for each cow. In this way some cottagers keep one cow, some two, and others as many as three or four. From the milk of these cows butter is usually made, and there is a good demand for it to meet the wants of tourists and visitors during summer. Sometimes three or four families join, and take their turn in making butter from the conjoint produce, each keeping back sufficient for the family wants. To protect themselves in case any cow should die, these cottagers are generally members of some Cow Insurance Club.

The factory system, or associated dairying, has been largely developed in the United States and Canada in recent years. The first factory was established in the State of New York in 1860, and so successful was it, that there were nearly five hundred in operation in the same State within six years. The system spread throughout the other States, and what became known as the 'American system of dairying' was introduced, as we have seen, into England, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and Holland. The introduction about 1872 of oleo-margarine, a preparation of beef-fat, into the system of cheese and butter making has damaged the American dairy business not a little. American dairy cheese is made under the well-known Cheddar system. In 1880 there were 3932 cheese and butter factories in the United States; in 1888 the number had increased

to five thousand, creameries having increased most largely. The butter made at some of these creameries, from its even qualities, commands a larger price than farm dairy butter, sometimes one shilling and eightpence to three shillings a pound.

A PROPOSAL BY PHONOGRAPH.

TOM DOUGLAS was young, good-looking, and would some day be well-to-do; but above all things he was scientific. His passion for science first became noticeable when he began to learn chemistry in the Fourth Form at Halstone School. Tom and all his class-fellows were deeply taken by the weird and unearthly odours, the terrifying explosions, and the miraculous bursts of subaqueous fire which appeared at the will of Mr Stubbs the science master. Indeed, they endeavoured persistently to emulate their tutor's exploits; but even the tutor's performances were presently quite eclipsed by those of his promising pupil Tom. The boy had a perfect genius for explosions, so that it soon became customary among the others, during the two or three hours which they spent each week in the laboratory, to give up any little enterprises of their own and simply keep an eye on Tom's movements. It was usually worth their while, for he rarely failed to do something marvellous.

When the end of term came and the youth arrived at his home in Dulberry, he set off at once on a tour of inspection round the home premises. A small building, which belonged to the gardener, and was used by him as a storehouse for seeds, flower-pots, and other things appertaining to his craft, struck his fancy. He found no difficulty in persuading his too complaisant parents to make this room over to him; and notwithstanding the murmurs of Sandy the gardener, it was forthwith emptied of its horticultural contents, fitted with benches, shelves, and a fireplace, and generally rendered habitable. Chemicals also, and all kinds of apparatus, were ordered from London. Had his friends not been altogether ignorant of the science of chemistry, they would have noticed that the chemicals which Tom ordered, and for which they blindly paid, were chiefly of the kind which go to make up explosions. Almost as soon as the laboratory had been fitted up, the goods arrived from London. On the first day, nothing worthy of note was seen or heard, Tom being too busily engaged in arranging and admiring his treasures to begin experimenting with them. Soon, however, the household began to listen with mild toleration to the loud explosions which, at intervals of about an hour, were constantly heard from the direction of Tom's laboratory. They were not quite so tractable, however, when the embryo chemist grew tired for the moment of noises and turned his attention to the production of unpleasant odours. But even then the boy was quite safe from interruption. They were not likely to attempt to approach the source of odours by which they were already almost stifled; whereas Tom revelled in the malodorous products of his experiments, and behaved, in an atmosphere reeking with the most abominable gases, as if he were once more

breathing his native air after a long and painful period of exile.

His love of science grew stronger, if a good deal more rational, as years passed by. At last, when he went up to Oxford, another room was added to his den. This was furnished after the manner of the average undergraduate's rooms, and here he kept his personal property and did most of his reading. Like most science-men, he was fond of novels, and of these this room soon contained an extensive and catholic collection. But the course of true love never did run smooth, and at last Tom Douglas discovered that there was one thing which, struggle as he might to ignore it, was beginning to interest him far more than any of the sciences to which he had hitherto devoted himself. His father's brother had many years ago emigrated to Australia. Almost immediately, he had married; but after a few years of hard struggle against poverty, his wife had died, leaving to him a little daughter, Dora. Tom Douglas was in his fourth year when he heard from home that his unknown uncle was dead. His father had received a letter some months before, saying that Dora would soon be alone in the world. She would be rich—for success had come to her father when it was too late to save his wife—and now the dying man begged his brother to become her guardian and offer her a home. Mr Douglas had at once consented; and Dora arrived in England shortly before the commencement of Tom's last long vacation; so that when he arrived at Dulberry she had already been there for a week or two. The cousins became very good friends; and it was the image of a sweet girlish face, blue-eyed, and a little sad, which occupied Tom's mind, and caused him to neglect his science-work almost entirely.

At the end of the 'long' he went up to Oxford once more, in order to take leave of his friends and formally to take his degree, for at the end of the previous term he had gained a 'first' in Honours Chemistry. This brief absence from Dora was so utterly painful to him, that he became aware of the fact that he really was very much in love with her. Of course, he ought to have known it before; perhaps he had done so, but at least he had never acknowledged it to himself. At anyrate he made haste to get back to his home.

When he returned to Dulberry he carried with anxious solicitude a box, which appeared to contain something at once very fragile and inestimably valuable. Dora had taken a great interest in his scientific studies—or rather, he had revived for her benefit his boyish interest in explosions. After lunch, therefore, he told her that during his absence he had spent a few days in town and there had secured a scientific wonder, which she must examine. He took the box under his arm, and they went together to his sanctum in the garden. Arrived there, he opened the box and took out a piece of mechanism which, he said, was a phonograph. He showed Dora how a thin plate of mica, moving with the air-vibrations caused by the voice, set in motion a small stylus of steel, and how this stylus marked out its vibrations on a thin cylinder of smooth wax, which, by a screw arrangement, was caused to move at once in the direction of its length and around its axis. Then he shifted back the

cylinder into its original position, so that the point of the stylus rested at the beginning of the little channel which it had already marked out on the wax. Finally, turning the screw again, he set the cylinder in motion; and the stylus, travelling along the line it had traced thereon, vibrated as it had done in the first instance. By this means the mica was once more set in vibration, and as it communicated its vibrations to the air, the original sounds were once more reproduced.

Tom tried to persuade Dora to sing a song; but the presence of that silent recorder made her nervous, and she was content with listening to the repetition of some trite and rather disconnected remarks of his own. The next few days passed not quite happily for Tom Douglas. He was in love, deeply in love, with Dora; but he did not dare to tell her as yet the secret which was nevertheless betrayed to her keen sight by his every word and action. He spent a good deal of time alone in his study, and amused himself after a rather silly fashion with the phonograph.

One day he had gone off on a visit to some friends, and Dora was feeling lonely and a trifle *ennuyée*. Her cousin had begged her to borrow any of his books if at any time she wanted something to read, and she went down to his study to get one. As she went, she was thinking of him, and wondering why he still hesitated to ask her the simple question which she would so gladly answer—the question which he was so constantly asking himself, and to which his love and his humility both gave different answers. She had chosen a book, when her eye fell on the phonograph lying ready for use on a table. Now that she was alone, she thought it would be rather pleasant to try how her own voice sounded. She had read lately in one of the newspapers that people had no idea of what their voices really sounded like; and she rather wondered whether her singing, of which she was inclined to think highly, was really so good as she had imagined. Filled with dread lest the unflattering phonograph should prove to her that her voice was harsh and unpleasant, and not quite decided as to what song she should try, she began to move the treadle which set the cylinder in motion. What sound was that which fell upon her ears? Her cousin's voice was speaking to her; and after a moment of blank astonishment, she listened with a quiet smile, as though Tom were standing before her in the flesh and saying what the phonograph now said for him. This is what she heard: 'Dora, darling, I have loved you ever since the day when first I saw you! I have longed to tell you every day since then, but have always been afraid. Will you try to love me just a little?' The voice lapsed into silence.

With a sudden gladness, Dora saw what had happened. Her cousin had also wondered how his voice sounded to others—to her—and especially how the question would sound which he so longed to ask. Well, the voice struck her as awkward, constrained, and quite unlike the cheerful tones to which she had become accustomed; but the words—

At that moment she heard her cousin's voice at the other end of the garden. He had returned home unexpectedly, and was chatting with the

gardener. He would be here presently, no doubt! In a moment she had once more set in motion the cylinder of the phonograph, and bending over it, spoke a few words in a low clear voice. Then she shifted the cylinder back into its original position, and stepped quickly into the next room—the laboratory.

In a few minutes she heard the conversation between Tom and the gardener cease. The young man came quickly down the garden and entered his sanctum. He flung his hat and walking-stick upon a chair, and then the phonograph struck his attention. He moved towards it and stood looking down on it, with his back towards the door of the room whence Dora was eagerly watching him. Then he began absent-mindedly to set the treadle in motion. Once more the phonograph spoke, and as it did so, Dora moved silently forward and stood in the open doorway of the laboratory. 'Dora, darling, I have loved you ever since the day when first I saw you! I have longed to tell you every day since then, but have always been afraid. Will you try to love me just a little?'

Tom heard these words; and then, before he had moved his foot from the treadle, the phonograph spoke in another voice: 'Why should you be afraid to come and ask me, when you know?'—It was Dora's voice; and even while he wondered at this marvel, he heard the same voice speaking again. 'Tom!' said the voice; and turning, he saw his cousin, standing with half-parted lips and laughing rosy face, only a yard or two away from him.

'Dora!' he cried, 'you have learned my secret!'

Dora moved towards him and hid her face in his shoulder; then, as he raised and kissed it, she whispered: 'Yes, Tom, long ago!'

FLORAL COLONISTS.

As we ramble along our country lanes or saunter by the side of our rushing rivulets we are struck by the almost infinite variety of wild-flowers which bespangle the grass, cluster in the hedgerows, or bend over the water; or even if we go no farther than our own gardens, we are well aware that multitudes of plants, with leaves and flowers of usually a rather ragged appearance, and which we designate weeds, grow vigorously and rapidly, and would soon, but for the assiduous labour of the gardener, thrust out the flowers which we have so carefully tended.

Now, the greater part of these wild-flowers and weeds are the true children of the soil, natives who have held the ground from time immemorial, and have reigned in undisputed right, until man has by cultivation overturned their empire and forced them to yield to other plants, which, though less adapted to the situation, afforded greater advantages to himself. But others, though growing among the wild ones and apparently native, are not aborigines; they have come as colonists, introduced by the hand of man, either designedly or otherwise, and intruded themselves among our native plants. Some of these have been residents in our country for ages, and have thoroughly

established themselves; others, although of recent introduction, have increased with such rapidity that in large tracts of country they have gained a permanent footing; while a third class only show themselves sparingly and locally, and can scarcely be considered naturalised. In this short paper we purpose directing your attention to a few of these floral colonists which from time to time have been introduced into our native land.

It is no easy task always to decide whether a plant is a true native or whether it is merely a colonist. In a very few cases we have the date of a plant's introduction; but in the vast majority of instances this is unrecorded. But if a plant is known to have been in cultivation for centuries, and is found only in the neighbourhood of houses or on the borders of cultivated fields, while in the corresponding latitude of Europe it is wanting, we may be very certain that it is only a garden escape.

To the monks, who in their way were great gardeners, we are indebted for the introduction of several plants; and since in many cases the ancient monastery has disappeared, the flowers which were wont to grow in its garden are often taken for wild ones. Among others, the Snowdrop was a favourite flower in a monastic garden, for it was sacred to the Virgin Mary; and in many a shady dell, especially in the west of England, where not a stone of the old convent appears, the snowdrop still blossoms in the spring, telling us of a vanished garden. Its native home, however, is on the Alps. Another plant, too, they brought from the mountains of Central Europe, a species of dock (*Rumex alpinus*), Monk's Rhubarb. No beauty of bloom or of foliage recommended it, nor did any mystic legend enshroud its history; but its root possessed medicinal qualities, and the monks well understood the healing virtues of herbs. It is now found in many places in the north.

But not only from monastic gardens, but also from the cottager's little plot of ground, many flowers which were grown for their beauty, or herbs which were planted for culinary or medicinal purposes, have been disseminated far and wide by means of wind or bird, and may now be found apparently wild in many localities.

The Yellow Fumitory (*Corydalis lutea*) may be often found on old walls in various parts of the country. It is a plant nearly related to the common fumitory, with largish, yellow, irregular flowers, and pale, glaucous, glabrous leaves, which have anything but a pleasant odour; but it is only a garden escape, and is never found at any great distance from houses.

The Common Pink (*Dianthus plumarius*) and Clove Pink (*D. caryophyllus*) are found, though rarely, on old walls in districts where they have been formerly cultivated; and even the Cheddar Pink (*D. cæsius*), which has been for years considered indigenous to the limestone rocks of Cheddar, in Somersetshire, is now considered by some authorities to be a garden outcast. The Wallflower, which is found on rocks and walls in many parts of the country, and which makes the St Vincent Rocks at Clifton, in the spring-time, golden with its bright yellow blossoms, while the air around is laden with its sweetness, is by some considered merely naturalised; while, curiously enough, the Stock, which is seen but

rarely, and then mostly on old castle walls or similar situations, is supposed to be a native.

The Periwinkle, a native of Southern Europe, which is a favourite plant on rockeries on account of its trailing stem and evergreen leaves, may sometimes be met with along our roadsides; but since it is propagated mainly by its rooting stem, and seldom, if ever, ripens its seed in our northern clime, it cannot be indigenous.

On walls, especially in the west, a common plant is the Ivy-leaved Toad-flax (*Linaria cymbalaria*). Pretty it is too, with small lilac blossoms like tiny snapdragons, which are produced in such profusion that in many parts of the country it goes by the popular name of Mother of Thousands; but though it is so abundant that it covers many walls with a bright green drapery bespangled with myriads of starry flowers, yet it is with us only an introduced plant from the south of Europe, and has been originally planted, even in those places in which it is most abundant.

The real Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*), which, with its bright showy flowers, is such a gay ornament in most cottage gardens, is sometimes met with, strayed away from the spot in which it was cultivated, and adorning the dreary hedgerow or quarry edge. When found in such situations, its blossoms are almost invariably red, though, when under cultivation, they vary with almost every conceivable shade of colour. Down by the rivulets of Warwickshire and of other parts of England, an American plant, the Monkey Flower (*Mimulus lutea*), may often be seen. In every case it must be naturalised, though the seeds have often been carried by the stream to a considerable distance from the garden to which they owe their origin.

The preceding have escaped from the flower garden; but the kitchen garden has also its outcasts. Parsley is often found on cliffs and rocky places. On St Vincent Rocks, Bristol—that happy hunting-ground for botanists—it is found abundantly; and on many limestone hills even in the inland counties it may be met with. The wild pear, which is so common a feature in the hedgerows of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, is now generally supposed to be the degraded remnant of a former cultivation. Even the medlar, which has often been quoted as a true English fruit, has been by some authorities lowered to the rank of a garden escape.

All plants which are propagated by means of runners are peculiarly liable to stray from the spot in which they have been planted; the Strawberry is therefore sometimes met with away from its bed, but is by no means common. A notable instance of this is the Common Elm, a tree which constitutes one of the leading features in English scenery; but it is certainly not British, for the seed never comes to maturity in our northern clime, and has in every instance either been planted or sprung from a sucker coming from an older tree. It has now been one of our forest trees for many centuries, and is perhaps the commonest. Another plant which is often found in England, but rarely ripens its seed, is the horse-radish, which may often be seen down by river-banks, or in waste places where garden rubbish is thrown. Any one who knows the extraordinary vitality of its root, and

the way in which a small portion of root will grow, will be at no loss to account for its appearance.

All these plants have, however, been introduced purposely and designedly; man has brought them over to his native land either for the sake of their beauty or from some utilitarian reason, and we have no reason to be sorry for their residence in our midst; but others have been introduced unwittingly and involuntarily, and their introduction has proved a curse rather than a blessing. Such are the numerous weeds whose seeds from time to time have been carried over from foreign countries with grain or other seeds. All the poppies whose scarlet blossoms look so beautiful in a cornfield have probably come over in the first instance in that way; and though we may admire the manner in which their colour agrees with the golden corn, the farmer would be only too glad if their seeds had never landed from Southern Europe. The Field Crowfoot (*Ranunculus arvensis*), a straggling weed, with smallish yellow flowers, and easily distinguished from the other crowfoots by its large flattened achenes, which are covered with bristles, was introduced also from the south; and many of the cresses and other cruciferous plants can boast of a similar origin.

North America has sent us the Water Thyme (*Anacharis*), which, though first discovered in this country so recently as 1842, has made such rapid advances that there is scarce a canal, river, or brook in the country but is infested with this troublesome water-weed. It rarely comes above the surface, flowering under water, and is readily known by its pellucid leaves, which are arranged upon a simple stem in whorls of three.

Kew Gardens, too, have let out some of their botanical specimens to the disadvantage of the neighbouring farmers. First of these stands a South American plant, a native of Peru (*Galinsoga parviflora*), a plant belonging to the great order Compositæ, with broadly ovate opposite leaves, and small heads of flowers. The ray flowers are small and few, about six, white and broad; and the tubular flowers are yellow. This plant is already a great nuisance in the various gardens and cultivated land in the parishes of Mortlake, Richmond, &c., and is rapidly spreading. A Russian plant, too, of the Balsam family, with small inconspicuous flowers, has also escaped, but does not appear to spread very rapidly; while a third offshoot from these Gardens is seen in that curious plant from North America called *Claytonia perfoliata*. It belongs to the order Portulacæ, has thick succulent leaves, of which the radical ones are ovate, and on long stalks; while the stem ones uniting, form a single leaf, through which passes the stem, which bears a number of minute white flowers. The seeds are black and shining. We have found this as far distant as Eden Park, in Kent.

These are but a few examples of naturalised plants; many others might be cited, but they are mostly only naturalised in small quantities and in limited localities. Many others, too, which now adorn our gardens, and are cultivated among our fruits and vegetables, may as the years roll on be registered among our wild-flowers; while, alas! some of those which have been long cherished among our woodland blossoms may become ex-

tinct. Primroses and violets, oxlips and orchids, are gradually decreasing; but may the time be long in coming when their haunts shall know them no more!

I D Y L.

In the valley of the Wye,
Clear and low the cattle-cry
Echoes o'er the meadows still,
Till it spurs the baby-feet,
Truant in the village street,
From their supper at the Mill.

To the stile beyond the cool
Shadowed waters of the pool,
That the freshets flush and fill,
Every eve in sun and shade,
Strolls a farmer down the glade
From his holding on the hill.

Skirting close the woods of pine,
Meekly step the foremost kine,
Till they splash the swollen rill.
Ankle-deep in herbage lush,
Follows with a deepening flush
Maiden Maggie of the Mill.

Gold the rippled locks beneath
Hat and honeysuckle wreath—
From her garden at the Mill;
While her wistful eyes of blue
Seem as glints of heaven's hue
To the watcher from the hill.

Springing with a blithe 'Good-e'en,'
From his stile above the green,
Downward hurries Farmer Will;
While the patient milky band
Long in water-eddies stand,
Drinking each a lazy fill.

Every evening her surprise
Deepens, as the blushes rise,
At their meeting by the rill.
Must he always watch the yield
Of that long ten-acre field,
As she passes to the Mill?

But he tells, with lover's art,
Of a lonely home and heart,
On a holding up the hill;
And the cattle homeward stray,
While they linger on the way,
Miller's maid and Farmer Will.

For a maiden will delay,
And it takes so long to say
In a lover's ear 'I will.'
And the children wait and wait
Till the hour is growing late
For their supper at the Mill.
C. A. DAWSON.

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A FORGOTTEN POEM.

ONE of the most famous poems of the sixteenth century was *The Sphere* of the celebrated Scotsman, George Buchanan. It would now be impossible to name a poem more completely forgotten. Yet, as a curious chapter in the history of taste and opinion, a brief account of it may not be uninteresting.

The poem owed its great reputation to two circumstances. It was written in Latin, then the language of educated Europe, and in verse which, in the judgment of the best scholars of that day, rivalled that of the great Latin poets of antiquity. In the second place, it treated of a subject which, at the time the poem appeared, was exercising all instructed minds—the new theory of Copernicus. The epoch-making book of Copernicus, in which he announced his discovery of the earth's revolution round the sun, was published in the very year of his death, 1543. From the first, his theory was received with contempt, and by none more than by the great scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The reason for their contempt may be simply enough explained. It was still the time of the revival of letters, and the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans was deemed beyond appeal. But these Greeks and Romans had in their wisdom adopted the theory known as the Ptolemaic, in preference to that associated with the name of Pythagoras, who, as is well known, is credited with having anticipated Copernicus. When the modern astronomer, therefore, came forward with his so-called new theory, they regarded it simply as an exhibition of confident ignorance. This contempt on the part of those who led the opinion of educated Europe, taken together with the scruples of the Church, explains how it was that nearly two hundred years elapsed before even learned men had assimilated with their daily thinking the fact that it is the earth that revolves round the sun, and not the entire heavens round the earth. Milton's *Paradise Lost* was published in 1669, more than a hundred years

after the appearance of the work of Copernicus, yet Milton's poem is based on the Ptolemaic theory that the earth is the centre of the universe. Milton was perfectly aware of the rival theories, and has certain interesting passages in his poem in which he states the respective arguments for both. Nevertheless, his deliberate choice of the one in preference to the other would seem to show either that he was himself convinced of its superior claims, or that he regarded the older belief as better adapted for poetical treatment. But even as late as 1711, Addison, in his well-known hymn published in the *Spectator*, says of the heavenly bodies:

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?

We must not, therefore, regard it as a proof of mere blind dogmatism on Buchanan's part that, some fifteen or twenty years after the death of Copernicus, he should have written a poem for the express purpose of combating that great astronomer's discovery. At the time he began to write it, Buchanan was acting as tutor to a son of one of the great marshals of France, and it was for his pupil's edification that the poem was in the first place intended. It is written in Latin hexameters, and is divided into books, each dealing with a different part of his subject. Buchanan meant his poem to be the great work of his life, and, according to the original plan, it was to rival in length the great epics of antiquity. Old age and infirmities, however, prevented its completion, and he left only five books, of which the last two are incomplete.

It is the first book of the poem which is especially interesting, as it deals expressly with the recent teaching of Copernicus. It is strange for us now to read how the great scholar solemnly adjures his pupil to shut his ears to a doctrine unworthy of man, irreconcilable with reason, worthy to be ranked only with old wives' tales. Here are a few of the arguments with which he seeks to make good his case. Think, he says in his magnificent Latin verse,

of the sound made by a boy's sling when whirled round his head—think of the sound made by a pair of bellows, and conclude from this what sound would be produced by the earth's moving round its own axis, with all its mountains, seas, forests, and cities! Again, if the earth revolved, and at the speed necessary to meet the case, how could any temple, house, or city be left standing? The sea, moreover, could not keep its bounds, but would rush wildly over all the earth's surface. When a bird should fly into the air, before it could descend, its nest would be some hundreds of miles from the spot where it had left it. Suppose two armies engaged in battle, the arrows of the one, indeed, would reach the enemy, but those of the other would be borne round by the earth's motion and never reach their aim. If the heavenly bodies remained fixed, he proceeds, where would be our seasons, our division of time into days and months and years? The earth *must* be the centre of the universe, otherwise the sun and the stars would vary in magnitude, whereas we know they do not.

Another interesting part of the poem is where it treats of the rotundity of the earth and Columbus's comparatively recent discovery of America. This is one of the poet's most highly wrought passages, but one at the same time that utterly confounds a modern reader by its exhibition of utter incapacity to appreciate the significance of Columbus's great achievement. Avarice, he exclaims, is at the bottom of it all, and the opening up of new lands has led to nothing but increased misery and vice. Better far for mankind had keel of ship never ploughed the sea! The voyages of Spanish and Portuguese navigators had of course, by Buchanan's day, put the rotundity of the earth beyond question. But it is evident that he was quite of opinion that Providence would have dealt more kindly with man had the earth been made square, as in that case narrower bounds would have been set to his avarice and lust of dominion.

In other parts of the poem we find the generally accepted beliefs of Buchanan's day. Above the moon, everything is changeless and everlasting; below it, everything is in a state of interminable war. The four elements arrange themselves according to their respective densities—lowest is earth, then water, air, fire. All these elements tend towards the centre, and this explains the rotundity of the earth. The earth and the entire universe must needs be round, because this shape most directly suggests perfection and infinity. The poet cannot think that Epicurus was right in teaching that the sun and stars by coming in contact with the earth are extinguished, and when they pass from this contact are re-illuminated. The phases of the moon, he thinks, disprove this explanation, as, on Epicurus's theory, all the heavenly bodies ought equally to pass through these phases.

Enough, perhaps, has been said to show what notions satisfied the most enlightened minds of Buchanan's age regarding what we nowadays call 'the elements of science,' and further, how, when the truth was laid before them, they deliberately rejected it. It is certainly a strange instance of the irony of life that a man like Buchanan, undoubtedly gifted with real poetic genius and

accomplished in all the learning of his time, should have dreamt that by such a poem he made himself sure of enduring reputation. It will be remembered that Milton at one time had thoughts of writing his great poem in Latin. Had he done so, would *Paradise Lost* be now a whit better known than the *De Sphæra* of Buchanan?

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXV.

IF Robert Snelling had not already fallen into monomania, he was at least rapidly on the way to it. The shadow of his ward obscured his mental sky from horizon to horizon, and wherever he looked he seemed to see nothing else than that. First and foremost, the boy had profoundly injured him in daring to be born at all. If John Vale the elder had died childless and without a will, his property would, beyond a doubt, have gone to Snelling. Even if he had made a will, he had had nobody else to whom to leave his belongings, with the exception of an inconsiderable legacy or two. In the next place, young John had done him immeasurable wrong by recovering from that blow upon the head, which had at one time promised to bring about such excellent and desirable results. Apart from these things, which, to do him justice, he looked upon as being injuries of the negative sort, the boy had inflicted all manner of positive wrongs upon him. It was through him that that part of the county was alive with scandalous stories concerning his guardian's cruelty, and through him that half Snelling's acquaintance gave him the cold shoulder in street and market. If it had not been for John's disappearance, he would never have left his prosperous business in Castle-Barfield, and though he had sold it to advantage, he knew that he could have made more of it by keeping it. It was by John's fault, again, that he had lost a safe and trusted business manager. And yet once more, it was by John's fault that his accustomed housekeeper had left him to the mercies of a strange woman who did not know his ways. And yet once more, and worst of all, it was by that same malevolent influence radiating out of young John that Jousserau had met Cecilia, and had spread to her mind the scandal which had turned the balance of her fancy against him. For nothing in the world would have persuaded him that Miss Shorthouse would have given him 'No' for an answer after a fortnight's waiting but for that fancied interference.

Men lying in long-drawn agony with a wound or a broken limb have been known often enough to take a fierce pleasure in augmenting their own anguish; and Snelling, with a heart already scorched with rage and hatred, consciously heaped fuel on the flame. The very thought of the boy was like gall and wormwood to him, his name was a nausea, and the sight of him aroused a bitter and impotent passion of revolt. If he had been free to show a sign of his real feeling, his hatred might have dwindled to a merely angry and disgusted distaste; but being compelled to treat him kindly, he grew to loathe him more and more.

There was at no time an actual scheme or even a hint of a scheme in his dull mind; but for all that he looked forward to a time when, by cunning design or happy accident, his way should be clear, and he should become the actual possessor of the property which he now merely held in trust. The solid earth itself was not firmer than his own inward conviction that had things been but fitly and properly ordered, right was on his side. The sun in heaven shone no clearer than that centre of his hateful, greedy creed. That is the singular thing about your true egotist, who, happily, is a *rara avis*. Whatever stands between him and his desire, whether it be abstract justice or a mere live heart and soul, is hateful and wholly in the wrong, alienated from the chance of having right on its side. If any one had known the workings of Snelling's mind, and had asked him plainly, yes or no, had his ward a right to his own, the mental part of him would have answered 'Yes.' But the inward man would have risen in a passionate protest against the thought. How could he have rights to what belonged to him, when Robert Snelling coveted it, and would almost die to have it?

If the way of transgressors is hard, honest folks at least have no right to be dissatisfied; and even the transgressor himself, if he did but know it, finds his one chance of safety in the whip that scourges him. The man's greed and hate left life scarcely tolerable. They poisoned his food, they distorted his mind, they shrouded him from the very light of heaven, and brought dreadful visions to his sleep. A brute had roared, so tortured; but he had to bear it all and give no sign.

He sat in the room he had made his own, brooding over a set of accounts which Isaiah's sudden dismissal had left anything but clear to him, and every now and again the one preoccupied thought returned to his mind with the irritating persistence of an insect to a sore. Isaiah's method of book-keeping had been beautifully accurate and clear so long as Isaiah himself had been there to explain it; but his records and memoranda would have puzzled a cleverer accountant than his master. In point of fact, Isaiah's system was purely of his own invention, and though the inventor had been marvellously proud of it, it was no less than a man-trap for any unilluminated successor. Whilst Snelling sat beating his brains in vain over the confused tangle of accounts before him, a rap sounded at the door, and in answer to his gruff command, his new housekeeper entered the room. She was an elderly woman of extremely plain exterior, and to judge her by her face, had spent some fifty years in the loquacious exposition of a standing grievance.

'What is it now?' asked Snelling unamiably.

'Why, sir,' began the woman, 'I'd ha' spoke to Master John about it myself, but he's gone gallivantin' off with young Master Gregg the minute as he'd swallowed his bread and milk for breakfast.'

'Well, what about him, woman?' her master demanded.

'There's this about him, sir,' the woman responded: 'he'll have we all roasted in were beds. He's reading in bed reglar every night, which is a practice as I can't away with nor yet

abide. He's found some sort of a old lamp somewhere, as he's filled himself from the tin in the back kitchen; and if he ain't been burned alive a'ready, it's a mercy, and no fault o' hisn.'

Snelling was about to answer, bidding her to take the lamp away; but at that moment a knock was heard at the front door of the house. 'See who that is,' he said, 'and then come back to me.'

The personage at the door was no other than our friend Tobias. He was hatless, and had a few straws clinging to his clothes in memory of his last night's couch. The elderly but unvenerable wreck was a little uncertain as to what day of the week it was, and was altogether undecided as to the hour. He was conscious mainly of a terrible thirst and a splitting headache; but his waking hour was firm to his last resolve, and he was here to lay the news of his discovery before the capitalist who was to be his partner.

'Will you kindly inform Mr Snelling,' he said in his blandest and most oily manner, 'that a person by the name of Orme is here, and that he has intelligence to convey to him of a most pressing and valuable nature?—Mr Orme, Mr Tobias Orme, madam, on business of importance.'

He looked so little likely to have business of importance to the housekeeper's mind, that she put the chain upon the door before carrying his message to her master. She returned a moment later, however, with orders to admit him. Snelling raised his eyebrows at his visitor's appearance, and held out the palm of his hand towards him, as a sign that he was not to approach too near.

'You may go,' he said, nodding to the housekeeper; 'I'll talk to you about that other matter later on.—Now, then,'—turning round in his chair upon Tobias when they were left alone—'what's your business?'

Mr Orme passed a hand across his lips, and essayed to moisten them with his tongue.

'You're a pretty figure,' said Snelling, 'to come into a respectable house.—Tell me your business, and get it over.'

'Excuse me, Mr Snelling,' began Tobias, 'my appearance is not in accordance with my prospects. I am aware of it—fully aware of it, Mr Snelling. I believe, sir, that I have every right and title to announce myself as a harbinger.'

'Have you been drinking?' Snelling asked him sternly.

'No, sir, no,' returned Tobias. 'I daresay, sir, that my appearance betokens some excitement; but it is not alcoholic, Mr Snelling.'—Snelling regarded him with a doubtful and disliking eye, but for the moment said nothing.—'I believe, sir,' Tobias continued, 'that I am the bearer of intelligence of the most striking and remarkable order. I do not believe, sir, that you have ever received such intelligence in your lifetime.'

'Well,' said Snelling, 'out with it.'

'I beg your pardon, sir, but I cannot consent to part with my secret, with my discovery, until I am assured that I shall be well treated.'

Snelling turned his chair bodily round, so as to face his visitor, and dropping one hand on the table beside him, stared him fixedly in the face. 'If you come here,' he said, with a drawling slowness of delivery unusual even with him—

self, 'with any idea in your mind as you can threaten me, you're the most mistaken man as walks.'

'Threaten, sir!' cried Mr Orme; 'there is nothing further away from my ideas and intentions. I have made a wonderful discovery, Mr Snelling; I have made a discovery which means hundreds of thousands of pounds.'

'You have, have you?' Snelling answered. 'And you want half-a-crown for a drink on the strength of it? You've come to the wrong shop, my man; you can walk.'

'Mr Snelling!' cried Tobias, driven into directness of statement by the fear that the interview might be precipitately closed, 'I have made a discovery worth thousands of pounds to you—hundreds of thousands of pounds to you. There's no possibility of mistake about the affair, sir. I know all about it. In my own humble way, sir, I have been regarded as an authority upon the question.'

'Hold on,' said Snelling. 'Answer my questions. You're neither mad nor drunk, to begin with, eh?'

'I assure you, sir,' Tobias began in answer; but the other cut him short with an imperative wave of the hand.

'Either hold your tongue, or answer me Yes or No. Are you mad or are you drunk?'

'I am neither the one nor the other. I am labouring under no hallucination.'

'Now, now!' cried Snelling, seeing that Tobias was charged with further speech, 'that's enough. —You've made a discovery, you say, that may be profitable to me?'

'Profitable is hardly the word, sir,' returned Tobias. 'It opens up, Mr Snelling, visions of magnificence of which the *Arabian Nights*'—

'Hold on!' commanded Snelling. 'Stop there. —You say that this discovery is a secret? Nobody knows of it but you?'

'Not a soul seems to have had the brains to appreciate its value; but it's lying there to be seen, and may be seen at any moment. If it is beheld by mortal eye?—

'Hold on!' Snelling cried again; but this time Tobias was not to be silenced.

'If it is beheld by mortal eye'—

'Stop!' roared Snelling.

'If it is beheld by mortal eye,' Tobias insisted, 'you lose it.'

'Oh!' said Snelling, 'that's it, is it? You've seen something that lies for everybody to see. It may be worth a pile of money. M—m! It wants money to get it, whatever it is, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir. It will naturally demand a considerable outlay and expenditure.' There was silence for the space of half a minute, and Snelling sat with thoughtfully frowning brows.

'I only desire to be assured of one thing,' said Tobias. 'If it should prove to you, sir, that the intelligence in my possession is of enormous value to you, and there is not the slightest doubt of that, not the faintest doubt of it, I assure you, may I ask, sir, what you would propose to do with me?'

'I can't buy a pig in a poke,' said Snelling. 'Let me know what you've got to sell, and then maybe I'll make a bid for it.'

Tobias astonished his interlocutor, and even

astonished himself a little, by the business-like directness of his answer: 'I have a fortune to sell, Mr Snelling. I am open to an offer of a percentage on your actual gains.'

Until that moment, Snelling had not been absolutely sure in his own mind that he took Mr Orme in real earnest. 'That sounds like business,' he said, when he had turned it over; 'but I can't be buyer and seller, my man. You must put a price on things, and then I'll talk to you.'

Mr Orme began actually to tremble from head to foot, and his tongue almost refused its office. 'Will you give me a mere five per cent., Mr Snelling, on all your actual gains?'

'That sounds like business,' said Snelling. 'If you've got any information to give me that's as valuable as you say it is, you'll be well to do for a man in your position in the world if I give you one per cent. That's what I'll do with you. If there's anything in your story at all, I'll give you one per cent. on what I make out of it.'

'Four, sir!' said Tobias.

'One!' said Snelling.

'Three, sir! You ought to make it three. I am an elderly man, Mr Snelling. I am alone in the world, and I only ask it for my lifetime. Make it three, sir. I shan't last long. I am a person of—of irregular habits, and I shan't last long. Try and make it three, sir. Do, please, try and make it three.'

'One!' said Snelling once more. 'I don't believe there's anything in the story; but if there is, I'll give you one per cent. on my profit, whatever that may be.'

'I can't sell it for one per cent.,' said Tobias groaningly. 'It's worth thousands and thousands and thousands; and whilst we're talking about it, somebody else may find it. If anybody with a brain the size of a pin's head were to see it, he'd know what it meant.' He was in an actual frenzy; and Snelling, cool and wary as he was in all matters of business, began to catch fire from him.

'You know very well,' he said, shaking a heavy forefinger at Mr Orme, 'that you're not the kind of man to bring a tale like this with overmuch likelihood of being believed. If what you say turns out to be true, and I find my advantage in it, I'll pay you two per cent. on actual profits, and not a penny more. If you don't like that, you can take your story-book elsewhere, and offer it to whosoever likes to spend his time in reading it.—There you are. Take it or leave it, and let's have no waste words about it. There's not a many people of business as'll give a minute to a man of your appearance, and that you know right well. Two per cent. D'ye take it?'

'Yes,' said Tobias; 'I will take it.'

'Very well.—Now, what's your secret?'

'I must tell you in the first place,' Mr Orme began, 'that I have been guilty of a slight dereliction of duty in coming here at all. Nothing less urgent than my business would have induced me to abandon the trust reposed in me. As a matter of fact, sir, pressed by a necessity which I trust will be no more than momentary, I am officiating temporarily as a sheriff's bailiff. I was placed yesterday, at your suit, Mr Snelling, at the house of a farmer in this locality who

bears the name of Day. I respectfully submit, sir, that in deserting my post I sought your own advantage.'

'That'll depend,' said Snelling, 'on how things turn out.—Go on, and let's have as few waste words as you can manage. There's more husk in your grain than I remember to have seen afore.'

'You already have a hold on Mr Day, sir,' pursued Tobias, 'and I have no doubt that in his extremity he will be willing to sell his land at a disadvantage.'

'Well, what's that got to do with me, even if it's true?'

'The mysterious and much discussed question of the Great South Staffordshire Fault is solved, sir,' Tobias proclaimed, with a rare blending of dignity and enthusiasm. 'There is an open coal-mine in Farmer Day's back garden, and I can assure you, sir, from actual inspection that it is of the finest quality.'

'Coal! There's no coal in this country-side,' cried Snelling, rising to his feet.

'There is indeed, sir,' returned Tobias; 'and what's more, sir, I believe it's the real old ten-yard Staffordshire. It crops up to the top, and you get the edge of it. I've seen six yards of it with my own eyes, without a break, without a flaw.'

'You've told nobody of this?' Snelling demanded.

'Not a creature,' said Tobias, and, so far as he knew, he was speaking truth.

Snelling strode across the room and threw open a door. 'You get in there. I'm going to lock you up. If you've been fooling me, I shall have to deal with you for two things; and if the tale's true, I'll have no risk of your running about babbling it.'

'I recognise your motive, sir,' returned Tobias, trembling. 'Believe me, sir, I do honour to your motive. I am willing to submit to a limited period of incarceration. But for the love of our common humanity, Mr Snelling, do not lock me up without a drink. I am an elderly man, Mr Snelling; I have been greatly agitated and excited, and a drop of something short, if I might take the liberty to suggest it, would be the making of me.'

'You'll get nothing out o' me,' returned his patron, 'until I know the truth or falsehood of this story. Get inside; and if you're thirsty, there's the water-bottle.'

There was nothing else for it, and Tobias obeyed. He was locked in, and from his prison chamber heard Snelling bustling about and shouting orders to his groom. A few minutes later he saw him pass the window on horseback.

Snelling, half on fire with excitement, put in spurs and rode for a mile at a headlong pace; but then, fearing to betray himself by any appearance of haste, slowed down to a trot, and fought his own impatience as best he could. Nearing Day's house, he was smitten with sheer amazement to see a dozen coal-grimed fellows lounging in heavy flannels at the garden gate. He rode on until he came amongst them. 'What brings you chaps here?' he asked, looking round and addressing the company in general.

'They're come on coal this side the Fau't,' one

man responded. 'Mr Proctor's here, the big engineer from Dudley Wood. It's g'iven him the notion as this side's just as rich as t'other. It's the real old Stafford thirty foot, and no mistake about it.'

'Hold my horse, one of you,' said Snelling, dismounting. He pushed his way into the garden, walked rapidly round the house, and came upon a scene of surprising disorder. The garden flower-beds were obscured by great mounds of earth, and from one of them a half-buried fruit-tree forlornly pushed its maimed and broken branches. There was a further gang of a dozen or so of flannel-clad, coal-grimed men scattered about the mounds, leisurely eating from earthenware basins and drinking from tin bottles. He paused for but a single glance of astonishment, and walking briskly on, came in sight of Isaiah, Farmer Day, and a gentleman of quiet business exterior engaged in eager conversation.

'Hillo, Snelling!' cried the farmer. 'You needn't trouble to send the bumbailiff back again. I'll count your money down in five minutes' time from this.'

Snelling made no answer, but stood looking at the exposed surface-coal. 'You're Mr Proctor, I believe, sir?' he said after a while, turning upon the stranger, who contented himself with a simple nod in reply. 'There's no mistake about this?' Snelling waved his hand to indicate the coal.

'None in the world, sir,' responded Mr Proctor, with a strong Scotch accent. 'It's been my belief for twenty years that there's coal, more or less, under every yard of this district, and now I know it.—Ye may say good-bye to your flower-beds and cornfields, farmer; in a score of years' time there'll be no such thing in sight o' ye.'

'I've got a matter of four or five hundred acres,' said Snelling, 'within a mile of this. Freehold, down to the very centre.'

'Then, sir,' returned the engineer, 'ye deserve to be congratulated. Ye're a very wealthy man, if ye never were before.'

'That's good enough for me,' was Snelling's answer.—'I'll give you your quittance, Day, when you're ready.'

So said, so done. He rode away with his money in his pocket in crisp notes new from the bank, and as he went, a fierce, slow exultation surged through him, and was arrested suddenly. The main part of the land under which this newly discovered treasure lay belonged to his ward. There, again, the boy stood between him and fortune, and even into this cup of sweetness his hand poured gall and wormwood.

The boy was in his mind, and anything that belonged to him was welcome to his thoughts as food for hatred. When he reached home, he walked into John's bedroom to look at the lamp of which the housekeeper had spoken.

'Ah!' he said slowly to himself. 'It was the fellow to that as burnt and set fire to Mrs Winter's bedroom. This chap made the same spluttering noise, and that's why it was put away. I remember. It was thought to be dangerous. I remember.'

He walked slowly back to his own room, and by the way encountered the housekeeper. 'What about that lamp, sir?' she asked him.

'There's more safety in it than there would be in a candle,' he responded. 'Let the lad have

it. He's got a thirst for knowledge, Mrs Wilkins, and it's a bad thing to stunt a growing mind. You can give him a word to be careful on it.'

Perhaps Providence might help him.

MAORIS IN PARLIAMENT.

BY A NEW ZEALANDER.

IN many respects the Maoris are a more receptive people than the Japanese. If I were asked to express the difference between the two, I should say the Japanese *imitate* European manners and habits; the Maoris *adopt* them. In the case of the Japanese we say and feel that he is merely copying us in what we do, and it strikes us that in many cases his own costume and his own institutions suit him better. The Maori in New Zealand, however, has to a large extent become one of ourselves. The visit of the Maori footballers to Great Britain will have shown how thoroughly the natives referred to enter into our national pastimes. There is no more thoroughly characteristic English game than football. We all know the feeling of half amusement, half disgust with which it is regarded on the Continent. Yet there is no game into which the Maoris have entered with more gusto; and their proficiency is shown by the fact that the team despatched to England more than held its own both in New Zealand and Australia.

Similarly, there is probably no point on which the Englishman prides himself more than his knowledge of politics and the freedom of his institutions. The Maoris have taken in as kindly a fashion to representative government as they have to football. They are born debaters, accustomed to have big meetings on matters of importance, at which questions at issue are discussed for hours, days, and sometimes weeks. Their orators deal in irony, sarcasm, poetry, allegory, metaphors, proverbs. Even the late Archbishop Whately himself could hardly have told them of a rhetorical device with which they are not acquainted.

There are four Maori representatives in the Lower House of the New Zealand Parliament, and two in the Legislative Council, and the speeches of all of them are as a rule effective and to the point. The Maori members are dressed in the European fashion, and, except for their olive skin, are hardly to be distinguished at first sight from their European brethren. All of them understand English sufficiently to follow the general drift of the proceedings. One of them, a half-caste, speaks our language perfectly, with a correctness of pronunciation, a choice of words and elocutionary effect which have caused him to be ranked among the best speakers in the House. The others, however, usually prefer to speak in their own tongue, and their remarks are interpreted sentence by sentence by the official interpreter standing by their side.

The Maori, as has been said, is a born orator, and the scene is a striking one. There is nothing persuasive about his eloquence as a rule; but it is often fiery, energetic, and forcible. He adorns his speeches with flights of imagery and figurative allusions, and is by no means deficient in a homely kind of humour. Looking at one of these Maori members addressing the House on the

grievances of his race, his eyes flashing fire, his hand outstretched with appropriate gesture, and speaking with an energy which causes the perspiration to stream down his face, you cannot help feeling that at any rate he is in earnest, 'that out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh'; and that whatever may be said of some of his European colleagues, there is nothing assumed about *his* indignation. The only approach to an anti-climax is when the orator, exhausted by his forensic efforts, pulls out a huge party-coloured silk handkerchief and proceeds to 'mop' his face, hands, and even the back of his neck with an unsophisticated vigour that recalls 'the child of nature' once more to the mind of the audience.

It was in 1867 that the experiment was first tried of admitting Maoris to the New Zealand legislature. Various means of conciliating them had been adopted with indifferent success, and it was then resolved to try the effect of enabling them to ventilate their grievances in parliament by means of their own representatives. The Maori Representation Act, which was introduced by Mr M'Lean—afterwards Sir Donald M'Lean—for this purpose, provided that the colony should be divided into four Maori electoral districts, each returning one native member to the House. As it was merely tentative in the first instance, its operation was limited to five years. Mr M'Lean, in moving the second reading of the Bill, pointed out that the natives were possessed of considerable intelligence, for, said he, 'politics and war had been the history of their lives from their youth upward. Let them have the wholesome excitement resulting from freedom of election to replace the excitement of war. He thought the House would have reason hereafter to feel satisfied that it had preserved from oblivion the elements of mind of a most interesting race of people.'

The Bill was agreed to practically without opposition; and in 1872 Mr M'Lean asked for and obtained its extension for another five years. In his speech on the second reading he was able to tell the House that its operation had been very beneficial, and that amongst other things it had stimulated the desire for education among the Maoris. In 1876 so satisfied was the House as to the result of the experiments, that the Act, with a slight amendment, was re-enacted, to continue in operation until specially repealed by an Act of the General Assembly.

I have said that the Maori members are by no means devoid of humour. There is also a good deal of common-sense in many of their speeches. Let me give one or two instances which may illustrate both these points. In the No-confidence debate of 1876, Mr Taiaroa very dryly and pithily remarked: 'I now for the first time am aware that this Parliament House is the place where most of the talk is carried on. It is a very good thing that the meetings of the Parliament are held in Wellington, because it is a very windy place, and we hear the wind blowing about here every day. I liken the wind to the speeches that are made by honourable members of this House. The wind blows from all quarters, and so with the votes of honourable gentlemen. They are given this way to-day, another way to-morrow, and another way the next.' Needless to say this neat little satire on parliamentary government

was received with a torrent of laughter and applause. Mr Taiaroa still holds an honoured place in the New Zealand Parliament. He is now a member of the Legislative Council; and it may be interesting to add that one of his sons is one of the Maori team of footballers to which reference has been made.

As may be gathered from Mr Taiaroa's remarks just quoted, the Maoris have rather a contempt for No-confidence debates and constant struggles for office. In the No-confidence discussion of 1879, when Sir George Grey's ministry was turned out, Mr Tawhai, a portly, good-natured Maori, a shining light on Wesleyan and Blue Ribbon platforms, made the following remarks: 'It appears to be the usual thing, and a thing that is looked forward to by many members of the House, that one side should fight against the other. I don't see any good in that whatever. A great deal of harm is done in this kind of warfare, and this harm extends to people outside of this House. Instead of members devoting their time to measures which will benefit the country, they waste the time of the House in useless contention. It may be profitable to those who indulge in this sort of thing; but I can assure the House that it is not so to the people.' Could anything be more forcible or dignified than this remark coming from such a quarter? Most people will admit, probably, that even 'the untutored savage' may be able to find flaws in the institutions on which we pride ourselves as being perfect.

The motion of want of confidence in the Grey government was carried by forty-three votes to forty-one. It was a matter of general comment that the Maori votes always went with Sir George Grey, whose influence with the native race is proverbial; but on this occasion one of the quartet, Mr Tomoana, broke away from the leash, and this converted what would have been a tie into a victory for the opposition. Tomoana's vote, in fact, was quite the sensation of the crisis. He explained that the government had done nothing to redress the Maori grievances, therefore he should no longer support them. He then described an interview he had with the leader of the opposition, Mr Hall, in which the latter, he said, agreed to his views concerning the native race, and agreed to appoint a Maori minister to manage native affairs. 'I agreed,' added the speaker, 'to support his side. I shall exercise my vote as a chief. If I see anything wrong on the other side, I shall attempt to overthrow them. Whichever side is right, I shall attempt to uphold it.' This speech caused considerable excitement; and Mr Hall had to explain that he did not promise that a Maori minister should be appointed to manage native affairs, but merely that the cabinet should include a Maori member. Tomoana adhered to his promise of voting with the opposition, and on the formation of the Hall government was made a member of the Executive Council without portfolio.

He had, however, still another surprise in store for the House. About a fortnight afterwards he rose in his place on the Treasury benches and said: 'I have asked the ministers to send for some other native to sit in my place, because for many years my people have been suffering. Some are in jail' (alluding to the imprisonment

of the followers of a native fanatic who had been creating a disturbance), 'and the women and children have suffered, and nothing has been done in answer to their prayers to alleviate their sufferings. I said I should vote and deal honestly with Mr Hall, and so I wish to go honourably from this seat, because I cannot see what benefits my people are to derive from what fell from the native minister.' At the conclusion of this speech the honourable member left the government benches and walked majestically across the House, where he took his seat among the opposition amid the deafening cheers of that party. The ministry, it may be added, were strengthened from another quarter, and therefore continued in office in spite of the defection of their colleague. Since that time, however, a native has never been appointed to a seat in the executive.

This sketch would be incomplete were I not to say that the general conduct of the native members has been exemplary, and in some respects a pattern to their European colleagues. No unseemly interruption of a speaker is ever heard coming from a Maori member; nor has it ever been suggested, to my knowledge, that a good dinner at Bellamy's was unfavourable to oratory in the case of a Maori legislator, whatever scandals in that respect may be circulated about his white-skinned *confrères*. To this it may be added, that no Maori has ever been known to vote against payment of the full honorarium to members; but then he has never been guilty of the hypocrisy of pretending to be in favour of a reduction while fervently hoping it will not be carried, and voting for the motion for retrenchment after making quite sure that there is no chance of its being adopted.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

CHAPTER III.

MR HEATH, examining his correspondence a morning or two later, was abruptly aroused from that fascinating study by the arrival of Colonel Sandhurst. The gallant officer appeared to be greatly disturbed, even so far as to have forgotten his gloves, a sign with him of some intense mental eruption. The solicitor, who had already ventured a pretty shrewd guess as to the primary cause of this perturbation, suavely asked for an explanation.

'Now, what do you think of this?' the injured one replied. 'That girl—Ethel, you know—is going to prevent my purchasing Fernleigh.'

'Very pleased to hear it,' Heath answered unfeelingly; 'only, I should like to know how she is going to manage it?'

'Why, this way. You see she happens to be the plaintiff in this lawsuit you were talking about, and has got the idea into her head that the assignment you people set up is really in existence. She is actually going to abandon her claim to all this money, and allow Mrs Charlesworth to take possession. There is no need to ask if your client will accept such an offer.'

Mr Heath at this moment would have cheerfully forfeited a good round sum to say that Mrs Charlesworth would accept it; but he did not, for the simple reason that he knew full well that nothing but the production of the assignment

would induce her to accept the offer of her generous enemy.

'I don't think she will, though, even for the sake of Fernleigh. All the same, this is very noble on Miss Morton's part. If the offer is rejected, it will be no fault of mine. But so convinced am I that it will be refused, that I have already commenced drawing the conveyance.'

'You really think so?' asked the Colonel, with a jubilation he was at some pains to conceal. 'You seem to have a quixotic lot of clients.'

'Perhaps so; but you will see I am right all the same. Even if Mrs Charlesworth is inclined to listen, her daughter Gladys will not.'

The Colonel's face darkened at the mention of this young lady's name. He had heard the romance on the previous night, with a feeling that Frank's interest in the girl was likely to end in a way contrary to all his fondest hopes. 'That is the hospital nurse, I presume? I hope Frank isn't going to make a fool of himself in that quarter.'

'Frank might do a great deal worse,' the lawyer answered curtly. 'And I will thank you to speak with a little more respect of Miss Charlesworth, who is *not* an hospital nurse, as you know as well as I do.'

'I beg your pardon, Heath,' returned Sandhurst humbly; 'but everything seems to have gone wrong lately. First, there was my scheme about Ethel and Frank; well, that's all knocked on the head. Imagine my surprise this morning to find Cresswell—you know him—in my sitting-room, talking to my ward as if the place belonged to him! It appears he came down last night; and, on my word as an officer and a gentleman, they had met and settled the whole thing before breakfast.'

Mr Heath gave a glance at the Colonel's doleful face and laughed aloud. It struck him as exquisitely absurd that an individual so singularly blessed both in body and estate should rail at fortune with the petulance of a child crying for the moon.

'Nonsense, man. You can't have everything your own way; and, besides, the young people are not like a lot of soldiers, to be ordered about on parade. Anyway, you can set your mind at rest anent Fernleigh. I have a note from the lady this morning, saying she will be pleased to see you any afternoon. As I am going there after lunch, you had better call about three. I have some business in the neighbourhood, and will meet you there at that time.'

'I suppose it must be done,' Sandhurst replied reluctantly. 'I don't half like the idea, all the same.'

'Of course you don't. What man would, who has in him a spark of kindness or gentlemanly feeling? All the same, it seems only right and proper towards the lady that you should go.'

'Very well. I will time myself to arrive there about three, and I only hope you will not keep me waiting. I am beginning to understand the feelings of a man in possession.'

'Better feel them than the emotion of those driven out of possession,' the lawyer returned grimly. 'I don't profess to have any sympathy with *you* in the matter.—And now, as my time is limited, I must turn you out. Three o'clock sharp, remember.'

With military punctuality, Colonel Sandhurst walked through Fernleigh gates as the stable clock struck the hour. Hot and dusty as it was outside, the sudden change to the cool green lawn with its shady ash trees and dark-leaved copper beeches was grateful and refreshing. The house, partly in shadow, with climbing rose and starry jessamine growing round the open windows and up to the carved oaken gables, presented a pleasing picture to eyes wearied by the contemplation of glaring roads and sunny meadows. Over all there seemed to hang the spirit of silence, broken only by an occasional bird-note, and the low moan of doves resting in the branches of a yew-tree, sombre against a belt of living green.

Inside, there appeared to be the same graceful harmony, the same sweet sense of refinement, a humanising influence borrowed from the presence of womanly love and delicacy—a fragrance of flowers in dragon vases and china brackets, with long spiral sprays of foliage hanging far down the dark polished walls. An open piano filled a corner; in an alcove gay with summer flowers stood an organ piled up with music. And into this pleasing picture there came presently a more beautiful vision still, a slight fair figure in deep mourning, relieved by white lace ruffles at the wrists and throat; the sight of which caused the Colonel to rise from his seat and render homage at the shrine of beauty.

'You are Colonel Sandhurst, I presume?' she said in a clear sweet voice, looking at the same time into his face with her beautiful violet eyes. 'I am Gladys Charlesworth.'

The Colonel bowed again, and murmured some platitude in which the words 'honour and pleasure' were alone audible. Old soldier and man of the world as he was, he felt a strange sense of awkwardness and confusion in the presence of this simple English girl.

'My mother will see you in a few moments,' she continued; 'meanwhile, I trust you will find no inconvenience in waiting alone. You will excuse me when I mention that I am compelled to hurry away in consequence of the illness of one of our poor village people.'

'You find there is much suffering amongst the poor?' the Colonel asked, conscious of the inane of such a question.

'There would be less if the rich took a greater interest in those around them. If the Bartons-ham estate belonged to me, the labourers' cottages would not be in the disgraceful condition they are at present.—But I am afraid to say all I should like on that question. I hope you will not find any inconvenience in being kept waiting, Colonel Sandhurst.'

'Well,' muttered the discomfited soldier, conscious of the becoming blush adorning his bronzed cheek, and almost pleased to find himself alone, 'I haven't had such a snub since I was a subaltern. I wonder if my cottages are in such a state as she says? She did it in such a cool lady-like way, too. Egad, I don't wonder at Frank feeling somewhat'—

But at this moment the whole current of these reflections was changed by the entrance of another pleasing object, and the Colonel immediately experienced that mingled feeling of awe and pity all kind-hearted people do in the presence of the blind. The boy advanced slowly into the room,

touching a familiar object here and there with his long delicate fingers. To the interested spectator, but for that mute piteous groping of the hands, the blue eyes seemed to be filled with the divine gift of sight, though they were cast upwards, seeking for the light that never comes. To this bronzed service-worn soldier the sight of the child clad in his Van Dyck velvet suit and broad collar was more moving than all the panoply of war, as he watched him in a dazed fascination moving slowly to the alcove where the organ stood. Then he began to play.

Forgetful of everything but the deep interest aroused by this unaccustomed scene, the Colonel changed his place so as to obtain a closer view of the musician. As he did so, the movement entailed a slight noise; whereupon the music ceased, and the performer looked in the direction of the sound. 'Will you please come a little nearer?' said he. 'I did not know there was any one here. And tell me who you are.'

'My name is Colonel Sandhurst,' the interloper responded gravely.

'You are a soldier?'

'Well, yes; or I used to be, at least.'

Vivian felt his way in the direction of the voice, and stood with his hand resting on the Colonel's knee quite fearlessly. The fine old soldier and the pretty graceful lad made a charming picture as they posed thus.

'I never met a soldier before, though my brother Maurice was one. I don't think my mother will care to see you here, because it will remind her of Maurice. If I were you, I wouldn't say I was a soldier.'

'I am afraid Mrs Charlesworth knows that already,' the Colonel replied with much humility; 'and I don't suppose we shall talk much about myself, you see.—Won't you play something more?'

'No, not now. I want you to tell me something about battles. Were you ever in a real fight, Colonel Sandhurst?'

'Many, my child. I was all through the Crimea, and after that in the Indian Mutiny. Since then, I have always been at home.'

'I don't see how that can be,' replied Vivian, shaking his head. 'I don't mean about the battles, but about home, because Gladys says you haven't one?'

'And where did Gladys derive that priceless information?'

'If you have a home of your own, then why do you want ours? That's what Gladys says, and she is always right.'

'But some people like to have more than one home.'

'Then it can't be home,' said Vivian conclusively. 'I have never lived anywhere but here, and some day it will be my own. If I was not blind, I should like to go away and see the world; but that is not possible. I can see this house, and know where all the trees and flowers grow, and where to find the first violets. I'm not helpless, you know; I can do everything for myself, and find my way everywhere. But if we were to leave Fernleigh it would be very bad for me.'

The Colonel made no reply save a faint smile; he could not have answered the simple pathos of the last words for the supreme command of the British army and a field-marshal's bâton to boot.

For the first time in his roving life he began to understand the full significance of the word 'home' and the deep meaning it held for some. Of his beautiful house in Sussex he was justly proud; but this platonic affection for bricks and mortar, the idealisation of stone walls, he had no conception. Sitting there, with that child-grasp upon his knee, a new feeling, the consciousness of a new and better world, was budding in his soul.

'Don't you find it cruelly hard at times?' he asked abruptly.

'Well, I never notice it,' said the lad with the same touching simplicity; 'only the winter is rather long and dreary. But then, there is the wind: I like to listen to that. No one can see that; and when it blows, I know as much about it as other people. It is very nice for a blind boy to know where to find everything he wants. If you will come with me now, I can show you some dog-roses; the very first of the season, and I found them myself, too.'

Still the Colonel did not answer. He caught a glimpse of himself in a mirror opposite, and actually blushed at his own reflection. He had had, so he was telling himself, some pretty keen thrusts in his time, but never anything half so terrible as this innocent childish prattle. Every word seemed to find some joint in his armour of self-esteem, and to pierce selfishness like a knife.

'You would not care to leave Fernleigh altogether?' he asked.

'It would be very terrible,' said the lad solemnly. 'Not so bad, perhaps, if I was like other boys. But mother would feel it most.'

'You think she would find it very trying?'

'I think it would break her heart. She has not had a very happy life—at least, so Gladys says. Only, I know how she loves Fernleigh.'

There was something more than pity in the Colonel's eyes as he looked down at the pale flushed face at his knee. Mrs Charlesworth, entering the room at this moment, paused to contemplate this picture as she overheard her child's words, with a mute hope that some simple sentence might have gone home to the heart of her enemy.

'I hope Vivian has not been troubling you?' she said with a fond smile. 'I must apologise, Colonel Sandhurst.'

The Colonel stood up with a very red face, though the lady's features had suddenly become white and agitated. For a few moments they regarded each other in astonished silence.

'Margaret,' said Sandhurst, 'if—if I had known it was you'—

'You would not have sought this painful interview,' Mrs Charlesworth concluded with chilling dignity. 'It is bad enough without this.'

Vivian, perceiving he was not wanted, had stolen away through the open windows. His mother followed him with her eyes till he was out of earshot.

'You will understand,' she continued, 'that in Colonel Sandhurst I had not expected to meet my old friend, Captain Markham.'

'Nor I in Mrs Charlesworth my old love, Margaret Hay. Probably, if my uncle, Curtis Sandhurst, had died three years sooner, the penniless Captain Markham would have proved a more formidable rival to his successor.'

'You blame me, you dare to blame me, when

you— But all that is long since forgotten. Let me be as just and generous as I can. I have to thank you for your kind offer; but I cannot accept it. Legally speaking, Fernleigh is yours; therefore, I cannot accept from you a sum of money which I can only regard as a present.'

'You give me very little credit, it seems,' said the Colonel bitterly. 'I am only making up to you the value of the property. You refuse to take what you call a present from me. I absolutely refuse to rob you of what I know is your just due. I distinctly decline to avail myself of so iniquitous a law as this foreclosure.'

'It is hard for me to appreciate this sentiment,' Mrs Charlesworth replied as bitterly, 'when I am losing what is to me a part of my very being. I cannot blame you, for I know that in all probability Fernleigh must go. Mr Heath tells me'—

'Let him answer for himself in person,' cried the lawyer, coming forward.—'Ah, I see you are still discussing Fernleigh. I presume, you have thanked Colonel Sandhurst for his magnificent offer?'

'I have thanked him, and declined it.—Of course, it is impossible for a stranger to comprehend the affection we have for the old place. Call it sentiment, if you like; but the idea of selling Fernleigh'—

'Madam, on my honour as a soldier and a gentleman,' the Colonel cried impulsively, 'if I can do anything in my power to retain your home to you, I will. Let things remain as they are for the present, and we shall see what time will do.'

Mrs Charlesworth bowed deeply. She was surprised and not a little touched at this outspoken generosity.

Mr Heath, the only one unmoved, looked from one to the other with a deep gleam of triumph in his eyes. 'You have done well, Colonel,' he said dryly, 'so well, that you will be pleased to hear my news. I have a great surprise in store for you.'

'I know!' cried Mrs Charlesworth with a glowing face. 'You have found the assignment?'

'I have heard worse guesses,' replied the lawyer with the same dry manner, taking a parchment from his pocket and handling it tenderly. 'That is precisely what I have done.'

EXTREMES OF HUMANITY.

It has always been a matter for discussion whether there ever existed, or still exist, any nations who may absolutely come under the terms of Giants and Dwarfs. In many ancient writings are mentioned various races of Pygmies as inhabiting the cold northern climes of Scythia, or the tropical deserts of Libya and Asia Minor. Herodotus also speaks of a race of little men of inky-black complexion who inhabited a large city on a river which flowed from west to east of Libya, and swarmed with horrible crocodiles. Ctesias, another Greek traveller, a contemporary of Xenophon, states that he saw in Central India

a race of Pygmies only two feet in stature; they inhabited a province in which the animals were proportionately small, the sheep being no larger than new-born lambs, and the horses, cattle, asses, and mules no larger than a ram. Aristotle mentions likewise a nation of dwarfs, and places them in Central Africa; whereas Pliny gives Thrace as their original cradle. Ptolemy in his History talks of a 'little people' called the Pechinians, whom he describes as inhabiting a large portion of the eastern frontiers of Ethiopia. In later times, an English sailor, Andrew Battel, who was taken prisoner by the Portuguese in 1588, and carried into Congo, relates in his book called *Strange Adventures* that he met with a nation of dwarfs called the 'Matimbos.' A Dutch traveller, Oliver Dapper, also describes a little nation of elephant-hunters, called the Mimos or Bakke-Bakkes, whom he found in 1686 inhabiting a district near the Congo River, called the kingdom of Macoco.

One of the latest travellers who make mention of a dwarf nation is M. du Chaillu, who in 1860 speaks of a strange people, of wild and timid habits, whom he found inhabiting a large tract of land in the country of Ashango; they were styled Ovongos by their neighbours the Ashoungas, but they neither intermarried with nor cultivated the ground of the nation amongst whom they lived. The Ovongos were negroes of hideous aspect and yellow complexion, and measured about four feet five inches in height.

As regards giants, primitive traditions are as full of accounts of men of enormous stature as they are of dwarfs. The poets and historians of antiquity aver that the human race did not begin to deteriorate till the time of Homer; sculptures exist, and are now preserved in the British Museum, of the frieze of the temple of Athena Polias at Priene—one of the twelve Ionian cities of Asia Minor—representing a combat between men and giants; and similar ones are to be seen in the temples of Selinonte, Argos, Agrigente, Athens, and Pergamus. Pliny says that on the occasion of a terrible earthquake in Italy, a fissure opened, revealing the skeleton of a man embedded upright in the earth, measuring about twenty-six feet in height! Plutarch goes further; he declares that a skeleton was found by Sertorius at Tangier, in Mauritania, measuring about forty feet; and Phlegon of Lydia, in his Treatise on Wonders, says that there were discovered in the Cimmerian Bosphorus and in Africa a vast number of skeletons averaging between twelve and fifteen feet in stature.

The traveller Magellan recounts in his Travels, written in 1520, that in latitude thirty-four degrees, near the mouth of the Plata River, he met with a gigantic tribe of Patagonians. He says that he measured many of them, and that they exceeded seven and often nine feet in height. But whether it is that the race is degenerating, or that Magellan exaggerated his measurements, it is certain that they do not at the present day exceed seven feet, and their normal height is about six and a half feet; the women being quite as tall, and as powerfully proportioned as the men.

At all times and in all countries, kings and nobles had a fancy for including amongst their retainers either a giant or a dwarf, sometimes both. Frederick the Great had his corps of gigantic grenadiers; and in the Tower of London may be seen a lance and some enormous armour of sixteenth-century work, which doubtless belonged to some giant knight or trooper of the king's bodyguard. James I. had attached to his person a porter named Walter Parsons, commonly called the Staffordshire giant, a handsome, brave, and strong young man, who had begun life as a farrier. His height was seven feet seven inches, and his portrait exists, engraved by Glover. Parsons lived on into the reign of Charles I., and was succeeded in his office by another giant, William Evans, who was two inches taller than his predecessor.

Cromwell also had a valet named Daniel, who was seven feet six inches in height, but of weak intellect. He unfortunately ended his days in Bedlam, having become possessed with the idea that he had been sent on the earth to prophesy coming events. Contemporary with Daniel lived Anthony Payne, a handsome and clever young farmer in Cornwall, a tenant of Sir Beville Granville at Stowe. He was as remarkable for his wit as for his strength and stature, which exceeded seven feet. This county has always been as famous for its big men as is Yorkshire; and to this day the proverb exists, 'As long as Tony Payne's foot.' After a career of many vicissitudes and long military service in the Stuart cause, Anthony Payne died at a good old age, and was buried in a vault in Stratton Church.

In 1686, and in the earlier part of the same century, two gigantic negroes were shown about London. They were said to be the sons of kings of two African tribes, and were captured by slavers, who brought them to this country. The first was Giolo, son of the king of the Moangi tribe. The other was known as 'the Black Prince,' and became converted to Christianity, and was admitted as a member of the household of the family of Clifton, living at Clifton, near Nottingham. He was christened Joseph; and a mark may still, we believe, be seen in Clifton Churchyard which gives his height as seven feet. Giants are usually not gifted with any more beauty than their opposites in creation, and are generally more remarkable for their awkwardness and stupid stolid looks than for any natural grace or intellectual brilliancy. There was, however, an exception to this general rule in the person of Maximilian Christopher Müller, a German giant, who travelled about in France and England in the reigns of Louis XIV. and George II. He was a man of splendid build and noble proportions, with a handsome and striking countenance, and measured exactly seven feet eight inches in height. His hand was twelve inches long from the wrist to the tip of the middle finger. He died in London in 1734, aged sixty, not long after Hogarth had introduced his portrait into his famous picture of 'Southwark Fair.'

It is a curious fact that the population of France has rarely produced a giant; Great Britain, Germany, Poland, and Switzerland carry off the palm; and this may perhaps be attributable to the prevalence in France of a vegetarian

diet, which does not tend to develop to so great an extent the growth of muscle as does the stronger diet of meat.

The eighteenth century, to judge by contemporary letters and newspapers, seems to have been more than usually prolific in giants and giantesses. Horace Walpole mentions a giant and giantess who were on view respectively at Spring Gardens, and at Half-moon Court, Ludgate Hill. They were both, it seems, handsome and well-proportioned persons, and without the usual awkward ungainliness of their kind. At this time, also, appeared a young Italian giantess seven feet in height, 'who was the admiration'—said the handbills—'of the Emperor of Germany, of eight kings of Europe, and of the Grand Czar of Moscow himself.' Her appearance seems to have been followed, in 1742, by that of Cajanus, the famous Swedish giant, commonly called the 'living Colossus,' who came over to England and established himself at a house opposite the Mansion House. He was the son of a pastor of a little village in Finland, and stood eight feet four inches in his socks. In 1755 London was visited by another Italian giant, named Bernardo Gigli or Gilli, who measured eight feet in height, and seems to have created an immense sensation by the colossal proportions of his limbs.

But no giant ever created such a furore as did Charles Byrne, the Irish giant, who was eight feet eight inches in height, and possessed of enormous strength. He was clever and shrewd, and full of the natural wit of his mother-country; but unfortunately the large fortune he rapidly gained by the exhibition of himself led him into habits of gluttony and intemperance, and he died at the early age of two-and-twenty, leaving instructions that his body was to be buried at sea; but the College of Surgeons in some way obtained his corpse for the sum of eight hundred pounds, according to certain reports; and the skeleton was 'set up' in their Museum by William Hunter, the famous anatomist.

Shortly after Byrne's death, another Irish giant exhibited himself in London, by name Patrick Cotter, alias O'Brien. He was so attenuated that, tall as he was, he appeared even taller. His height was eight feet seven inches. Feeble and debilitated in health, he could only walk by supporting himself on the shoulders of two tall men walking in front of him, resting a hand on a shoulder of each. Many amusing stories are related of him. One evening, at a masonic dinner, he took out of his pocket the celebrated dwarf Count Borulauski, and set him upon the table, to the astonishment of all the guests. Some time after, whilst staying at Bath, he nearly terrified a night-watchman out of his wits by taking off the top of a street-lamp and lighting his pipe at the flame. He was of an amiable and gentle disposition, but not remarkable for any intellectual capacity. Since his day to the present time, London has only seen four giants of any abnormal height or size—namely, James Tolles, eight feet six inches in height in 1819; Scott; Chang; and Herr Winckelmeier, the Bavarian giant.

Of giantesses, Miss Scott and Pauline Marie Elizabeth Wedde are the only colossal ladies who have astonished the eyes of the sight-seeing world. The latter, called the Queen of the Amazons, was

born at Ben-Rendorf, in Thuringia, on the 31st of January 1866, and introduced to the London public at the Alhambra in a piece entitled *Babil and Bijou*. She was good-looking, and of a handsome, well-proportioned figure, and measured about eight feet four inches in height. Of her subsequent history and career we have not been able to trace any account, since her provincial tour in France, after exhibiting herself in this country.

It is a curious fact that giants rarely exceed the age of forty or forty-five, and few amongst them ever show signs of much intellectual capacity. They are as a rule good-tempered, indolent, and placid; their opposite extremes, the dwarfs, being irritable, active, clever, and ill-tempered.

Dwarfs may be divided into two sections, firstly, those who are born so, and remain dwarfs all their lives from childhood till maturity; and secondly, those who become dwarfs from some accident in the early months or years of childhood. It may be remarked that those dwarfs who come under the first head are often noticeable for their shrewdness and intellectual capacity, combined with much childish vanity and an overweening love of dress and admiration. Those, on the other hand, who are deformed and show an unnatural development of any special limb, are as a rule irritable, semi-idiotic, and incapable of any high degree of mental capacity.

One of the most celebrated dwarfs of whom we read in history was Nicholas Ferry, the dwarf of King Stanislas of Poland, who was remarkable for his wit, good temper, and intellectual attainments and accomplishments. Next after him in celebrity ranks a female dwarf named Babet Schreier, who was born at Piegelsbach, near Mannheim, on the 31st of October 1810. Her parents were poor labourers, hale and hearty people, who permitted visitors to see their wonderful child, but would never consent, poor as they were, to exhibit her for any pecuniary benefit. Babet was perfectly formed, although when she was born she weighed only a pound and a half. She grew till she was about two feet and a half high, and there stopped. Her health was always good, and her character amiable and lively.

It is a strange fact that the length of life of dwarfs seems to be in proportion to their size and stamina; they arrive at maturity quicker than a normal human being, and age quicker. We read of this in the case of the famous English dwarf Hopkins, who lived about 1751. At fifteen years old he measured two feet seven inches in height, and weighed only thirty pounds. Up to this age he had the appearance of a fresh smooth-skinned youth; but suddenly an extraordinary semblance of the most decrepit old age began to creep upon him. He became bent, crooked, and torn with an asthmatic cough; sight and hearing began to fail, and his teeth to drop out or decay. So attenuated and feeble did he become, that he could not walk without a stick, and presented all the appearance of a withered and aged man. Before these signs of decay came upon him his weight had been nineteen pounds; but now he lost nearly six pounds, and visibly shrank, till he died in about a year from sheer decrepitude and old age. His parents were fine tall healthy people, and there had been no previous member of his family who showed a similar abnormal condition. He

died on the 19th of March 1754, aged seventeen years and two months.

Although dwarfs generally attain a greater age than giants, still they rarely pass threescore and ten. There are, however, two notable exceptions to this rule, in the persons of Amias Clowes, the famous Matlock dwarf, who died at that place in 1784, at the ripe age of one hundred and three, his height being three feet and a half. He had caused to be built for himself a little house eight feet square, furnished with articles suitable to his size. The other instance was that of Peter the Great's favourite and dwarf, a woman he called Poupée, whose height was that of a child of six. She was remarkably pretty, lively, and clever, and the emperor had an extraordinary affection for her. She lived to pass the age of one hundred years without ever having suffered from any illness or infirmity.

There may still be seen in the Ducal Palace at Mantua six little rooms opening one out of the other, which were constructed by order of one of the Dukes of Mantua for the special occupation of his favourite dwarfs. The walls of these apartments are but six feet high, and the floors eight feet square, and they are reached by two staircases of small steps. These rooms are at present denuded of all furniture, and the doors even have been taken off their hinges.

In our own times, no dwarf has created more sensation than Charles S. Stratton, commonly known as 'General Tom Thumb.' His career of self-exhibition was one long success both to himself and to Barnum, who undertook to show him about. His tour in Europe alone brought him fifty thousand pounds. He married Lavinia Warren, one of two dwarf sisters who accompanied him on his tours. Of this marriage was born one child, a girl, who died in 1866, when about three years old. Tom Thumb himself died in 1883; and his widow, we believe, married again another American dwarf. General and Mrs White succeeded to the celebrity and admiration formerly bestowed on General Tom Thumb, and charmed the public by their amusing ways and imitations of popular actors and singers.

NOT QUITE LOST.

A TRUE TALE OF THE SEA.

In the spring of 18— I was at one of the islands on the west coast of Africa, anxious to take the first chance that offered of getting back to Old England. One of the huge Cape mail-boats was due in about a week from the time my story commences—boats which combine the comforts of a first-class hotel with the nearest approach to absolute safety that persons trusting themselves to the mercy of the sea can reasonably expect. I did not, however, intend to wait for the mail-boat, if any other vessel offered a chance of getting to England before her. One morning a steamer came in bound for England. She was a cargo-boat, but carrying a few passengers; and the captain said he could make room for me. Before taking a passage in this vessel I had a good look at her, and I came to the conclusion that, though there were not many comforts on board, at any rate she looked like a good safe sea-boat. She had plenty of freeboard: indeed, I found out

afterwards that her cargo was a light one, consisting of wool and raw hides, so that she was higher out of water than usual, and she had good beam for her length.

I went on board about six P.M. on a Friday evening. The weather was beautiful. The deep blue sky—set off by the still deeper blue of the sea, only broken here and there by the smallest of 'white horses'—and the island glowing in all the beauty of tropical sunshine, made a picture not easy to forget. The passengers consisted of eighteen first-class and ten steerage. Amongst the former were two ladies and four little children. The crew mustered about twenty men all told. After dinner, I went on deck to smoke the pipe of peace and think of wife and children, who were being brought nearer to me by every throb of the powerful engines.

All the cabins were on the upper deck, the hold being devoted to cargo, with the exception of one small cabin for the steward. The vessel was steered from the bridge; but there was another wheelhouse right aft, for use in case of emergency. She carried two masts, and was square-rigged on her foremast.

Next day, when I turned out, we were out of sight of land; the weather was still fine, though there was a little sea, caused by the north-east trade-wind, which was blowing steadily, though not very strongly, against us. All went well till the evening. At six o'clock the cabin passengers dined, the captain, a jovial, ruddy-faced sailor, who looked as if he had no cares in the world, taking the head of the table; and the doctor, a self-possessed wiry little man, taking the other end. As dinner went on, the flow of small-talk increased, till, towards the end, there was a regular hum of conversation, and most of us were looking tolerably happy and contented. Suddenly, the whole scene changed: first came a crash, which seemed to shake the ship from end to end; and then scrape, thud, hammer, as the engines continued to make several revolutions before they were stopped. As we were at least two hundred miles from any land or shoal-water, I knew instinctively that the screw-shaft was broken, and that, in all probability, those last two or three revolutions had done terrible mischief.

We all made the best of our way on deck. The passengers were not much alarmed as yet; but I noticed a look of great anxiety on the captain's face as he hurried away.

It soon transpired that the shaft was broken; and the broken ends hammering against each other before the engines could be stopped had broken the after-bearing where the shaft passes out through the ship, and water was pouring in there into the tunnel (fifty or sixty feet in length) leading to the engine-room, along which the shaft passes. The well was sounded—about a foot of water was found, and preparations were at once made to get the pumps to work.

I must now recount a noble deed, which under other circumstances might well have earned a Victoria Cross. The tunnel which I have just mentioned ended at the engine-room with a water-tight door in a so-called water-tight bulk-head. The chief engineer, knowing at once what had happened, and finding a large body of water coming out of the tunnel, called for

volunteers to go with him up the tunnel and try to stop the leak. The danger was very great; the tunnel was already half full of water, the rush of which was so strong that it was difficult to walk against it; and at the rate it was rising, it seemed almost impossible for men to get to the end of the tunnel and back again before it was full of water, in which case they must have been drowned. One man only responded to the appeal of the chief; and these two brave fellows, regardless of everything but their duty, dashed into the tunnel, carrying blankets and ropes to secure over the leak. They actually got to the end of the tunnel and succeeded in placing the blankets over the hole; but before they could secure them, the rising water forced them back, just filling the tunnel as they were dashed back into the engine-room. Then, with great difficulty, the water-tight door was closed; and the fires not having been put out, though the water had nearly risen up to them, they were able to work a powerful steam-pump with which the vessel was fitted, soon reducing the water in the engine-room. The water-tight bulkhead was still leaking badly in several places, and it required all the skill of the chief engineer to make it sufficiently tight to prevent the water from gaining on the pumps inside the engine-room.

Abaft the engine-room the water was rapidly rising. Some of the passengers had been set to work at a hand-pump on deck; but being a poor pump, it was worked very hard with little result. We took the work in two gangs, twenty minutes off and on, and I found myself smoking my pipe between the spells with considerable comfort.

The well was sounded again, and five feet of water found in it. Shortly after this, the captain told me privately that there was no chance of saving the ship; and he was shortly going to give the order to prepare the boats for leaving her. This order was soon given; and then occurred the only sign of panic which I saw from first to last. Some of the crew, which was composed of men of several nationalities, made a dash at one of the boats, with the intention of getting away in her by themselves. The night was dark, the moon not having yet risen, so that they were not noticed for a minute or two; but when the mates found out what was going on, they bundled them out of the boat in no time.

About this time I had occasion to go through the saloon; the steward was there; and although he knew that orders had been given to leave the ship, he was busy dusting some glasses in a rack, and had evidently been round the saloon putting everything in perfect order, so that it might go to the bottom tidy! I suppose habit was second nature to him. On going out, I passed the cabin where the four children were peacefully sleeping. I could not help peeping in; but it was sad to look at the rosy cheeks and peaceful faces of the little ones, and to think what a small chance they had of surviving a long boat-cruise.

The vessel was well found in boats, six in all—four large ones, and two light gigs. It was decided to use only the four large boats, as they would take us all; and we set to work to get them swung out and provisioned in a hurry. It was an exciting time! If the vessel had been

sinking quickly, we should not have got one boat away. Nothing would work easily; the davits stuck for a long time, and resisted all our efforts to turn them; and the falls jammed in the blocks. Moreover, the boat I was told off to had been painted the day before, and was all over wet paint, which made it most difficult to handle her, besides leaving a reminder on one's garments. However, it was done at last; and tinned meat, biscuits, and water put into each boat. As to our water-cask, it was so rotten it could not hold water at all, and we had to content ourselves with filling a few bottles.

The captain then ordered the women and children and one sick man into the boat he was going to take charge of; and in they got, the boat still swinging at the davits. One old man brought all his heavy boxes from the cabin, and placed them beside the boat he was going in; and when told he could only take some wraps, he quietly dragged them back to his cabin.

Just as the order was going to be given for all to leave the ship, and even the man at the wheel had been called away, the chief-engineer came on deck and said to the captain: 'Don't you leave the ship, sir; I believe we can save her.' He then explained that though the engine-room bulkhead had leaked considerably, he and his men had made it nearly tight, and what little water came into the engine-room was easily pumped out again; and though the water was still rising abaft the engine-room, it was not rising so fast as it did at first; and the vessel, in his opinion, was sure to float for some hours yet, if she could not be kept afloat altogether.

The captain consented to wait till daylight, and we men went back to the pumps, though the poor women and children were still kept swinging at the davits, the captain being afraid to take them out of the boats, for fear there would not be time to get them in again. But after about two hours of it, he let them come out.

The dreary night wore on. Cocoa, and once a drink of rum, were served out to the men at the pumps. When the rum came—a wine-glassful to every two men—the man I shared with was a grimy stoker, and he had first drink; for a moment I hesitated when my turn came; but the claims of exhausted nature were not to be denied.

The moon was up now. We got some sail on the vessel, and headed her for Madeira, which was about two hundred miles distant, and the wind fair. As far as we could see, no vessels were in sight; but some rockets were tried. Only one of them, however, went up, the rest being damp and useless.

Sunday morning broke at last. A sad Sunday! We anxiously scanned the horizon: there was not a sail in sight anywhere.

The bulkhead which was keeping us up for the time-being was nearly amidships, but not quite, it being a little aft of that position, so not quite half the vessel was at the mercy of the leak.

Shortly after daylight there was a consultation in the captain's cabin as to what should be done. It was decided to take the hatches off, and throw over all the cargo abaft the engine-room that could be got at. There was a steam-winch available, and a derrick was soon rigged up. The cargo we could get at was all wool, in bales of about ten hundredweight each; and as bale after

bale went over the side, we made a long wake of them, as they did not sink at once.

The weather still kept fairly fine; had it not been for this, we could not have taken off the hatches, as the after-part of the vessel was by this time rather low in the water, and we should in all probability have been unable to save the ship.

The steward had not neglected his duty, and had prepared as good a breakfast as he could manage; and mechanically we went to it, not that anybody had any real wish to go to breakfast, but as a matter of habit. It was an uncanny thing, also, to take a meal in a cabin which one felt almost sure would be at the bottom of the sea before the next meal-time came round. Yet, in we went, the captain taking the head of the table as usual; but he could eat nothing, and even his jovial ruddy face was much altered.

Shortly after breakfast, one of the sailors who was on the lookout cried 'Sail ho!' We certainly saw what appeared to be a sail; but it disappeared and again appeared in a curious manner. Everybody brightened up at this news, particularly the poor women; but after careful examination through the glass, it turned out to be only some whales spouting.

Ten feet of water being in the hold by the afternoon, the stern of the vessel was very much lower in the water. Towards evening, as the light was beginning to fade, we saw a steamer; but it was hull down, and we could only see its masts and funnel. We had an old carronade which had probably last been fired at the battle of the Nile. This was loaded, and with great difficulty fired; but it took such a long time, that the steamer was out of sight before it went off, and no result followed. We also tried one or two more rockets; but it was of no use.

Sunday night. All the cargo in the after-hold that could be got at had been thrown overboard; so, by way of using the steam-winch, a large cask was rigged up and lowered into the hold, filled with water, hoisted up, and tipped overboard. This could be done about twice a minute, and helped considerably to keep the water down. The stench from the hold added now to our discomforts, as the raw hides and wool began to ferment, owing to the action of the water combined with the heat of the weather. But that was a small matter.

And so the second night went on. The great ship looming against the star-lit sky with her dark square sails set on the foremast, her bows towering high above the sea, her stern nearly level with it, and three red lights on her foremast—signals of distress—looked like some huge monster out of a fairy tale stricken nigh unto death, but struggling on while life lasted.

There were some curious traits of character exhibited on the part of both crew and passengers, though most of them did their duty quietly and manfully. One man, a steerage passenger, took to his berth after the accident happened. When the second-mate went to rouse him up and make him take his turn at the pumps, he said 'he was not going to pump; he knew the vessel was going down, and he would die comfortable in his berth.' In fact he was left there, as the mate had no time to waste over him. Another man armed himself with a

revolver, with the intention of shooting himself if the worst came to the worst, as he said he preferred shooting to drowning. The revolver was taken from him.

At half-past three on Monday morning, just before the first glimmer of daylight appeared, we sighted another steamer. No rockets were left; but fortunately there was a Roman candle, and this was supplemented by a blue light. The vessel was about three miles away, and passing us at that distance. For about two minutes after the blue light had died out, we all strained our eyes in anxious silence; but the stranger was keeping a good lookout, and at the end of that time a bright light appeared from its deck for a moment; and then up into the clear sky shot a majestic rocket, and bursting at a great height, showered down its coloured balls. I have seen many rockets, but never enjoyed the sight of one so much as I did then. A deep sigh of relief passed through all the assembled watchers; and almost immediately after, we could see all three of the steamer's lights, showing she was steering straight for us. She soon got alongside as nearly as she dared to come; and her captain having arranged to tow us to Madeira, distant about one hundred and ninety miles, if we could keep our vessel afloat, we were taken in tow. To manage this we had to lower one of our boats; and the trouble we had in getting that boat safely afloat gave us some idea of the difficulty and danger there would have been, in the state of the sea, in getting everybody safely away in the boats.

We had two more nights and days of pumping and bailing, the water still gradually gaining on us. Once or twice we managed to lower it an inch or two; but we soon lost the advantage we had gained. So matters went on. The last night, before we got in, I noticed that every now and then little dark shadows flitted across the deck, which I was at a loss to account for. The mystery was explained the next morning, for one of the children happening to go into the after-wheelhouse, which was not used in a general way, found nearly all the rats in the ship assembled there. They had forsaken the hold, either because they considered the risk of drowning was too great there, or possibly with some desperate hope of being able to leave the ship before she went down. We made a raid on them, and eleven rats came to an untimely end; 'the rest they ran away.'

Having sighted and passed the inhospitable island of Porto Santo, we arrived off the east end of Madeira. By this time there was fourteen feet of water in the after-hold, and the stern of the vessel was still lower in the water. There is a considerable race off the east end of the island, caused, I suppose, by unequal soundings; and the way the poor ship rolled in this broken water was sickening. She would make a heavy roll, say, to port, and then she would stop, and as the weight of water followed the roll, she would continue to roll the same way as before, till you felt sure she was going to capsize; then she would slowly right, and go through the same performance the other way. However, we soon got under the lee of the island and into smooth water.

Our steamer had come from a South American

port which the Portuguese are pleased to consider unhealthy. Though there was nobody ill on board, and the vessel had left that port some three weeks or more, she was obliged to hoist the yellow quarantine flag on nearing Madeira. As we passed the signal staff, a lot of little flags went up. I was standing by the captain at the time, and heard him mutter something in which the word 'fools' was noticeable. I asked what the signal meant. The question asked was: 'Are you in distress?' A brief 'Yes' was the reply. Again up went the little flags from the station, and this time they said, 'Do not anchor if you can help it;' and that because we were flying the yellow flag. These inhospitable Portuguese, rather than run the most remote risk of disease, would have allowed us to go to the bottom without any help. Our captain answered: 'Must anchor, or beach her;' and shortly after, we did anchor. But not a soul was allowed on board to help us; and a guard was set over us, to prevent any of the passengers or crew from landing.

However, we got some help at last. The people of Madeira are noted for their powers of swimming and diving. No diving-dresses were to be had; but without them, we got two of the best divers to come off, and though not allowed to come on board, they were allowed to work outside the ship. They had two boats made fast astern, and they dived in turn, taking a header with a lump of oakum in one hand, and in the other a short thin piece of wood to drive in the oakum. They had a depth of twenty feet to dive to get to the leak, still each time they managed to drive in the lump of oakum before coming up; and after a time, they so far stopped the leak that the pumps began to gain on it. This was all that was wanted; and six hours after, the water was so far reduced that the engineers were able to get at the leak from the inside.

Two or three days longer we were kept prisoners on board a vessel that could not move; and then one of the huge Castle line of steamers came in, to which I joyfully transferred myself and luggage after a hearty good-bye to the captain and others.

Thus, by God's help, and the care and patient perseverance of the captain and his officers, not a life was lost or a person injured, and the good ship herself was kept afloat. Four days later I reached Plymouth.

DAY-DREAMS.

HERE at least is a haven of refuge where a man may wander at will without fear of interruption, and with no other critic than himself to deal gently with the flights of fancy in which he may indulge at pleasure. Indeed, there is no limit but his own imagination to check the magnitude of his thoughts and the execution of his vast designs. Does he wish to assume regal honour? In a moment he is clothed with imperial purple, and surrounded by the wisest men of the age, who gratefully pay tribute to his greatness and munificence. Statesmen involuntarily consent to be guided by his intellect, and express no sense of wounded pride in that they are the learners, and he the dictator of wisdom. A court filled with learning and wit obeys his slightest behest;

while women of peerless beauty and virtue minister to his wants with a grace that Diana herself might envy, and which the less favoured of mankind sigh in vain to obtain. Untold wealth surrounds him with a lustre that only serves as a foil to the magnificent scene; while jewels of a king's ransom lend their beauty to deck the path of the all-good and great king, whose greatest happiness lies in the content of his people and the prosperity of his country.

Wearied of such splendid inaction, the sceptre of the throne is immediately changed for the baton of a general, who commands armies which carry all before them, and whose strongest passion is love for their commander. Campaigns more brilliant than those of Condé, Wellington, or Napoleon are commenced and concluded in a breath, and fresh laurels added to his brow, already adorned with innumerable trophies of war. Captives bow down before him in thousands; and the haughty oppressor bends the neck that has hitherto been held in proud disdain against the world, till subdued and conquered by superior strength and sagacity. Besieged towns hold out their arms at his approach; and the thunder of his cannon strikes terror into the heart of the tyrannical autocrat, while giving assurance of his protection to the weak and oppressed. In less time than the words are written, triumphal arches rise from the ground; and surrounded by his victorious troops, he passes through the midst of the grateful thousands who assemble to do him honour, and who, breathing blessings on every side, add their presence to a scene which causes the triumphs of the Roman generals to fade into insignificance by comparison.

Again the scene is changed, and he is the greatest philanthropist that the world has ever seen. Prison doors open at his approach, and the wretched inmates fall down in gratitude at the feet of their deliverer, who has inaugurated the reign of mercy and kindness in the place of harsh severity and labour. Out of the midst of poverty and wretchedness arises like magic a scene of cleanliness and beauty; and where hitherto have been but squalid misery and vice, in a moment is now a scene peopled with the happy spirits of content and virtue. Well-built and prettily designed cottages supply the place of the fever-stricken dens that in the immediate past were the homes of thousands who could afford no other. In the front of each is a garden, filled with old-fashioned flowers, that put to shame those of many a mansion; while all around, and in the close proximity of friendly relationship, fruit and vegetables fill up the picture of Arcadian beauty which surrounds those who are unconsciously educated and refined by that which their own industry and care serve to maintain. Sallow cheeks, stooping shoulders, and stunted growths are replaced by ruddy faces and stalwart frames; while scowls give place to smiles of self-respect, now one of the chief movers in the regenerating influence which, from being but individual, has at once become universal. Hospitals are endowed with a munificence that for ever frees them from fear of debt, and allows their noble work to be pursued in a manner which science cannot improve upon, and which humanity regards with an admiration akin to reverence. The inmates of the crowded cities

grow young once more in the enjoyment of fresh air and green fields; while the children regain the roses of health and happiness amongst the sweet-smelling hay and flowers which grow around them. Factories and workshops are compelled to provide for the comfort and health of those who work within their walls, and to close at a reasonable hour under heavy penal laws, which protect the interests of the weak while dealing fairly with the employer; and the disgraceful practice of shutting up young children in close rooms where the seeds of disease and early death were formerly sown broadcast, is now happily looked upon as a barbarity of a former age, which foolishly sacrificed the strength of future generations to a misplaced and selfish greed of gain to itself.

These are only a few of the delights which the creative genius of Fancy calls to life and action, and in a few moments places the dreamer in the centre of a panorama which is called into existence solely for his pleasure, and of which he is at once the artist and admirer. Lying carelessly back in the well-worn armchair in an attitude in which comfort defies appearances, the dreamer can summon at will pictures of the brightest and most variable hue, changing from grave to gay at his pleasure; in one moment filled with the quaintest humour; while in the next, by an easy and natural transition, surrounded by a pathos which brings tears into the eyes in unconscious acknowledgment of the truth of the picture. And for all this there is needed only the hour of twilight and quietness to call to life more joys than an emperor can purchase with gold, and more delights than are pictured in the fairy tales of youth and childhood.

NO PRAYER TO-NIGHT.

No prayer to-night! No golden head
To lie in my lap with glittering light;
But a broken heart, and a sigh instead—
Ah me! ah me! no prayer to-night.

No lisping tongue, no dimpled hands,
To sing and strike in keen delight;
No hair to plait in glistening strands—
Ah me! ah me! no prayer to-night.

No prayer to-night—no bright eyes shine;
No cradled head to catch my sight;
No rosy lips pressed close to mine—
Ah me! ah me! no prayer to-night.

No trusting love; no pearly tears;
No smile; no laughter loud and bright;
No little voice to tell its fears—
Ah me! ah me! no prayer to-night.

No prayer to-night: an aching heart,
A life that is full of care and blight,
A life that has sorrow in every part—
Ah me! ah me! no prayer to-night.

A. D. STEWART.

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OUR WINDOWS.

WINDOWS are sometimes called, fancifully, the eyes of the house, just as human eyes are sometimes called the windows of the soul. There is not sufficient height of walling in any of the numerous remains of hut-circles to inform us whether the ancient Britons had eyes, or window-openings, to their dwellings; but as there is evidence that they were acquainted with the advantages of flues, or openings at the backs of their hearths for the escape of smoke, we must not decide they were without them. For our present purpose, however, it will be sufficient to look at the work of the old masons after the days of the Heptarchy. We have plenty of structural evidence that Saxon masons left small openings for light in the sturdy fabrics they reared. We have still many Saxon towers with small unglazed deeply recessed window-openings at various stages of their height, divided into two lights by strong rounded balusters. Most frequently, the heads of these openings are semicircular; but occasionally they are acutely pointed like two sides of a triangle. There is one of these Saxon church towers in the chief street in Lincoln, looking down on all the busy traffic of the place as it has looked down upon all its preceding phases for a thousand years. There is another in one of the main streets of Oxford, as silent and unperturbed. There is a well-known example at Barnack, in Northamptonshire; and there are many more in remote parishes in different parts of our pleasant land.

We have a much larger number of early Norman windows. They are narrow slits, five or six or seven inches wide, with semicircular heads, and vary in length from a foot and a half to three or four feet, and are so splayed through the thickness of the wall towards the interior as to admit as much light as possible with these external limitations. As time went on and security was more assured, window-openings became larger and larger. Their semicircular heads were surrounded with mouldings richly carved with ornament; and in

cathedrals and castles, two of them were sometimes placed side by side and made into one by a larger arch that encompassed them both. A century or so later, longer single lights or lancets were used, and then grouped together in similar couplets, and, as frequently, in triplets. By this time, however, the soft curve of the Norman builders was abandoned, and pointed arches were used for every purpose, including window-heads.

By degrees these lancet windows were widened so considerably that the glass placed in them required support, and mullions were invented. The multiplication of mullions left spaces in the window-heads to be filled with tracery, which was designed with as much geometric beauty as was possible to the builders. Circles cusped, or lined with semicircles, presented a petalous appearance as of flowers, roses or marigolds. The isolation of these roses or marigolds in the apices of gables was the creation of the rose or marigold window, of which the wheel-window is but another variety. Still later, when our cathedral windows were filled with flame-formed tracery, the fronts of some of our domestic buildings came to be little more than tiers of windows. There are several of these old houses to be seen in many of our old country towns. Newcastle-upon-Tyne is especially rich in them. The mansions of the great were also nearly all windows when this fashion prevailed, as witnesses the local saying concerning Hardwick Hall, in Derbyshire, where Mary, Queen of Scots, sojourned for a time—'Hardwick Hall, more glass than wall.' The aim appears always to have been 'more light;' and transverse lengths of masonry, called transoms, became indispensable for the security of the large expanses of glass set up.

Our largest window is the east window in York Cathedral. This is seventy-five feet high—or more than the height of twelve men one above the other—and thirty-two feet wide. It rises to the full height of the stone groined roof, and is truly a majestic masterpiece. It is said to be the work of John Thornton, a Coventry glazier, in 1405. He had before his eyes the superb fenestration of the chapter-house, the house of houses, concerning

which Æneas Silvius wrote, its 'walls of glass are held together between columns very slender in the midst;' but still we must accredit him with a grand courage of construction. He made eight noble mullions which rise in straight slender lines to a wide transom, so corbelled out as to be wide enough for a footwalk, and thence pass upwards till they arrange themselves under three pointed arches, over which there are tiers of geometrical configurations culminating in the apex. There are about two hundred compartments thus formed, which are filled with stained glass depicting leading events in sacred history. Yet, notwithstanding this incomparable grandeur, many return to the five fine pale lofty slender lights in the north transept, called the Five Sisters, with undiminished pleasure in their grace and legends.

The east window of Carlisle Cathedral is a formidable rival of that of York. Looking at both, as we may now, within the space of a few hours, their points of agreement and diversity are striking. The Carlisle tracery is more branchy and leafy, more evenly distributed, and contrives to adapt itself more insinuatingly into the given space. This window measures thirty feet in width. The central division rises in leaf-like outline to the key of the arch, full of quatrefoils and leaflet forms; and the two outer divisions fall into the configuration of pointed arches, also filled with ogee-formed tracery. It is claimed for this design that it is the most beautiful in the world.

One who is accounted our leading art critic, however, has placed the west window of Dunblane Cathedral as the finest in the world. And the situation of Dunblane is so lovely, that if there is any foundation for the theory that the mind is acted upon by its surroundings, this supremacy could scarcely have been otherwise.

Apart from splendour of size and accessories of environments, many of our village churches have windows of endearing beautifulness. Sometimes they arrest us by their exquisite simplicity, sometimes by their consummate and venerable delicacy, always, of course, by their absence of pretence. There is a little silver-gray church, or chapel, at the foot of a wide hill on the top of which a tribe of ancient Britons have left a vast entrenchment, called Old Bewick, in Northumberland, which is a case in point. This little edifice lay unroofed, and consequently in ruins, for a couple of centuries or so, and thus acquired on the interior faces of the walls the same soft gray tones that weather alone generally gives to the exterior. It is now re-roofed and in use again. And in the apse at the east end is a tiny hoary loophole of a window, just sufficiently wide to admit a streak of light upon the altar—the same, we may be sure, that was put there by the early evangelists who reared the structure in the dim beginning. In Widdrington Church, in the same county, are five windows placed in the structure in those old knightly days when geometric configurations were giving place to more flowing forms. One of them, at the east end, is divided by mullions into three lights over which a cusped circle rests on two flowing quatrefoils. The others, which are in the mellow south wall, are square-headed with label mouldings over them, and likewise filled with trefoils having similar drooping essaying curves. Square-headed windows are not uncommon, as we may see in St Clement's

Church, Sandwich, and elsewhere; but of this particular transitional period they are rare. In the same county there are many other instances of beautiful windows in remote village churches, tall, stern, straight, admonitory lancets, appealing in the briefest manner to the highest thoughts; and others of softer and more persuasive influence fraught with tender curves and intertwinings: all the work of those who have lived before us and left them for our inheritance.

There is an old saying that it was never dark in Jarrow Church, which is believed to cover the claim made by historians as to glass being first used in the windows of that edifice. Until glass was introduced, the winds and rains were kept out by shutters, or by perforated stone slabs or panels. We may occasionally see some of these perforated panels retained in towers. There are some in Cromer Church, in Norfolk; and another in the tower on the island of Iona, not belonging to this early period, but survivals of their usage.

The windows of Carnarvon Castle may be taken as fair samples of military fenestration in Plantagenet times. Here, besides slits and crossbow loopholes, are long narrow shoulder-headed lights a foot wide, as straight as arrows; there, is a set of three couples of shorter square-headed lights forming but one; farther on, is a more curious arrangement of four smaller shoulder-headed lights, ten inches across, whereof the bases of the upper two are formed with the same shoulder-like outline, all cunningly strong and secure; and again we have the wider, lighter, more attractive double cusped lights with quatrefoils in the pointed heads, some with, some without, transoms. When we think of Edward I. and Queen Eleanor, bronzed perhaps by their expeditions to the Holy Land, or tired and harassed with their long journeys, looking out from them upon the mountains and streams they determined to call their own; of the Welsh princes looking up to them defiantly; of the bards who took the fact of their invincibility to heart; of the brave men who defended them from within, and those who assailed them from without—every stone is of interest. In some of the windows in the towers of Alnwick Castle there are stone seats built through the great thickness of the walls on either side of them.

Perhaps the most fascinating of all windows are oriel. Dormers are capable of much quaint and cosy expression, as we may see in such old-world towns as Ruthin, where some of the house-roofs have as many tiers of these 'eyelids' as those in old continental towns; but oriel are still more captivating. As the device was to the banquet in olden times, so is the oriel an extra enrichment to the already sumptuous feast for the eye in such buildings as Hampton Court, our old college buildings, and manor-houses. Whether they make central features over doorways and gateways, or light up odd nooks overhanging grassy quadrangles, or sunny gardens, or cool paved spaces, they always impart a surprise as well as a charm. Sometimes the name of oriel is given to bay-windows rising from the ground to the parapet of large halls. We are now referring, however, to the smaller projections at some height from the ground, supported on brackets, or on masonry gradually thrown out of the wall below for their reception. They are of varied forms,

but most frequently they are either semi-hexagonal, semi-octagonal, or semi-decagonal. There is a small oriel of three sides only at the topmost stage of a massive fortress-like tower adjoining Hulne Priory. This tower was built as an additional defence to the priory, besides its surrounding wall, wide enough to be manned in various places, by one of the ancient Percies. The oriel with its cusped lights and high parapet 'sits' upon large corbels which die into the face of the stalwart wall; and it watchfully overlooks the mount close by, fondly compared to Mount Carmel, the winding river, the distant hills, and all the convent buildings, now roofless and overgrown with ivy.

When we look into another aspect of the subject, and contrast the enormous lake-like sheets of plate-glass now in use with the old leaded diamond-paned lattices of bygone days, and not forgetting their jewel-like sparkle, picturesque appearance, and association with maidens' bowers, nor even their frequent setting of climbing roses, jasmines, and woodbines, we must own few things in daily use give a better gage of modern progress than our windows.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THERE was quite naturally a considerable hubbub and excitement in the district over a discovery which promised to change both the character of the inhabitants and the face of the country. Tobias felt himself to be the author of it all, and was windily eloquent in many bar parlours over eleemosynary rum and tobacco. What he did not know about the Great South Staffordshire Fault, he atoned for by a fluent invention, and he was looked upon in some quarters as quite a light of learning. Enormous crowds of sightseers flocked from the neighbouring towns to look at the out-crop; and on Sundays especially, Farmer Day's back garden was like a fair. At first he made an angry effort to drive the curious away; but learning, by the experience of a few hours only, how impossible that was, he surrendered himself to circumstances, and in the first week saw his garden trodden as clear of flowers and grass as if it had been a macadamised high-road.

After the necessary habit of the district, gangs of miners worked night and day. Some rough machinery was adjusted, and the foundations of an engine-house were dug in an adjoining field. Isaiah was a man of great importance, and was actually in conference with the traffic manager of the local line of railway with respect to a side-extension. Meanwhile, wagons drew the produce of the mine to the railway station, and the new coal being put upon the market was found to be of excellent quality.

The tide of good fortune touched Farmer Short-house with the rest, and bade fair to carry him into regions of prosperity which he had never so much as dreamed of inhabiting. He farmed his own land and owned the mines and minerals thereunder. Some one of his forebears had gifted the family with a pretty wide stretch of waste, and for this he was now offered what seemed to him extravagant prices. The offers warned his

heart as well as if the money they represented had actually lain at his banker's. He had always been well to do, and was rather of a saving turn than otherwise; but under these new conditions he launched out a little, permitted Cecilia to buy new curtains and a new gown, executed a somewhat expensive change of horses, and gave himself the luxury of a new suit of clothes, blue cloth, brass-buttoned, cords with a primrose bloom upon them, and a pair of top boots. In his new raiment and his unexpectedly prosperous new condition, it came easy to the good man to think well of himself; and since to think well of one's self is with any honest and open nature the best of preparatives for thinking well of other people, the farmer was excellently satisfied with the world at large.

He was walking about his lands one agreeable afternoon, when, leisurely climbing over a gate, he beheld a trespasser. The trespasser had brought a camp-stool with him, had set up some species of framework in front of him, and was obviously engaged in some sort of occupation. It was impertinence enough that the man should have ventured on to the farmer's land at all in a place where there were no footpaths to warrant invasion; but that a man should actually set up his workshop, whatever his pursuit might be, on another man's land looked like the very crown of insolence. 'I'll have a talk to that feller,' said the farmer to himself. He took his walking-stick by the middle, and advanced at leisure, going softly and noiselessly over the grassy carpet. The stranger was so absorbed in his occupation, whatever it might prove to be, that he never so much as looked away from it for a moment. The farmer, indeed, was at his elbow before the man was aware of his presence. When he became so, he turned, and nodded with so sunny a smile and so evident and perfect an unconsciousness that his position there was in any way assailable, that the farmer was fairly nonplussed.

The stranger was painting, and the farmer, being a little puzzled as to how to begin his exhortation, stood by in silence, and speedily became so interested that he stood with rounded eyes and half-opened mouth and actually snored. The business was quite new to him, and the stranger, to his eyes, looked like an absolute master of his craft. There was a group of cows in the picture, and they looked like actual denizens of the fields. One of them, a white beast dappled with reddish spots, stood pensively facing the spectator, with its under lip awry, as if in the act of chewing the cud, and there was something so patiently and kindly bovine in its expression, that the farmer felt half inclined to caress it.

'How long has it took you to make that, young man?'

'Plait-il?' said the stranger. 'I beg pardon. What?'

'How long have you been over that bit of work?' He stuck out the point of his walking-stick towards the picture, and Jousserau warded it off.

'You must not—touch it,' he said. 'It is wet. I have been two whole day at that picture.'

'It takes a deal o' patience,' said the farmer.

'Oh no!' said the swarthy little man, looking up with his engaging little laugh. 'It takes not

patience if you are lover of it. It is the night, when I cannot work, that takes me patience.'

'Do you make a living at that sort of work, young man?' the farmer demanded.

'Yes,' responded Jousserau. 'It is my trade.'

'Funny occupations there is in the world,' said the farmer contemplatively, and again stood by in silence to look on. He became so devoutly interested that he followed all the dexterous motions of the brush with lollings of the head this way and that way, accompanied by elaborate motions of the tongue, as if by that motion he guided the movements of the artist's hand. When the little man had worked with great industry for perhaps half an hour, he laid down his palette upon the grass, and having rested the tips of his brushes delicately on its edge, began to roll a cigarette in his lithe brown fingers. This operation was also new to the farmer, who began to think that he had lighted on a creature altogether strange and remarkable.

'What do you reckon to get for a harticle like that?' he asked, pointing his stick once more towards the picture.

Jousserau put his head on one side and surveyed his own work critically. 'Not much,' he answered with candour. 'It is not worth much. At this I am beginner. There are many sorts of painting—many, and this I do for to amuse myself alone. To my own trade, I paint the face; that is my proper work.'

'Oho!' said Shorthouse, and instantly being genially filled with a sense of his own competence, began to turn over an idea in his mind. An idea, with Farmer Shorthouse, was something of a rarity, and it was always a bit of a wonder where it came from. The present notion was altogether novel and fanciful, but it tickled his brain agreeably, though it excited a certain bumpkin sense of bashfulness. The late Mrs Shorthouse, who had been a pretty woman in her time, as Cecilia's mother had an ample right to be, had been painted years ago by a travelling artist. Her portrait still hung in the seldom used best parlour, with a yellow gauze about the gilt frame to preserve it from the flies. It represented an amazing wooden simper, with a bulb of hair and a prodigious high comb on top of it, and on either side a short curl, like a neatly arranged black shaving. The subject was attired in a long bodiced gown, apparently made of court-plaster, with leg-of-mutton sleeves; and at the bottom of the picture a pair of hands which might have belonged to a magnified wax doll were mechanically crossed one over the other, with a chrome-yellow ring on every finger. The memory of this work of art came clearly into the farmer's mind, and the new idea was to have his own presentment put upon canvas as a pendant or companion to it. The two, he thought, would make an excellent heirloom for the girl. But if he were painted at all, it crossed him that he would like to be painted in his habit as he lived, and not in that cold stately company splendour in which Cecilia the first was represented. That was well enough for a woman, for it stood to nature that women should be fond of state and finery. For himself, he would go as far perhaps as the new blue coat with the brass buttons, but he would mollify that glory by the introduction of a jug of home-brewed with the foam upon it and a long clean

Brosely. Then he thought of the cords and the tops, and the longing seized him for a full length, but that seemed almost too much. There was a vanity of ostentation in it which frightened him. He would have it cut off somewhere about the finish of his portly waistcoat. And being on the question of waistcoats he thought of the red plush; that, with a gold albert chain across it, would look no less than imposing.

'You mek a trade o' portrait-painting, eh?' he said after a long silence.

'Yes,' returned Jousserau, 'that is the work I do best.'

The farmer hesitated, fluttered, resolved, withdrew, resolved again, withdrew again, and then made the final plunge. 'If you don't happen to be particular busy,' he said, 'I'd like ye to come up to my house and have a look at the portrait o' my missus. It's been i' my mind for some time to have my own done to set alongside of it. I've got a da'ter as'd be glad o' summat to remember me by.'

'So, yes. I will come,' said Jousserau; 'I will come presently, in half an hour.'

'You're a foreigner?' said Shorthouse, after another pause.

'That is true,' said Jousserau, with one of his quick smiles. 'I am foreigner here. You would be foreigner if you were in my country.'

The farmer was staggered into silence by this amazing proposition: that he, a Briton born and bred, reared in the very heart of the English midland, could by any stretch of fancy be considered a foreigner anywhere was almost beyond him. 'I shouldn't belong to the country, to be sure,' he made answer; 'but as to being a foreigner'—

'It is only not belonging to a country,' Jousserau answered, 'that makes foreigners.'

That sounded as if there were something in it, but the rustic intellect was perplexed. Ideas were growing too common with it. The farmer was conscious of a plethora, a feeling of mental indigestion. 'There's different sorts of foreigners,' he remarked a little later, manfully wrestling with the new theme. 'There's no offence meant, young man, but what sort be you?'

'I am Frenchman,' said the little artist amiably. 'I come from Arles. You do not know of him? No?'

'No,' said Shorthouse; 'I never heerd of it.'

There the conversation ended; and Jousserau went on with his work for about the promised half-hour, and then, having packed his easel and camp-stool into a convenient little parcel, put up his palette and brushes, took his picture by a strip of canvas at the edge and announced himself ready.

'Be you a-living hereabouts?' Shorthouse asked, by way of renewing the conversation.

'Yes,' answered Jousserau; 'I am lodger with Mr Vintare.'

'Who's he?' asked Shorthouse. 'I know most of the folks hereabouts; but that name's strange to me.'

'Mr Vintare,' repeated Jousserau—'Mr Isaiah Vintare.'

'Oho! Ay! ay! Isaiah? I know him, of course; but you sounded the name so strange I could make nothing on it.—So you're living with Isaiah Winter, eh?'

That would be handy for the portrait-painting, if anything were to come of it, for Isaiah had set up his habitation within easy walking distance of Shorthouse's house.

The farmer led the artist to his house, and ushered him into the best parlour. It was a sombre chamber, chastening to the spirit in its gloom, its vault-like odour, and the prim, unused, and awkwardly regular array of its furniture. It was as unhomelike as an upholsterer's shop, but on company occasions among men of Farmer Shorthouse's class it is not *en règle* to be at ease. A little discomfort in respect to posture and shirt-collar would seem to be peculiarly desirable.

'Theer's the portrait,' said Shorthouse, when he had drawn the heavy curtains aside from the window and had admitted a little of the outer light. 'Now do you think as you could do anything like that?'

The artist stood looking at the work with a serious face. 'No,' he said; 'I do not think I could do anything like that, even if I tried. I will do you something a leetle better than that, if I do for you anything at all.'

'These things,' said the farmer, pointing to a daguerreotype on the mantel-piece, 'is good for nothing. I don't want to go down to them as may come after me mekin' 'em believe as their grandfather, or maybe their great-grandfather, was an 'Ottentot.—Look at that, now; who'd tell that for a pretty gell's picture? A pretty gell her is, though, though I say it. That's my da'ter, and about as much like her as choke's like cheese.'

'Ah!' cried Jousserau, turning quickly, 'you are then Mr Short-house? Ah yes! I have met the young lady with my boys.'

'Like enough,' the farmer answered, not quite comprehending him.—'But now, tell me what you'd charge me for a picture o' myself, drawn natural and coloured, the same size as that? I'm not a man to beat any tradesman down in his price, but I look to you to be reasonable.—I paid ten pounds for that un, and the man as did it sent it home without the frame. He said that was the way of the trade, and so it may be for all I know. I'm game to pay a ten-pound note for mine, that is if it's drawn and coloured natural. If it's as like nature as them cows, it'll suit me all over.'

Jousserau would probably have asked for a good deal more than the farmer was disposed to give, in which case the negotiations would have been brought to an immediate close; but the sight of the daguerreotype and the news that Cecilia was the farmer's daughter had an influence upon him. Truth to tell, this young southern gentleman was curiously susceptible, and Miss Shorthouse in a single interview had made a considerable inroad upon his fancy. It would be pleasant to meet her again, and that ox-like head of the farmer's would make an excellent study. The reflection decided him. He was in no immediate want of money, and he need not go about making a practice of painting farmers on their own terms.

'You'll oblige me with your name, if you please, young man,' said the farmer; and Jousserau produced and handed to him a card with a little flourish of politeness.

'Ah!' said Shorthouse, settling his glasses on

his nose to read it, 'that's convenient and comeatable.—Pretty handwriting.' He conceived the copperplate inscription to be the artist's own handiwork, and nodded over it approvingly. 'It's a sensible thing,' he said, 'when a man's got a funny name like that to have it wrote down ready. It's convenient to strangers.—And now let's settle about the time when it'll be handiest to have the work gone on with. If you're a early riser, young man, I'll give you from seven to nine every morning till it's done.'

'That will do,' said Jousserau. 'I will go to-night to the town and will buy a *toile*—what you call it?—a cloth, to paint upon, and I will begin to-morrow morning.'

'Right,' said the farmer. 'That'll suit me proper.—Mind you, mister, it's to be done on approval.'

'I shall paint your portrait,' said the artist, nodding his head with great gravity, 'and I shall paint it like you, and I shall paint it well. What I cannot make, I do not pretend I make.'

They went back to the kitchen, through which they had entered, and there found Miss Cecilia, bending interestedly over Jousserau's cattle-piece. He had placed it by chance in a good light upon one of the kitchen chairs; and the girl having drawn another seat towards it, was absorbed in its contemplation. She heard and recognised her father's step, and spoke without turning: 'What a pretty picture, father! Have you bought it?'

'No, my gell,' he answered. 'It's this young man's handiwork. He's made a bargain to paint my portrait, to hang up alongside mother's.'

Cecilia rose in a little becoming confusion, and Jousserau bowed to her, quite in the grand manner. Cecilia dropped him a little courtesy.

'Charmed once more to meet Mees Short-house,' said the artist.—'I must go now to buy my cloth. I will be here to-morrow.' He gathered up his belongings, bowed once more, and was gone.

'Why, Cecilia!' cried her father, 'you curcheyed to the young man as if he'd been a lord.'

'Mr Jousserau is a gentleman in his own country, father,' returned Cecilia. 'A real artist is a gentleman in any country.'

Here again was yet a new idea for Farmer Shorthouse. He said nothing, but he felt as if things in general were shaken and uncertain.

ENGLISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

WHAT is known as the Educational Code is a document of exceptional interest and importance to those who have any regard for the educational welfare of the kingdom. The full title of this document is, 'Code of Regulations, with Schedules, by the Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of the Privy-council on Education.' Technically, it is known as 'The Code for 1889,' or more briefly still, 'The New Code.' Though it is a comparatively small pamphlet, consisting of only nineteen pages folio in large type with ample margin, with a dozen additional pages of Schedules, it includes in itself a whole code of laws closely affecting the most important interests of the nation. Under its provisions the largest army this empire has ever organised, lives, moves, and has its

being as an organisation. This army—to continue the simile—is commanded, in England alone, by three hundred field-officers, bearing the respective grades of Chief Inspector, Inspector, Sub-Inspector, and Inspector's Assistant. Of commissioned officers, in the form of certificated teachers, there are forty-four thousand, with another eighteen thousand of subordinate rank as assistant teachers, and three thousand five hundred cadets, or students in training. The non-commissioned officers, technically known as pupil teachers, number thirty thousand. The full complement of the rank and file is five and a quarter millions, of whom over four and a half millions are enrolled, while fully four and a quarter millions are paraded at the annual examination, these being divided among thirty thousand different companies or 'departments.' To maintain this vast army, fighting against the powers of ignorance, the nation expends annually three and a half million pounds.

The Code* deals with everything pertaining to the educational life of this army. No interest is too important, no detail too insignificant, for it to take cognisance of. It inquires into the date of birth of the youngest toddler who for the first time crosses the threshold of a school, and is equally curious as to the exact university degree of the wrangler who may be appointed an inspector. All sorts and conditions of schools come under its authority. The struggling village school in the most remote dingle where the modest successor of the poor 'hedge schoolmaster' of a past generation rules as absolute monarch over three or four dozen children; the enormous institution in the metropolis, with its palatial block of buildings, providing accommodation for two thousand children; and the still more imposing 'higher-grade school,' every member of whose staff boasts a university degree—all alike acknowledge the sway of this terrible 'Code.'

So important a document as this is not to be lightly conceived, nor, when once prepared, to be heedlessly or without careful consideration adopted as the educational law of the land. Due formalities have to be observed in its production. Minds specially trained by long experience of official life draft it, legal luminaries revise it to make the confusion of its multifarious provisions worse confounded by technicalities and wordy ambiguities. Having received the imprimatur of two members of the ministry of the day, it is then 'presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.' Here it lies on the table for a month, subject to the criticism of friend and foe, and open during that period to revision or amendment. This ordeal having been passed, the Code forthwith becomes the law of

the educational world, and, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, cannot be changed—for twelve months. There is an annual reissue, and each fresh edition contains more or less numerous and important amendments or modifications upon the preceding one, so that what may be enforced one year may be forbidden the next, and what was a virtue in 1888 may be a delinquency in 1889, and *vice versa*.

It will be evident, therefore, that the annual appearance of the Code—which this year comes into force in August next—is watched with both interest and anxiety by a large and important section of the community. For a period of over two years a Royal Commission has been engaged in inquiring into the working of the Education Acts in Southern Britain; and pending the appearance of their Report, the annual tinkering to which the Code was wont to be subjected was to a great extent suspended. Advantage was also naturally taken of the inquiry by a number of different educational organisations to place their views before the Commission.

As the present issue of the Code is the first which has appeared since the Commission presented its Report, it can readily be understood why its publication was so anxiously expected, its provisions so eagerly scanned, and why there is in the country such general interest displayed in a document so purely formal.

Few, however, of the general public would be able to benefit very much by a perusal of the Code itself. Its ramifications are so intricate, the bearing of one clause or section upon another with which it appears to have no necessary connection so important, and its technicalities so numerous, that it requires a trained mind to understand its real significance. Even a lawyer accustomed to the verbosity of legal documents would find himself at fault if he endeavoured to interpret the Code without some technical knowledge of the subject as a specialist. A celebrated judge before whom was recently tried a case turning upon the interpretation of the Code, declared in open court that its intricacy utterly baffled his powers. In further illustration of this fact, I may say that an important organisation which had placed evidence before the Commission, and expected to find effect given in the Code to the recommendations contained in the Commissioners' Report, were grievously disappointed at the small amount of concession granted in the Code. They entered a strong protest, backing it up by organised parliamentary pressure on the Department. Now, though this organisation numbered among its leaders several members of the legal profession, together with ex-inspectors of schools, principals of training colleges, elementary schoolmasters, and others who had spent years in working under previous Codes, and to whom the interpretation of the document might be supposed to be a matter of comparative ease, they were all baffled; for, on approaching the Department with their complaint, they found, to their no small surprise, that by the comparison of two widely separated articles in which a few verbal alterations had been made, changes so important had been introduced as amounted to a concession of nearly all they had demanded!

It is satisfactory to note that there is in the

* It will be understood that the Code spoken of in this article, as well as the figures above given, have reference to England and Wales alone, and not to Scotland, which has an educational system and Code of its own.

present Code an evident attempt to bring common-sense to bear upon the school requirements. For instance, in the infant classes—for children under seven—where certain specified courses in reading, writing, and arithmetic used to be required, Kindergarten amusements are now largely substituted, and the child is amused instead of being abused while undergoing instruction. The perceptive faculties are trained while the memory is not in danger of being overburdened or the brain over-taxed. Formerly, too, it used to be the custom to compel little boys to become so many infant tailors, by requiring them, while still under seven years of age, to make daily use of needle and thread, and to pass in sewing at the annual examination! There might have been some reason in this, from a bachelor's stand-point, if the requirement had extended to the period of adolescence; but to compel a boy to use needle and thread up to seven years of age and then to discontinue the practice for ever, was irrational. The absurdity has evidently been brought home to the framers of the present Code, and these infant tailors are disestablished, the lads being now engaged in elementary drawing upon slates while their sisters are employed in sewing. Another very practical feature in the Code is the special encouragement given to the study of cookery both theoretical and practical, and the arrangements whereby a number of small schools may combine in supporting one central class for instruction in science. All these are features which will recommend themselves.

But the pupils are not alone interested in the Code; the teacher is affected by it too. Let us suppose, for instance, that a parent wishes to bring up his boy or girl to the scholastic profession, the question naturally presents itself how shall this be done?

The course of preparation nominally begins at thirteen years of age, but really two years earlier. A boy or girl being over thirteen years of age, wishing to become a pupil teacher, has to undergo an examination. This is of a very elementary kind, and consists of reading a passage from one of Shakespeare's historical plays or from some other standard author; writing a short theme or letter on an easy subject; working correctly a few sums in vulgar and decimal fractions, simple proportion, and simple interest. Formerly, it was necessary, in addition to passing this examination, also to pass satisfactorily an examination in English grammar and in geography or history. In place of these, however, there will now be accepted a certificate from the managers of the school that the candidate has been for the two previous years instructed in any two of these.

This preliminary test having been successfully borne, the youthful aspirant is registered as a 'candidate,' and has then to undergo a probation of twelve months. During this year of probation, the lad or lass of thirteen is supposed to have charge of a class of twenty children. At the end of the year, another slightly more difficult examination has to be undergone, the chief difference being in the increased requirements in arithmetic. A certificate is also demanded from the managers as to the necessary instruction in some two Class Subjects.

Assuming this second examination to have been passed, and the year of probation to have proved

satisfactory, an indenture of apprenticeship is drawn out, changing the 'candidate' into a 'pupil teacher,' and binding him or her to serve for four, or in some cases five, years at an annual salary agreed upon between the parties. During this term of apprenticeship the pupil teacher counts on the school staff as sufficient to teach thirty scholars. At the close of each year the pupil teacher has to undergo a fresh and more difficult examination, greater strictness being observed by the inspector at the end of each of the first two years. If a pupil teacher fails to pass satisfactorily in the subjects of the first and second years, he or she may, with the consent of the Education Department, be re-examined once, when, if the pupil teacher ultimately fails, the engagement is peremptorily terminated, and the disappointed candidate for scholastic honours must seek an opening in some other profession. Formerly, the pupil teachers of a district were wont to be summoned together to some common centre for the purposes of this annual examination, and in the case of remote country districts, this often entailed no little hardship. Now, this is no longer necessary, the teachers being examined at the schools in which they are engaged. While this favours the pupil teacher in one sense, it entails a corresponding hardship upon the head teacher, and even upon the pupil teacher; for the former has to cope with the difficulties of the exceptional circumstances of an examination day without any assistance from his ordinary staff; while the pupil teacher, being engaged in working his own examination paper, is prevented from superintending, as he was wont to do, the examination of the class he had been teaching throughout the year, and is consequently deprived of the opportunity of seeing with his own eyes the weak points in the instruction which may appear under a searching examination by a trained inspector.

The apprenticeship being happily terminated, there is yet a further ordeal before the doors of the profession are finally thrown open to the applicant. Three courses are now open for the candidate, who may choose either to become a student in a training college, to undergo two, or in exceptional cases three, years' further preparation for the profession; or to seek employment as an assistant teacher in an elementary school; or to take sole charge of a small school of less than sixty children. Until recently, these last two courses were open to all pupil teachers who had passed their fourth year's examination satisfactorily; now, however, they must also pass what is technically termed the 'entrance examination,' which is held annually in July at a number of centres, and which lasts for three or four days. Those who do well at this examination enter the residential training colleges, where they are lodged and boarded for a nominal sum, and receive their tuition free as 'Queen's Scholars;' or they may be enrolled as students at day training colleges or university colleges, where their tuition fees, together with a small sustentation allowance, are provided for them by the Education Department. This last is a new and much valued provision, which, though it has long been in force in Scotland, is now for the first time introduced into the English Code. As the colleges naturally choose those who stand highest in the pass lists, and as

the accommodation at these institutions is necessarily limited, a large number who may be able to pass barely, will find themselves excluded from the training colleges. For these, as well as for those whose limited means make it impossible for them to spend two years earning no wage, the remaining avenues of assistantships, and of teacherships of small schools, afford means by which they may yet attain the coveted teacher's certificate. Whether they be students in training, or acting teachers perfecting themselves for the profession by a course of self-culture or private study, two more examinations await them. These are known as the first and second year's college examinations. The present Code demands that each candidate for a certificate should pass both these examinations; whereas, formerly, if either of the two were successfully passed, a certificate of competency would be issued. Admission to the profession is thus rendered increasingly difficult.

The would-be certificated teacher's trials are not yet over. Even after passing the long and imposing array of nine examinations in as many consecutive years, the last hill has not been climbed. There yet remains a period of at least two years' further probation in actual school-work, when, if the inspector reports favourably upon the teacher's practical skill, and satisfactory results are obtained by the school or class under the probationer's charge, the much-coveted 'parchment,' as the certificate is called, is finally issued, and the youth or maiden is henceforth classed as one of the forty-four thousand certificated teachers approved by the Education Department.

Taken as a whole, the present issue of the Code, while retaining some objectionable features, may be regarded as a fair and honest attempt at solving the educational problem for England and Wales. The use of the word 'Wales' in this connection reminds us that the inhabitants of the Principality will probably give it a warmer welcome than will any other part of the kingdom. It appears that the Celtic tongue is still spoken by fully two-thirds of the million and a half inhabitants of that portion of the empire, and the native language is now for the first time officially recognised as available for school purposes. Managers of schools are allowed, if they think fit, to teach Welsh reading, writing, and grammar, with the geography and history of Wales, by means of bi-lingual reading books. This means a course of bi-lingual instruction, not only possessing exceptional attractions and interest for the Welsh people, but also of such high value as an intellectual training as should enable Welsh schools to turn out better material than is possible for English schools, restricted as they necessarily must be to a single language. The advantages, intellectually, of a bi-lingual training are too evident to need demonstration. This concession to what appears to have been a popular demand in the Principality, contains the germ of a principle which other districts would do well to emphasise—namely, that of granting districts widely differing in their circumstances and educational needs the right to decide for themselves their actual course of instruction. It is evident, for instance, that much of what might be suited to the needs and circumstances of a large and well-fitted school in such manufacturing centres as Birmingham, Man-

chester, or Sheffield, would be out of place for a small school in the Fens or in a remote Devonshire valley. Yet, under existing conditions, a child has to undergo precisely the same course whether he live among the peaceful surroundings of an agricultural neighbourhood, or in the ceaseless rumble of machinery in the manufacturing centre, or the murky atmosphere of a mining district, each of which possesses its separate and distinctive interests.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

COLONEL SANDHURST returned to his hotel in a very thoughtful frame of mind. He was wandering in spirit through long-forgotten scenes, and ghostly faces rose out of the past to trouble him. Thirty years, twenty-five years—a long time ago, and yet it seemed only yesterday that he and Margaret Hay were together, before she learnt that wealth and position were better than love and honour. And yet she had shown no sign of repentance, rather had assumed the position of an injured woman. Perhaps he had been too impatient, perhaps some treachery had been at work. Again, she had treated him with such marked scorn throughout the interview. Altogether, he felt strangely small and humiliated; nor did he expect any extraordinary amount of sympathy from Ethel Morton or Frank in his unexpected defeat.

Nor was this gloomy anticipation a mistaken one, for the lady in question openly expressed her opinion that nothing could have turned out better; indeed, the loss of so much wealth was hailed with a positive expression of relief. The Colonel, who inclined to be somewhat angry, grimly inquired what Cresswell thought of the change in his fiancée's fortune. But that individual appeared to be in nowise distressed. On the contrary, he took the matter with a coolness that fairly exasperated Colonel Sandhurst, who was at length driven to retort.

'My dear fellow,' said the baronet, in reply to certain scathing denunciations anent this fatuous disregard of common prudence, 'Ethel is quite right, as no one knows better than yourself. Besides, it is a great mistake for young married women to have command of a lot of money. It creates a feeling of independence. And if we had all that abundance, we should only spend it, you know.' To which foolish not to say flippant speech Colonel Sandhurst deigned no reply.

The arrival of Mr Heath soon after dinner was a positive relief to all, and infused a brighter spirit into the somewhat solemn proceedings. 'A most extraordinary thing,' said he, when at length alone with the Colonel. 'You remember my telling you this morning that I had already commenced to draw the conveyance of Fernleigh? There are a lot of old deeds in the box, and in idly turning them over I found the assignment.'

'What! Amongst my deeds?'

'Amongst your deeds. At the very time that Fernleigh was mortgaged to you, the missing documents must have been hidden under those old parchments.—But,' continued the lawyer, lowering his voice, 'I found something quite as singular still—nothing less than a letter addressed to you, and evidently in Mrs Charlesworth's handwriting.'

'You are romancing,' returned the Colonel quietly, though he was conscious of a quicker throbbing of his pulses. 'There was a time when she might have written to me, but that is a quarter of a century ago.'

It was Heath's turn to look puzzled now, though he said nothing, merely drawing from his pocket the letter in question and handing it over to his companion. It was yellow with age, the ink faded to a pale red, though otherwise clean as it had been the day it was written.

The Colonel perused it carefully twice through, then turned to his companion. 'Heath,' said he with the same quiet inflection, 'had that letter fallen into my hands when it was intended to, Margaret Hay would have been my wife.'

'Your wife? I did not know that you ever knew her.'

'Nor did I, till I met her to-day. Perhaps it is singular that we never came together in all these years. We first came together during a London season. Up to a certain point, you will be good enough to imagine the rest. Her father did not like the idea; but one thing he agreed to. "If," said he, "you will not see my daughter for three months, or correspond with her, and at the end of that time she is of the same mind, I will give my consent." Need I say that I consented in my turn. We were young and romantic then—too much so, as subsequent events proved. At the last day of the three months she was to write to me and tell me to come. But she never wrote. I am not going to tell you any more, except that this is the letter I ought to have had. Read it.'

Mr Heath put on his spectacles and read the simple note:

MY DEAR GEORGE—The three months expired to-day. At five minutes past twelve midnight this letter is being written. Will you come to me and see if you think I have changed?—Ever yours, affectionately,

MARGARET HAY.

'How long, after this note was written, was it before Margaret Hay married her cousin?' asked Mr Heath.

'Two months to a day.—Rather a sudden change of opinion, you see.'

'Then, of course, Charlesworth got hold of it,' pursued the lawyer, ignoring the Colonel's implied sarcasm. 'The very thing he would delight in doing. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, and all that sort of thing, but— When he got hold of the Fernleigh title-deeds, he must have laid the note there accidentally.'

'I wonder what she thinks of me?' said the Colonel suddenly.

'That you have behaved very well over this matter, my dear fellow. And now that my hands are no longer tied, I don't mind telling you the same thing. You will find her very grateful for your intended kindness, which reminds me that I have a commission to execute. Mrs Charles-

worth is very anxious to see the young lady who would have behaved so generously if she had had the opportunity. I am charged to ask you, as an old friend, to waive ceremony and take your party to Fernleigh to-morrow.'

'If he will not, we must go without him,' cried Ethel, who had approached near enough to hear the conclusion of Heath's message. 'And I don't think we shall have much difficulty in persuading Frank to join.'

'I daresay you would like to go without me,' said the Colonel with a pleased chuckle; 'but you won't, all the same.—Never mind the ceremony, Heath. I will send my man over with a note to-morrow morning, saying we accept Mrs Charlesworth's invitation with all possible pleasure;' to which Miss Ethel replied sententiously that wonders would never cease.

If there was one thing more beautiful to contemplate than the perfect weather on the following afternoon, it was the immaculate splendour of Colonel Sandhurst's attire, a fact that Sir Edwin Cresswell, himself no mean connoisseur in the art sartorial, did not fail to comment upon in confidence to the lady of his choice.

'Bingo the Earl, Chivalry's pearl,
Went a-philandering after a girl,'

she quoted, *sotto voce*, as they took their seats in the wagonette. 'Isn't it just too splendid? If we could only marry the dear old colonel to Mrs Charlesworth, we should have our romance complete.'

But for the exuberant spirits of Miss Ethel, and the quiet sallies of the equally happy baronet, the drive to Fernleigh would have proved a quiet one. Once within the gates, however, tongues were loosened, for the serene quiet beauty of the house brought an honest tribute of admiration to every lip; its peaceful silence seemed to soothe every heart and bear all unhappiness away. Even Ethel, as she found herself tenderly embraced by the mistress of Fernleigh, fell under the influence of the charm.

'We must all be friends,' she said. 'I feel very grateful to you all.—Gladys, why do you not speak to Miss Morton? There is no call for the usual formality.—Sir Edwin Cresswell, I once knew your mother very well. If you are anything like her, Miss Morton is a fortunate girl.'

The Colonel had already caught Vivian up in his arms, delighted that the child had remembered his soldier, Ethel looking at the boy in a sudden ecstacy of child-worship; while Gladys Charlesworth stood face to face with Frank as one who has found a pleasant dream to be the sweetness of reality.

'You have not forgotten me?' he asked.

'Oh no, indeed. Only, it seems so strange to see you here. The last time we met was all sickness and suffering; here, it is so peacefully quiet.'

'It is a beautiful place!' Frank replied, drawing a deep breath of admiration, and feeling almost dazed with the wildness of his own happiness. 'There is no wonder that you love it. But tell me how it was that you left me so abruptly out yonder? Not even time to say good-bye, not even a moment to thank you for your angelic kindness.'

'Not now,' said Gladys hurriedly, with a quick frightened glance at the others' retreating figures. — 'See; they are going into the gardens, — my mother's favourite walk. Won't you come with them?'

But Frank stood perfectly still, looking down into the pleading face. 'Why did you leave me like that?' he repeated. 'Do you know that I have been searching all London to find your whereabouts?'

'Captain Sandhurst, I will tell you everything presently, only let us join the others now. Mother will be so disappointed if you do not see the garden with her.'

Captain Frank suddenly melted; he would have been something more than a man could he have withstood the wistfulness of those imploring violet eyes. So they went into the old-world garden; and under the avenue of ancient fruit-trees, Frank detailed to his hostess the story of his lingering illness away from home and friends — how an angel nursed him, and the manner in which that sweet divinity had been found.

'Your girl and my boy,' the colonel remarked musingly, as he watched the figures disappearing down the shady avenue. 'How strange it seems! It seems almost like the renewal of one's own youth.'

'It seems more strange that they should have met in such a way,' Mrs Charlesworth replied. 'They would make a handsome couple, George.'

The old name came so naturally that neither of them noticed it. The Colonel laughed lightly, wondering a little to find himself viewing such a contingency so complacently. Under the bending arch of the trees they sat, till the talk gradually veered round to old times long since forgotten, though none the less delightful of recall.

Meanwhile, Gladys and her companion had wandered on beneath the filbert boughs to a secluded spot, below which the sunny meadows sloped away into a far-stretching valley, beyond which rose range after range of wooded hills, crowned in the faint blue distance by the Malverns. In the quiet contemplation of this silvan beauty they were silent for a time, with that innate sympathy that exists between spirits of a kindred nature. There was a soft flush on the girl's delicate cheeks, a subdued content gleaming in her eyes.

'You look like happiness materialised,' said Frank at length.

She turned her glowing face to his, trembling with a sweet emotion. 'Almost too happy,' she replied. 'Yesterday was all dark and troubled; to-day is all joy and sunshine. Then it seemed as if we were going to lose home and everything almost that makes life worth living. I do not think I am very sentimental, but I have a passionate love for this place. Perhaps you cannot understand the feeling.'

'Yes, I think so. When I was ill, dying almost, out yonder I learnt to appreciate the meaning of home. I used to dream of it, more perhaps when you were by. When you left, I knew it *was* a dream. And that brings me to the old question: Why did you go away so suddenly?'

'What more had I to detain me? I had lost my brother; you had grown well and strong enough to do without me.'

'You think so?' Frank asked, with a dangerous

thrill in his voice. 'Perhaps I am the best judge of that. I was not strong enough to do without you, and I never shall be now.'

'I am glad you thought of me. It is pleasant to know that.'

'Thought of you! I have never forgotten you for a moment. Sweet hypocrite, dare you look me in the face and say it is not so?'

She did not look up, though a rosy smile trembled on her cheeks and ruddy lips for a moment. In spite of the tumultuous beating of her heart, there was in all the painful uncertainty an exquisite sense of pleasure which rendered it doubly pleasing.

'Gladys, if I may use the name again, tell me why you left without good-bye?'

For the first time she glanced up at him with her truthful eyes. 'I will tell you, then. In the first place, I thought you would despise me, and your regard was very dear to me.'

'Of course I should have despised you,' Sandhurst replied ironically — 'the same as one would despise a heaven-directed angel sent to succour a despairing wretch. But, ah me, I quite forgot to do that because, you see' —

Gladys stretched out a trembling little hand imploringly. Immediately the bold soldier seized it and kept it imprisoned in his own warm grasp. At the touch of this strong masterful grip, all the reserve and coldness seemed to leave the girl yielding and helpless.

'But I thought you would,' she cried. 'I was only an hospital nurse; you are a soldier with a good name and fortune. I was always proud of being Miss Charlesworth of Fernleigh; but even then I did not know how long I could call myself so. And if you had met me some day, an obscure governess, or perhaps a shop assistant' —

'I should have lavished large sums on that blessed establishment in my excess of gratitude. — No; I will not release your hand, Miss Charlesworth of Fernleigh. You proud young person — isn't that the expression I should have to have used if I had found you in a shop?'

Gladys laughed, and said no more about her prisoned fingers. There was a wild flush on her cheeks, and a lustrous gleam in her eyes like unshed tears. As Frank looked down into them, a sudden flood of tenderness rushed into his heart, overpowering all other feeling. 'Gladys,' he said quietly, 'you were very cruel to me then.'

'Perhaps; but it was not without pain to me. I did not know' —

'That I loved you. I did, the first time I saw you. I do now; I shall as long as life is spared to me. Hear all I have to say. This is no passing fancy — remember, it is more than a year since we parted — and instead of growing weaker, my love becomes stronger every day. If I can do anything to make you happy, if I can — Gladys, my darling, will you be my wife?'

Then there came a long silence more eloquent than words, as heart went out to heart in a perfect understanding. It seemed as if the parting of a year had been washed away with its months of doubt and uncertainty, as she lay upon her lover's breast with his arms around her. Woman-like, Gladys was the first to break the stillness, with a broken laugh and a strangely happy face tinged with a shame at her own beatitude.

'I wonder what they will say?' said she. 'Mr

Heath told us yesterday that you and Miss Morton were expected to'—

'To fall in love with an obsolete family arrangement,' cried Frank gaily. 'My dear child, what chance could I possibly have with a full-blown baronet? Strange as it may seem, Ethel prefers Cresswell to me.'

'What shocking taste! And to console yourself, you came to me. I am afraid yours is only a secondary attachment.'

To which audacious speech Sandhurst replied by a rapturous embrace, in which Gladys' hat fell to the ground and her fair hair spread out in wild disorder. And, to add to the catastrophe, at this moment appeared the Colonel in company with the mistress of Fernleigh, eyeing the blushing culprits with an ill attempt at deep severity.

'I should like to know the meaning of this,' asked the Colonel, in his sternest parade voice. 'I should very much like an explanation.'

'It is simple enough,' said Frank coolly.—'Colonel Sandhurst, permit me to introduce you to my future wife.'

Mrs Charlesworth gave a little cry of astonishment, while the Colonel bowed with an exaggerated politeness, possibly to hide the pleased expression which somehow would manifest itself on his features.

'What shall we do with them?' he asked, turning to his companion.

'It is so sudden, so unexpected,' faltered the bewildered lady with a glance at the now collected lover.—'Gladys, what have you to say?'

'It is quite true,' said she, laughing and crying in a breath. 'He asked me to—to marry him, and I'—

'Well. And you?'

'Were obliged to say yes. He would take no other answer;' and Gladys kissed her mother once, and disappeared without another word, leaving Frank to bear the brunt of the paternal wrath, an impending punishment which he bore with enviable stoicism. Fortunately, the advent of Vivian at this moment served to distract attention from the culprit, who forthwith took the lad by the hand and set off in search of an imaginary wren's nest.

Mrs Charlesworth took a seat, the Colonel stood by her side.

'You are not displeased?' he asked with a shade of anxiety in his voice.

'Not exactly displeased; indeed, I think I am very glad. It seems so poetical that between our children there should be such a tender feeling. I think of this the more because there might have been'—

'As blissful a consummation for us.—Margaret, do you remember the time when you and I looked forward to such happiness, when at the end of three months you were to write to me?'

'And I did, George; do not forget that.'

'Yes, I know it now; but I did not receive the letter at the time. I waited for a month, but it never came. And then I thought you had forgotten me, so I troubled you no more.'

'And I thought you had forgotten me. How absurdly proud we must have both been not to—— How did you find out afterwards?'

The Colonel took the letter from his pocket, and handed it to her. When she had read it, he told the story of its finding. But the history of

the treachery practised by a vanished hand he did not tell her, nor did she ever know.

It was blissfully quiet there, save for the song of birds and the light sound of voices on the lawn below. For a long time neither spoke, for the mind of either was back in the far past.

'Margaret,' said the Colonel at length, 'there is still a little fragrance over our dead romance. Can't we treasure up the remaining years together?'

'Last year's leaves are dead,' Mrs Charlesworth replied, blushing like a girl; 'their fragrance has gone for ever.'

'But the beauty springs afresh. I have been a lonely man; I shall be more so in the near future. The sunshine has gone, but its warmth still remains. If you can bear with me for a time, I shall be the happier.'

'Very well. It shall be as you wish, George.'

The sound of voices came nearer, till presently all the happy group had gathered round the colonel and his companion. When they became a little graver and the conversation had taken a more serious turn, he told them. They listened in respectful silence, while Vivian climbed on to the Colonel's knee, looking up into his face the while intently.

'What do you think of it all?' asked the narrator in conclusion.

'I think it will be very nice,' said the boy confidentially.

'You are pleased, Vivian?' asked his mother.

He looked from one to the other as if he saw them, then away round the garden, peaceful in the fading afternoon, pleasant, fresh, and sweet, as if the very guardian spirit of the place had blessed the garden and its denizens. A delicate light fell upon his face, filtered through the branches.

'I think it is the best thing that could happen,' he said in his quaint old-fashioned way; 'and I think,' he concluded, with a glance heavenward, 'that God has been very good to us all to-day.'

BIRD MIMICRY AND VENTRILOQUY.

UNDOUBTEDLY, the most perfect mimic amongst the feathered tribes is the American mocking-bird, a bird belonging to the Thrush family. On account of its wonderful powers of imitation, the aborigines of Mexico called it *centcontlatolli*—namely, four hundred tongues or languages. It is during the daytime that its imitative powers are usually exhibited; and so perfect is its mimicry of the songs of other birds, that even the most practised ear is easily deceived thereby. Although it has never been known to imitate the human voice, its powers extend to the mimicry of the cries and calls of other birds, the mewing of cats, the barking of dogs, cock-crowing, hen-cackling, pig-squeaking, creaking of hinges, and numerous other sounds.

The best imitator of the human voice is the parrot; but its powers as a mimic are so well known that we need not stay to enumerate them.

It must not be supposed that this faculty is confined to one or two species, for it is possible

that most birds are more or less endowed with it. Many of our British species are excellent mimics, and although by no means so proficient in the art as their foreign brethren, the term 'mocking-bird' might be very appropriately applied to not a few. The development of these powers frequently takes place when in confinement, the exercise of the faculty seeming to afford much enjoyment to the performer. Amongst the British birds which may be taught to utter words and short sentences are the magpie, jay, starling, and jackdaw. The first-mentioned of these, it is said, may be taught to speak almost as plainly as the parrot does; and the starling may be taught to say almost anything, as well as to whistle tunes. A goldfinch has been known to mimic to the life the chirp of the sparrow, the 'Spink, spink' of the chaffinch, the twittering of the swallow, the bell-like 'scold' of the blackbird, the notes of the oxeye tit, the bunting, the whitethroat, and the wren—in fact, any and every bird's cry that he had the chance of hearing during his ten years' confinement.

The bullfinch is a notable imitator of tunes, while the canary frequently reproduces parts of the airs that have been whistled or played in his hearing. There is on record a most interesting and curious case of mimicry by a canary. A gentleman having taken temporary rooms in a London lodging-house, was much disturbed during his first evening's stay there by the persistent striking of a clock (utterly regardless of time) outside his room. It became so annoying to him, that he opened the door for the purpose of calling his landlady, when, to his surprise, the sound suddenly ceased. Upon questioning the landlady, he found that the sound was made by a pet canary whose cage was placed in a window-seat outside his door. The imitation was so exact that it was impossible to detect the fraud by the ear alone.

Reculver Marsh, on the coast of Kent, is much frequented by lapwings and skylarks, the latter of which have adopted the peculiar and well-known alarm-cry of the plover. These birds are also imitators of the cry of the ringed plover. Professor Newton tells us of another imitator of the lapwing—the starling, who, moreover, has been heard to imitate the twittering of the swallow. Jays, again, are said to be able to reproduce the peculiar notes of the carrion crow.

There are very few persons who have intruded upon the nesting-ground of the lapwing who have not been deceived by the piteous cry and painful fluttering of an apparently wounded bird; for the plover is an excellent mimic in this respect, and by these means succeeds in drawing off the novice from her nested treasure. Titlarks, wild-ducks, wagtails, and sandpipers also thus exercise their reasoning faculties and powers of mimicry.

Death-simulation is a species of mimicry or fraud not unfrequently practised by birds when suddenly alarmed. The following is one out of numerous instances that might be cited: Some ten yards from her nest on Lough Neagh, a water-hen was discovered lying on her side, partly in the water, her head being concealed by one of the large loose stones which lay about the spot. The bird was picked up by the tip of the wing; and as its limbs were relaxed, and to all appear-

ance it was quite dead, the holder was about to drop it to the ground again, when, to his intense astonishment, the mimic suddenly flapped its wings and took to flight. The landrail has been known to simulate death in a similar manner, and under the closest examination it showed not the slightest sign of life. The pretence was continued until some time after it had been stowed away in the captor's pocket, when, with a sudden effort, it escaped from its prison and flew away as if nothing had happened.

Not only are certain individuals of the feathered tribes true mimics, but it is possible, nay, probable, that some few also are ventriloquists. Mr Rigg Withers tells us that during his wanderings in the forests of Brazil he discovered a bird-ventriloquist which has a peculiar shrieking cry as loud as a peacock's, and which is known as the Bell-bird. He thus writes about it: 'It is seldom seen in its wild state, being, like the musical frog, a ventriloquist of very high powers, and as a sun-loving bird, a frequenter of the highest tree-tops, where its snow-white plumage and transparent wings render it almost invisible even when in motion.' From a description of this bird's performances in confinement, it appears that its notes were heard in every quarter of the small village, and seemed at times to come from the mountains at the back of the village, fully a quarter of a mile away.

Mr Bowdler Sharpe tells us that one day in early spring, when in a wood near Mongeron, France, his ear was arrested by a loud and not unmusical cry like that of a titmouse. As the sound appeared to be close to where he was standing, he searched all the trees in the immediate neighbourhood, but could find no bird of the Tit family. At length, however, he discovered that the notes were produced by a creeper which was busily engaged in search of insect-food on a tree some ten yards away. The cry, he states, was ventriloquial, sometimes appearing to be uttered close at hand and sometimes at a distance.

Whether or not the cornerake is gifted with the power of ventriloquy, we do not know, but we well remember how frequently in our bird-nesting days we were deluded by this bird. Stealthily making our way along some hedgeside, we would be suddenly startled by the 'Crake, crake' of the landrail, seemingly close at hand. With 'cautious steps and slow' we would make our way through the long grass towards the spot whence the sound proceeded, when, as though the bird were gifted with the power of invisible flight, it would be transported to a spot some hundred yards away. Towards this we would cautiously proceed; but just when we appeared to be within a few feet, without a rustle, without a blade of grass stirring, and apparently without a pause, the monotonous 'Crake, crake' would be heard at a still farther distance. As we think of it now, we can distinctly recall the 'haunted' feeling we experienced as we stood in the meadow (it was evening) listening to the landrail's notes, which seemed to swell and die away almost to an echo, as does a peal of bells on a fitful breeze; and we are strongly inclined to think that the cause of the sound appearing to emanate from so many points almost at the same time is due to a ventriloquial power with which the bird is

probably endowed. The grasshopper-warbler and the ring-ousel possess similar powers, which are, doubtless, a means of protection to them, being used to lure away the intruder from their nests.

LONG JAKE'S TRIP HOME.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

LONG JAKE had been indulging in his periodical spree. The fact first dawned upon him with the dawning day, when a heavy driving shower beat into the veranda and soaked him where he lay like a log. As the day advanced, the truth grew gradually sharper and clearer, and piece by piece he began to patch together those fragments of the past few days which still lingered, with blurred outline, in his memory. Yet, though his head ached again—perhaps from the mental effort, perhaps from other exciting causes—of the greater part of the time he was able to recall absolutely nothing. It was on Friday he had ridden into the township from his hut beyond Razorback, and, as a matter of course, parted with that thirty pound cheque to John Byrne, the publican: he was quite sure of that. It was now Tuesday afternoon, and John Byrne, the publican, had plainly intimated that the end of the spirituous tether which that cheque had secured was arrived at: alas! he was equally sure of this. But the interim was a nebulous void. Thus the knowledge that he had been four days drunk stole slowly into the blunted sense of Long Jake, as day steals into some cave deep in the mountains, forcing its laboured way through gap, rift, and crevice. But it was not until it came to catching and saddling his mare, with infinite difficulty and feeble vexation of spirit, that he fully realised and appreciated all that had gone on.

At last, however, he was in the saddle, sitting tight with thigh and knee, the upper part of him huddled into a ball. Not much of a man to look at, at any time; no grace of feature or of form; not even a really good seat in the saddle. Nothing of any account from head to heel. A small fresh-coloured face; crooked beard, turning gray; legs absurdly long in proportion to the rest of him, and that the shape of a bow. They called him Long Jake; for his ill-apportioned length was the man's sole individuality; and as for surname, it was never dreamed that he had one, either in this little township of King-parrot Flat or in the surrounding ranges.

'Well?' shouted John Byrne from the veranda that fronted his grog-shanty, as Jake rode round from the yard. 'So you're off, eh? And when shall we see you again? Not for another six months, I s'pose.—So long.' John Byrne spoke sadly, yet with the consoling certainty with which one augurs the return of summer while watching the falling leaves. For Long Jake was one of his regular sources of income—had been for years. To look at John Byrne as he stood there in his red shirt and cabbage-tree hat, tall and handsome as he was, you would never have taken him for a shark and a robber. On the contrary—though these terms, I assure you, would have been none too hard for him—you would probably have discovered in him a type of rugged, solid, honest manhood. At all events everybody else did—at first sight.

Jake muttered something profane but incoherent in reply, and flung a sulky nod to the knot of loafers in the veranda, who, having been drinking at his expense since Friday, returned it with an interest not dissociated from satire. Then he was off at a brisk canter, sitting, as some one unkindly observed, 'like a sack of coals;' and, though sitting close, swaying in the saddle every few strides, in clear indication that his balance was as yet imperfect.

Tenements, whether wood or canvas, were few enough at King-parrot Flat; but what there were lay wide apart on either side the broad bush highway, divided by clumps of gum and belts of wattle and wild fern; so that the township, which could have been set down in three or four acres just as well, extended from end to end nearly a mile. As Jake passed close in front of the opposition grog-shanty at the other side of the road, higher up, he was playfully hooted by a second—naturally hostile—knot of loafers. Outside Harrison's store, still higher up, the aged Harrison, who was sunning himself in front of the house, laid down his newspaper and broke into a cackle of senile mirth as the odd horseman—whom he took for an Australian John Gilpin—thundered past. And little Martha Byrne, driving back the cows from the creek, made such an impudent, impish grimace in his very path, that Long Jake turned in the saddle with a more savage look upon John Byrne's child than he had hurled back at the grown men. Even the cows stood still to regard him with blank astonishment, as he clattered through their midst. There was only one house left to pass—a long, low, new building, more pretentious than any other in the township. It was the new store, lately opened by new arrivals in the colony; the bold venture of a young immigrant couple, and so far held in supreme contempt by the broad spirits of King-parrot Flat. Mrs Truscott—the township said unanimously—*might* be a fine young woman; they weren't so sure about that, however; but one thing they were sure about—she would have to get rid of those confounded 'old-country airs' of hers before they had anything to do either with her or her stuck-up husband. As for the latter, why, he actually thought he knew something about horses; as if a new chum in the colony *could* know anything about horses! And he had a young colt or two up there in his yards that he was breaking in, English fashion. Just fancy trying on that kind of 'rot' with bush-horses! King-parrot Flat thought it all an excellent joke, though one which—as men of 'savvy'—they could not help feeling strongly about.

Now the road to Razorback twisted abruptly round the corner of this Truscott's store; and after passing the store, Jake would be alike beyond the township and range of those arrows of ridicule to which an unsteady rider presents a gratuitous target. He therefore made no attempt to check his pace as he swept round close to the picket-fence in front of Truscott's veranda. Had he done so, he might have heard and understood the bounding thuds of a bucking horse, close at hand, before he doubled the angle of the fence and before it was too late to prevent a collision; for Truscott had mounted a vicious young brute that was at that moment bucking furiously. As it was, before either rider could utter a cry, the horses met.

Jake was thrown clean and far; and as ground and sky whirled before him, the last thing he saw was the young horse reared, as it seemed, into the dark-blue vault overhead—trembling in the balance—falling backward.

Jake was only half-stunned by the fall, but he was more than half-sobered. In an instant he had picked himself up. The colt was just rising to its legs, apparently no worse; his own mare was cantering awkwardly away, with her near foreleg thrust through the reins; and on the ground, close to the stockyard rail, lay a heap of gray flannel and white moleskin and quivering flesh. At sight of this, alcohol seemed to reassert its sway in Jake's brain; it reeled; and he was hardly more conscious of what followed than of what took place around him while he was lying helpless and insensate at John Byrne's.

Twenty minutes later, the rushing air on his temples brought him once more to his sober senses. He was on the mare, and was riding swiftly back to the hut. Then, for the second time that day, Long Jake tried to piece together what had happened. But now all came back to him consecutively and with fearful vividness: How he had crept timidly up to the thing that lay so still, touched it, and started back; lifted an arm, and let it drop heavily. How he had taken the warm yet lifeless body in his arms, and, exerting all his strength, staggered with it round to the veranda, where a shrieking, laughing maniac had rushed out upon him. How, in spite of the madwoman, he had borne in his burden and laid it down as gently as might be. How, very soon, a noisy rabble rushed up; how he answered their questions as clearly as he could, and promised to return to the township if wanted; and was then suffered to break away. All as in a dream.

But that night, when safely back at his shepherd's hut, away on the sloping pasture-land beyond Razorback, when darkness fell over all things, and the white dead gum-trees towered like risen spectres on the side of the range—that night, Long Jake lay tossing on his bunk and making sure that this time, at last, delirium tremens had fairly caught him. For the moon, shooting her cold rays through the open door of the hut, cast a ghostly white shadow on the sandy floor—a gleaming ghostly shadow, sliced as with a knife out of the surrounding blackness, and taking the hideous shape of a coffin; and outside, the young saplings were nodding their heads like funeral plumes; and the crickets croaking a hoarse, monotonous, maddening dirge. Then anon the dead face of the man was thrust before his disordered vision; and anon the frantic face of the woman. So that at last he could bear it no longer, but tore himself from the bunk, and roamed through the night, half-dressed as he was, among the pale corpses of trees, until the morning dew upon his uncovered head, and the morning breeze upon his fevered temples, helped to cool and clear the poor bewildered brain.

Long Jake was in the habit of planning these systematic carousals of his with a deliberation that was little short of horrible. This time he had waited patiently until heavy rain filled the creeks and water-holes, so that his flocks had the best of feed and water close at hand; and

he had trimmed and mended the rude fences of the great paddocks, and left everything generally snug. Then he had obtained from his employer a substantial cheque, on the pretext of buying a horse at Wattletown. For the projected 'bust' was by no means Jake's first since his installation in the hut on Razorback, and he was well aware that if he were found out—let alone the harm that might or might not befall the sheep during his absence—it would be at least as much as his place was worth: that was thirty shillings a week, plus rations, and in itself was of small consideration; he could get as much, perhaps more, from any squatter in the colony, as an experienced shepherd and boundary-man. But somehow, Jake had got to like the place for its own sake. He was content in his solitary life among the grim and sombre ranges. Indeed, this queer, reserved, nameless old fellow found the solitude of Razorback the best thing in life. I am not sure that he did not regard those 'busts' at King-parrot Flat simply as so many necessary life-tonics which he owed it to himself to administer with unfailing regularity. At anyrate the rude slab hut, the cats, the cockatoo, the very prints pasted on the walls—these simple signs grew by degrees to spell for Long Jake the word—'Home.' And until this time he had experienced nothing but thankfulness and relief on returning home, sick and wearied from his excesses.

But this time it was different. Home conveyed no comfort; he could not rest. He felt that which—out of a pretty lengthy experience of similar after-glows—he had never felt before—namely, shame. That was not the worst of it, however. The dead storekeeper was always before his eyes. And when riding through the bush, he found himself unconsciously looking over his shoulder, fearfully expectant of the wild face and uplifted arm of the woman whom he had been instrumental in making a widow. For brooding exaggerated the circumstances of the accident, until the brand of the primal murderer would burn on the brow of Long Jake in the dead of night and send the poor self-accuser wandering pitifully over the ranges.

Rough as the life was in the old days—the other time-honoured epithet is for the optimists—there were still coroners to be had for the sending, even in the ranges. And a couple of days after the accident, a messenger summoned Long Jake to the inquest at the dead man's store. Well, no blame was laid on poor Jake, except by himself; and he galloped back without speaking to a soul outside the store. The widow could not be brought to attend the inquiry, and she was not seen.

A part of the weight that pressed it down was now lifted from the mind of Long Jake, but only a slight part. In the distorted perspective of his own mind he was still blood-guilty; and could there be degrees in blood-guiltiness? He would have ridden into the home-station and laid bare his naked feelings to the boss, who was a kind and just man, and who, moreover, would certainly hear of the accident from other—possibly unkind—lips. But, unfortunately, the one rigid rule of Long Jake's life was, never to lay bare a fraction of his feelings to a fellow-man. However, after a few days, a journey to

the homestead, for rations, became imperative. It was high noon when, amid a loud barking of dogs, Jake led his mare into the rough stable and walked over to the store. Within, the young gentleman from England—who was obliging enough to acquire 'colonial experience' at a nominal salary—was whistling shrilly.

'Ha! it's you, Long Jake,' he cried as Jake entered. 'Rations? All right; in a minute; but—hang it!—shake a paw first, do.' He was evidently in tremendous spirits; and Jake was too perfectly colonised to be in sympathy with any such demonstration. He held out his hand sulkily; he intended to have his rations at once, and go. But the high-spirited young gentleman went on whistling noisily and packing emu eggs in sawdust, as if no one was at the other side of the counter waiting to be served.

'Tell you what's up,' he presently volunteered, pausing in his song; 'I'm off home! Sick o' this, don't you know—rough as blazes, and all that kind of thing. Yes, home to England! Jolly, eh?' A vivacious continuation of the interrupted tune, in another key, and then: 'Sail next Tuesday week; Blackwall liner; good business, eh?' Crescendo: the whole store filled with the volume of this young Briton's whistle.

'If it's a fair question,' asked Jake, when the tune had come to a blatant end on a wrong note, 'what might a passage cost?'

'Just the sort of question it is—ha, ha!—you don't see it, though!' laughed the other airily. 'Why, about seventy pounds, first-class.'

'Ah, but second?'

'Oh, about thirty, I should say.—Why? Are you thinking of going home too?'

Jake said curtly that he wasn't; and asked plainly if he might expect to be served that morning.

While the young man was busy with the scales, William Noble—'the boss'—came into the store and conversed pleasantly with his boundary-man without one allusion to King-parrot Flat. And before he left the homestead, Long Jake ascertained that he had still five pounds seventeen and eightpence standing to his credit in the station books.

'Thirty pounds!' he muttered strangely as he remounted the mare. He had 'lammed down' that sum at John Byrne's the week before! He rode home to the hut in silent thought; but when he dismounted at the well-known spot, he once more whispered, 'Thirty pounds!' This time the words fell naturally from his lips; they had formed the keynote of his reflections during the ten-mile ride.

THE CAUSE OF DROUGHTS.

In a clever little brochure lately given to the world by Mr Velschow of Copenhagen, the author, in treating of *The Natural Law of Relation between Rainfall and Vegetable Life*, aims high, for, in his short concise treatise, he endeavours 'to set forth a theory of the formation of deserts, notably those in Australia, and to give an explanation of the real cause of deserts and droughts; thereby indicating how far it may become possible to work against, and in many instances eventually overcome, the evil of drought.' If his theory and

remedy are correct, South Africa, which is a land of droughts as well as Australia, ought to profit by Mr Velschow's observations.

But he is not by any means the first writer who has propounded the 'general principle' 'that absence of vegetable life is the real cause of absence of rain,' though he seems to think that in so saying he will 'hardly find many followers.' Indeed, one might almost say the idea is as old as the hills. One very ancient writer, Critias (about 600 B.C.), speaks of the 'sickness of a country in consequence of deforestation;' and more than three hundred years ago, Fernando Colon declared that 'the rains in Madeira and the Canaries had become rarer since the trees had been cut down.' Humboldt and many others have given forth their notes of warning—alas! too often unheeded—with the consequence that, on account of the destruction of timber, vast countries are subject to drought.

This has not always been the work of the European settler only. In Southern Africa, we know that the natives have a regular season for setting fire to the long rank grass which grows in Kafraria and in different parts of the various colonies and states, thereby frequently injuring large tracts of forest-land; and this custom was kept up by the early Dutch Boers; also that of chopping down all the mimosas, the thorny branches of which they use to make their sheep and cattle kraals. Dr J. Crombie Brown, when government botanist at the Cape of Good Hope, studied the subject deeply, and in his work upon the *Hydrology of South Africa*, says, speaking of bush-fires: 'In this way does the destruction of forests by fire tend to promote the desiccation of a country so far by combustion, and further by exposure of the humus to decomposition by the sun's rays destroying one of the constituents of the soil which exercises great retentive power on its moisture.' And again, in his book on *Forests and Moisture, or Effects of Forests on Humidity of Climate*, he says: 'There are cases in which an extensive destruction of forest has been followed by a marked desiccation of soil and aridity of climate, and some cases in which the replanting of trees has been followed by a more or less complete restoration of humidity; or the planting of trees where there were none has been followed by a degree of humidity greatly in excess of what had previously been observed.'

But South African writers upon this subject are too many to be enumerated. In a little book, written several years ago, *The Farm in the Karoo*, the chapter upon Karoo Deserts takes up the subject, also quoting a paper that Mr C. Brown had read before the British Association at Clifton. Mr Velschow's chapters on what he calls the 'air-cushion' are very interesting, and give a reason for that most distressing phenomenon we so often used to observe in Southern Africa in times of drought, namely, the coming up of clouds evidently well charged with moisture, and their gradual dispersion without apparently bursting or leaving a single drop of rain.

We have lived in the Karoo during a severe drought, when not only every blade of grass had long disappeared, and every leaf and twig of the Karoo bushes had followed, but the very stems and stalks of the plants were barked by

the hungry, starving sheep and goats; and well do we remember our all rushing out of the house in answer to the cry, 'There is a small cloud coming up from the sea.' How we watched that cloud! It came on steadily till it was nearly over our heads. Surely it would descend in a copious shower, for its aerial voyage was at an end, and it seemed stationary. Alas, although the cloud did not move on farther, all the same it was soon gone, and not a drop of rain had fallen on any portion of that thirsty land. It only rained *in* the clouds, and went towards helping to saturate what Mr Velschow calls the 'air-cushion.' He says: 'The sky over the inner plains of Australia is generally for weeks covered with clouds before rain ultimately sets in after a drought; and during this time, the clouds are constantly engaged in discharging moisture, until the air-cushion at last becomes saturated. Then the clouds no longer discharge moisture into the air, but on the earth's surface itself.' Thus showing that if the clear transparent air just above the earth were moistened by the evaporation from vegetation or forest-trees, the rain-clouds would pass through the air-cushion by amalgamating with the moisture already therein.

This is the reason of our having such great floods of rain after a drought in South Africa, when rivers are frequently rendered impassable for several days at a time. The water is there, although we do not see it; and when at last the air-cushion is broken into by some powerful electric disturbance, it falls to the earth in torrents so abundant that rivers rise to a height of forty and even seventy feet above their usual level; the greater part of the water rushing away at once to the sea, a comparatively small quantity being saved by dams and reservoirs.

The application of the theory in a practical form is, that when the land becomes cultivated and clothed with cornfields, vineyards, hop-grounds, and orchards, as well as having the forest-lands continually renewed, the rain-clouds, attracted by the evaporation which will inevitably ascend from all such growth, will be constantly distilling as rains the moisture taken up from the ocean, thus preventing the great air-cushion from ever becoming so dry and waterless that in satisfying its own great thirst, the dire disaster of drought is felt all through the land.

PRINTING INK FROM SPENT COTTON WASTE.

The utilisation of waste products, which has made such great progress during the last two decades, has experienced a further development in a department in which we are more especially interested. We refer to the process of Mr C. T. Bastand, of 38 Riley Street, Bermondsey, London, by means of which spent cotton waste is made to yield up all the oil and greasy matter contained in it, the latter being subsequently converted into that useful agent of civilisation, printer's ink. Cotton waste, as our readers are aware, is used to clean machinery of all descriptions. When spent—that is to say, used up—it is full of refuse oil and grease. Hitherto, it has been the practice to boil the spent cotton waste in a solution of caustic soda, by which process all the grease is extracted, to wash it, and mix it with

new waste, when it is again placed upon the market. The oils and grease are allowed to run to waste.

Mr Bastand proceeds in a very different and at the same time highly remunerative manner. He places the spent cotton waste in a closed cylinder heated by steam by means of an interior coil. He then pumps a solution of bisulphate of carbon into the cylinder containing the waste, upon which the chemical acts, separating the oil and grease. In their combined state, the bisulphate solution and oil are then run by him into another steam-heated cylinder. Here the bisulphate becomes vaporised, and passes thence to condensers, and is finally run into a stone tank, to be used over and over again, the loss of bisulphate being almost imperceptible. The cotton waste freed from oil is washed, dried, and sold again.

The far more valuable product obtained, the oil, is run from the second cylinder into tanks, pumped thence into a copper heated by a small portable furnace, running on wheels, and freed from all moisture. It is then pumped into a second copper, where it is converted into the varnish from which printing ink is made. When the varnish has been brought down to its proper consistency, the furnace is withdrawn, and the varnish is taken to the mixing-house, where it is incorporated with the necessary pigments and other ingredients necessary to produce the various shades and qualities of printing ink. When mixed, the crude ink is ground in a French buhrstone mill, and, after grinding, delivered into a machine, in which it is passed between rollers a number of times, according to the quality of ink required. To obtain the lampblack used in the manufacture of printing ink, a portion of the recovered oil is used; and thus what was formerly wasted is converted into the medium which enters so largely into the diffusion of knowledge.

BURIED TREASURES.

'Tis true my later years are blest
With all that riches can bestow,
But there is wealth, wealth cannot buy,
Hid in the mines of 'Long Ago.'

There jealous guard does Memory keep;
Yet sometimes, when I dream alone,
She comes and takes my hand in hers,
And shows me what was once my own.

I revel 'mong such precious things;
I count my treasures o'er and o'er;
I learn the worth of some, whose worth,
Ah me! I never knew before.

And then all slowly fades away,
And I return to things *you* know,
With empty hands and tear-filled eyes,
Back from the mines of 'Long Ago.'

MARIE HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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THAT STITCH IN TIME.

BY MRS LYNN LINTON.

THAT proverbial stitch in time is said to save nine. It might be said to save ninety and nine, and yet leave a few hundreds as a reserve in hand. Time and Opportunity have thick forelocks in front, and never so much as a solitary gray hair at their bare polls by which to seize them and compel them to halt when once they have passed; so, moments must be caught as they fly, and things, if they are to be done effectually, must be done promptly. 'Never put off till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day,' is a better rule of action than the Spaniard's lazy *mañana*, or Lord Palmerston's half-laughing, half-cynical dictum about the self-answering property of letters if left long enough unnoticed. Those who understand the true science of life take their Time emphatically by the forelock and leave nothing to mend itself. With them rents are sewn up, thin places strengthened, weak attachments tightened, missing bits supplied, all as soon as needed. Thus, preventable disaster never wrecks their lives, while premature decay of valuable material is unknown, and all things last to their natural term. But this can be done only by taking the fault at the beginning. The boy's finger stopped the little hole in the dike which an hour's neglect would have widened into a disastrous breach. The insignificant rent which a few delicate stitches would have brought together and made invisible, left to increase by time and friction, becomes absolute destruction of all usefulness or beauty; and the old nursery apologue of how, for want of a timely nail, the shoe, the horse, and the rider were successively lost, is exemplified in practice every day of every year.

If all life-lore could be concentrated into one axiom, that of the stitch in time would be the wise man's device. It spreads itself everywhere. Like the protoplasmic monad, it envelops every circumstance, and converts to its own law every

fact and every feeling. That stitch in time applies to emotions as well as to things—to persons as well as to events. It includes for one the misunderstandings which, be as careful as one may, will arise between friends. That 'something light as air,' that gossamer thread of suspicion, of displeasure, of misreading, detaches itself from the solid garment of affection, and incontinently the stout well-knitted fabric begins to unravel. The floating end is of the finest description, and a few stitches would fasten it back into its place and prevent all the after-results. But those stitches are neglected, and for want of them the entire fabric slowly and surely unravels into ruin. Of the former closely woven garment of friendship not a vestige remains; only a heap of unsightly thrums and ends, which bring as much annoyance as the former had brought pleasure. A frank demand for a frank explanation would have cleared away the misunderstanding, and would have been the stitch in time to save not only nine but the whole concern. That something light as air was a mere cobweb—a fancy—a suspicion—an idea—no more solid than the cloud which looks from a distance to be a solid entity, and when near at hand is found to be as unsubstantial as a dream. It could have been brushed away with a feather. The dropped stitch might have been fastened back with a hair: but the first beginnings were neglected; and that hole in the well-built dike through which the waters began to ooze, so gently, so slowly, that a boy's finger could stop them, became a breach which swept away farms and homesteads, brave men and noble women, cattle and little children, and left the whole face of the country scarred and desolate.

Quarrels follow the same law. That stitch in time, the 'soft answer which turneth away wrath,' has been neglected, and in its place rent added to rent, thrust for thrust and goad for spur, bring the inevitable result of total disruption, unmendable disintegration. Two irascible people make but short work of peace and amity. When they come together in the bonds of matrimony

they come only to part when the cat-and-dog life they lead has become insupportable. Had one of the two just so much respect for this old adage of ours as to forbear to snarl when the other growls—to stitch back the hanging hook, the loosened tape, before weakness of attachment becomes total severance—the thing would have worn into its fitting groove like many another angular marriage. But there was none of this wisdom; so, quarrels begat quarrels, and weakness became dissolution, and what a little forbearance and patience and foresight might have made a success, fell to pieces as a failure; and two people were left bruised and maimed and stranded on the shore of desolation, all for want of that stitch in time—that soft answer which turneth away wrath.

With habits of extravagance leading to debt, disaster, ruin, and perhaps dishonour, that stitch in time is of primal importance. It is needful to begin at the beginning of things if any good is to be done—to fasten back at the first unravelling, if the fabric of a man's fortune is to be preserved. It is of no use to let rents go on till almost all the original stuff has been torn away, till the gold has melted into vapour under the blowpipe of bills and IOUs. No readjusting can make an exiguous garment as comfortable a fit as it was when there was plenty of space everywhere. The material has been destroyed, and failing the fresh supply got by a lucky speculation, no more is at hand. A man's coat must be cut according to the amount of cloth wherewith he is supplied; and when he has only enough for a jacket he cannot make an ulster. If heed had been taken of the first rent and the initial hole had been stitched up, all would have been well. As things are, no power on earth can replace that which has been thrown away, and no alchemy of retrenchment can restore that which has been wilfully consumed. All future expenditure must be based on the narrowest line consistent with stability; and the pleasures which were once had daily by the bushel are now scarce at the half-pint. All for want of that stitch in time which ought to have sewn up the first unravelling and prevented the rent from growing larger!

What is true of habits of extravagance is true also of all habits of every kind. Human nature is at once plastic and rigid. It runs easily into a mould, but it sets as easily as it runs. That extra glass, taken once or twice for the nameless 'sinking' which impatience will not bear and for which imprudence demands a 'pick-me-up,' soon becomes a habit which has to be perpetually renewed and as perpetually increased. The little stitch in time, that small effort of self-restraint which would have been so easy in the beginning before the habit had rooted, becomes by time impossible, and the minute hole in the dike increases till it becomes a breach through which rush the strong waters of hopeless and irremediable drunkenness. The habit, so easy to have been checked in the beginning, becomes the overmastering and overwhelming controller of destiny; and destruction and disgrace follow on the failure to put in that stitch in time which would have saved all. So with gambling, so with indolence, so with evil-speaking, so with meanness, and on to the end of the cata-

logue. If cockatrices are to be destroyed, you must begin with the egg. If you let them hatch out and live till they are full grown, the chances are they will devour you instead. And is not this eminently true of health, as well as of habits which have a more moral side to them? That neglected cold, my friend, nearly cost you your life. You neglected the warning of that 'oppression on your chest,' of that cough which shook you to pieces, and thought that a brave heart and stout will could subdue inflammation without much ado. When you were lying between life and death, for twenty-four hours on the brink of the Eternal River, you learnt the value of that stitch in time which would have saved you more than the proverbial nine. Had you nursed your cold when only a cold, it would not have developed into double pneumonia. Had you crushed your cockatrice in the egg, those blood-stained blows of his would not have struck so near your heart. How much those little stitches, not taken up in the beginning, have to answer for when they are called neglected colds! Half the diseases on the list come from them. Also from those symptoms of overstrain, neglected and disregarded, do we plunge into sad issues. That dear valuable friend and mother, now lying at the point of death, would be still hale and hearty had she laid up when those first uncomfortable sensations pointed to the storm signals of her health. She did not heed them—thought she would work her way through the breakers and wear down the threatened dangers; and only when dropsy supervened and her poor feet would no longer bear her weight, only then did she consent to keep the bed wherein a timely lodgment would have saved all the rents that came. It would have been the stitch in time, and the rent would have been replaced with a patch as good as new.

So we go on, and the roll-call is as long as there are circumstances in human history. We stop the first evil reports, or of ourselves or of our friends, and the slander dies, like a upas tree cut at the root. To let it go on would have been to let it spread and propagate, till half a hundred seedlings, half a hundred variants, all differing from each other and all false, had filled the ground and obscured the light of day. Who knows now how many of the slanderous tales sent home by unfriendly ambassadors in the days when no newspapers checked rumours and sifted reports, were true or false? The repute of those dead personages has been marred for all time by this word and that, set in the midst of confidential letters sent by trusty envoys sworn to fidelity and secrecy. From that word came all the rest. It was the first unravelling, and there was no friendly hand to stitch up the rent. Who knows? Faustina, Lucrezia Borgia, Catharine de' Medici—to mention the most salient three of history—perhaps they were the victims of slander, and their fair fame has been the unravelled fabric which the stitch in time did not save. It may well be so. Closer at hand and in these present days of fuller publicity, we have reports now of this prominent personage and now of that, which adherents deny and opponents repeat. Vague slanders float in the air. Kleptomania, drunkenness, madness, immorality—the little rent begins by some

imprudent gossip who has mistranslated, or more simply imagined, and the thing spreads. The 'Jacob's ladder' which defaces a shining garment spreads till it has ruined all, because the stitch in time of vigorous denial has been wanting. 'Small habits well pursued betimes, may reach the dignity of crimes,' says Mrs Hannah More. A match maliciously struck may burn down a palace. A masked torpedo boat, set afloat out of sight, may wreck the noblest ship that ever outrode a tempest and won a fight; and so a few words of poisonous import may destroy a character past all future rehabilitation—unless, indeed, we take heed of the beginnings, remember the old adage about the stitch in time, and put our heel on the cockatrice egg before it has hatched itself out and become the parent of a countless brood.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXVII.

As a matter of course, the farmer's cronies came to know that his portrait was being painted; and when at the end of the second sitting the head was put in, in a very firm and resolute fashion, quite a little stream of them dribbled in at odd hours to look at it. There were all sorts of doubts and surmises as to what was to happen to the unfinished parts of the picture, but about the live portion of it there already there was no doubt whatever. The actual Shorthouse seemed to look out of the canvas, ruddy and tanned and lined, honest, prejudiced, thickheaded, and kindly, a type of the old-fashioned rustic midland man, hardly to be excelled in value. The farmer knew nothing about schools of art; but he had gone to a passionate realist, and ignorant as he was, he could hardly fail to see some of the differences between the pale, timid, and stupid conventionalities of his wife's portrait and the masterly veracity of his own. The idea that Jousserau was, as his daughter had suggested, possibly a gentleman, had taken possession of him, and he called him 'young man' no longer. Where and when he had learned as much as that, he would have been puzzled to tell; but he was somehow aware that a Frenchman claimed the right to be addressed as 'mossoo,' and that title he bestowed on Jousserau, to the painter's great amusement and enjoyment.

When the antique silver flagon with its rim of foaming beer, the blue coat and the red waistcoat, the Brosely pipe, and the tumbler were all set upon the canvas, the farmer's self-congratulation was almost without bounds. Day by day, as Jousserau finished his morning's work, he put the canvas away in the best parlour, turning its face to the wall, and exacting a promise that no dusting should be done while it remained there. Half-a-dozen times in the course of the day the farmer would turn the work round, handling it as tenderly as if it had been a new-born child; and sometimes he would spend a whole half-hour in the contemplation of the work. The tankard looked as if one could actually lift it; the pipe was fragile and slender as it was in nature; the glass of beer, with its encircling ring of dying foam, looked drinkable. The red plush waistcoat was like plush, the blue coat like blue cloth, the brass buttons like brass buttons. The picture bade

fair to be a source of perennial enjoyment to him, and he thought that he had never laid out ten pounds to such advantage in his life.

The morning hours spent in the farmer's kitchen—for there, for the sake of the light, Jousserau insisted on pitching his easel—were not without their sentimental effect upon the artist. Monsieur Jousserau's experiences in affairs of the heart were varied, and his aspect toward the sex was variable and inconsistent. He was either over head and ears in love with some one of its charming members, and ready for her sweet sake to forgive all her sisters the faults he charged against them; or he was for the moment a confirmed misogynist, armed with epigrams by a hundred of his fellow-countrymen. His action in courtship was rapid and decided, and three or four interviews with any lady who took his fancy served generally to bring him to the point of declaration. No one of the dozen or two to whom he had proposed under these conditions had as yet found this brusque and lively method of wooing satisfactory, and the good little man had indeed been unfortunate in the fact that a fair half of the ladies of his choice had been already bespoken. Finding his offer set aside, he returned to his misogyny, and condemned all women for at least a fortnight.

Perhaps he was learning something from experience, or perhaps he was inwardly aware of something more serious in his conditions than he had hitherto observed. Be these things as they may, he made no matrimonial overtures to Cecilia, and it is possible that, like the immortal parrot of the story, he refrained from speaking because he thought the more. His one overt act was to hint to the farmer that it would be a pleasant thing to have a portrait of Mees Cecilia. Shorthouse took kindly to the notion, and the painter presented himself with a new canvas before the girl herself had been made aware of the project. She resisted it at first, but feebly, and gave her first sitting to a running accompaniment of blushes, which to Jousserau's mind became her especially well. The young lady gave her *séance* later in the day than her father had done, and the farmer absented himself from his affairs to play propriety. He would stand pipe in mouth behind the painter, watching him with untiring interest, and became more absorbed in the picture's progress than he had been even when he had been himself the subject. He had never known how pretty Cecilia was, and probably never would have known if nobody had come to show him; but she made a lovely picture, and there she was in actual flesh and blood evidence to justify the painter's reading of her. Jousserau had caught her with a certain half-pensive smile, which Farmer Shorthouse would never have had the eye to notice.

'It's thee to the life, Cecilia,' he would say a dozen times a day. 'I've seen thee lookin' like that hunderds an' hunderds o' times.—It's the very spit on her. It ain't like a picture; it's like another gell a-sittin' there, the very livin' image on her.'

The farmer paid, and Jousserau received with perfect gravity his twenty pounds for the two pictures, as if that sum had really represented the value of his work. But when the work was done and the visits to the house were all over, he became unutterably mournful and *distrain*,

wandering about the yellowing lanes in solitude, and composing in his own language sonnets to his mistress' eyebrow.

The cronies who had come to see the farmer's counterfeit presentment came also to see Cecilia's. They were all critically admiring; but for the most part the merits of the Brosely pipe, the silver tankard, the red plush waistcoat, and the glass of beer pleased them better than the delicate beauty of the second work. The farmer was uncertain in his own opinion, and wanted a sound criticism to go upon. So one morning when the two works were freshly framed, and he stood in the best parlour surveying them and debating their respective merits in his mind, the voice of the vicar came like an inspiration to him.

Now, Parson Heathcote was a personage in those parts, being no less than first-cousin to my Lady Barfield. He was a man of wealth and taste, and everybody knew that the parsonage boasted a fine collection of pictures. The farmer hailed his arrival, therefore, and at once inducted him into the parlour to give judgment on Jousserau's handiwork. The polished cleric put up his eyeglasses with a fine want of interest, but had no sooner looked at the canvases than he changed his manner. 'Why, Shorthouse, Shorthouse! what are these? Where did you find the man who did these?'

'He's a Frenchman from foreign parts,' Shorthouse answered. 'I found him a-drawing and colouring the cows in one of my fields.'

'A wandering artist,' said the vicar. 'Come, this is interesting. What does he make you pay for these?'

'Ten pounds apiece,' said Shorthouse. '—I don't think it's out of the way, sir.'

'Rather curiously out of the way, to my mind.'

'—Do you know, my friend Shorthouse, that you might pay five hundred and get no better work? —What's the man's name?'

'I've got it wrote out here somewhere,' said Shorthouse. 'I don't seem to sound it like he does. I can't get my tongue round it. It's wrote out on a piece of pasteboard,' he continued, groping in his waistcoat pockets. '—Ay, here it is.'

'Jousserau!' cried the vicar, 'Achille Jousserau! —What brings him over here? Why, he's the designer of the great memorial window for Lord Barfield, which is to be unveiled for next Sunday. —Let me tell you, Shorthouse, that he must be particularly fond of you to paint your portrait for ten pounds. He wouldn't paint mine for ten times that.'

The farmer began to think more than ever of the pictures after this decisive verdict.

'Father would hardly believe,' said Cecilia, who had followed to look and listen, 'that Mr Jousserau was a gentleman.'

'A gentleman?' said the vicar. 'Of course he's a gentleman. A man of very good family, and many accomplishments. A very charming little fellow, and a great friend of mine.'

The farmer felt horribly abashed that he should have called a friend of the vicar's, 'young man,' and that he should have patronised him.

'Dear me!' he said. 'To think as he should be a friend of yours! Why, their's 'Zaiah Winter, as has known him for over a twelve-month, gives out as he lived in Warwick with a workin' foreigner there, quite poor and lowly.'

'Ah, yes, my friend,' said the parson; 'but the man he lived with was his fellow-townsmen. That is a great tie between Frenchmen who are living out of their own country.'

'The young gentleman dresses nohow,' said Shorthouse.

'Like an artist—like an artist,' said the parson. 'A bit of a bohemian, but a charming and good little fellow.—You're in luck, Shorthouse.'

'Excuse me, sir,' said the farmer. 'Their's no offence meant, and I hope as none will be took.'

'I hope not.—What is it?'

'These here foreigners, I'm told,' said Shorthouse with great gravity, 'is papists, all and sundry. I shouldn't ha' thought as a papist would be let paint a window for a Christian church.'

'Well, that's a point, to be sure,' the vicar answered, laughing; 'but it happens that Mr Jousserau is not a papist. He's a Huguenot, Shorthouse, and as good a Protestant as you or I.—You'll see him in church next Sunday, I daresay.'

Here were more ideas. The world was growing embarrassing.

But the most amazing bewilderment awaited him on the Sunday. It was a soft gray morning after rain. The church bells were ringing, and from any little bit of rising ground the country-folk might be seen straggling towards the church in answer to their invitation in rather more than their usual numbers. In the old days, the Earl of Barfield had sat through the morning service of half the year round in the family pew; but since the late Earl's decease and burial, the Quality had left that part of the county, and their presence at church was a rarity. They were to be there that morning in honour of the inauguration of the great memorial window. The young Earl of Barfield was expected with the Countess, and Sir Ferdinand de Blacquire, the county member, with her ladyship his wife, who was as yet known to none of the good people of Beacon-Hargate.

Cecilia had started on ahead with the daughters of a neighbouring farmer, and Shorthouse was solemnly waddling along alone, when he found himself accosted by Snelling. They had seen but little of each other since the latter had taken his answer from Cecilia, and Shorthouse at first was a little embarrassed by his friend's greeting.

'I want a word with you,' said Snelling; 'and if you'll take what I'm going to say kindly, I shall be obliged to you. I've heard as that young Frenchman has been a good deal at your house lately.'

'Yes,' said Shorthouse, who was aware of the feud between Jousserau and his companion. 'He's been paintin' my portrait, and Cecilia's.'

'Faithful are the wounds of a friend,' quoted Mr Snelling; 'but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. If Providence had blessed me with a daughter, Shorthouse, that's not the sort o' young man that I should allow to come anigh her.'

'No?' demanded Shorthouse.

'No,' said Snelling.

'And if not, why not?'

'Well, I'll deal square with you,' Snelling answered. 'The man's been taking away my character, and anything I say agen him might carry less weight than it would if I was supposed to have a likin' for him. But that won't hinder

me from tellin' what I know to be the plain truth about him: he's a low scoundrel, and has no right to cross a decent man's doorstep.'

'You're mistook in the young man,' said Shorthouse. 'Parson Heathcote claims him as a friend, and speaks most high of him.'

'I took you for a man o' sense, Shorthouse,' said Snelling. 'The idea o' you believin' a cock-and-bull tale like that!'

'Cock-and-bull, or no cock-and-bull,' Shorthouse returned, 'it was the vicar himself as told me so. I reckon he knows whether a man's a friend of his or whether he isn't. He said he was. Parson says he's a gentleman. You've quarrelled with the man, and you're willing to lend your ear to anything.'

This staggered the vulgar traducer for the moment, and he saw that if Jousserau really had powerful friends, it might be wise on his own part to leave him alone. But a rather singular and altogether unlooked-for thing had happened to Snelling since he had taken his dismissal from Cecilia. He had proposed to marry the young lady's prospective acres rather than herself, and had looked upon her final acceptance of his suit as being almost certain. Except as an unusually prosperous stroke of business, he had hardly cared to think about it. But from the moment at which he had heard her answer, he had been growing more and more into a desire of her. It began first in a dull anger and resentment, in which he wished for nothing but the power to rule her, and bend her or, if need be, break her to his will. It was a natural part of the man's egotism to feel that a woman put the worst of possible insults upon him in refusing to marry him. He had not the faintest wish in the world to understand himself, or to trace to their source his own emotional processes. But if he had had the will and the power to do that, he would have seen resentment turn to hatred, and hatred in its turn change into some distorted semblance of love. So long as he had had but little doubt that she would take him, he had not cared for her; but now he saw how impossible she was for him, he began to hunger for her. And since any kind of real passion is more piercing and discerning, because more alert, interested, and observant than average feeling, his inert and sluggish mind woke suddenly to a new perceptive faculty. He was far and away too stupid and self-satisfied to trust to instinct; but instinct somehow told him that Jousserau was or would be his rival, and his own nature taught him to stab the rival before he had a chance to strike. It made matters none the easier for him to know that Cecilia would in all probability be a score of times wealthier than he had supposed her to be when he had still thought her property worthy of being joined to his own. The prize had turned out to be infinitely more valuable than he had fancied, and he had missed it. In spite of the girl's disclaimer, he believed that Jousserau had poisoned her mind against him, and he was not the man to submit to an injury without retort.

The churchyard was full from the lychgate to the porch, for nobody dreamt of entering until the great people should have arrived. The bells changed their measure, and then stopped, all but one, which tinkled rapidly, as if to hurry

up the delayed magnates. The carriage drove up at the last second, and from it alighted, amid a respectful and curious silence, the Earl of Barfield, who assisted the Countess to descend. Then came Sir Ferdinand, the county member; and all necks were craned for a first look at his bride, when, to the wonder of everybody who knew him, M. Jousserau descended from the carriage, glorious in lavender gloves, a silk hat, and a frock-coat, carrying those splendours with no embarrassment or look of rarity, and being in nowise moved either by the curiosity he excited or by the exalted company in which he found himself.

Snelling could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, and Shorthouse fairly gaped in his astonishment. As for Cecilia, who was a most honest and simple-hearted creature, she felt these great folks to be so far above her that to have been on terms of week-long intimacy with anybody who went familiarly about with them exalted her with wonder. The painter wore a kind of halo to her fancy. He raised his hat to her as he went by, talking to Sir Ferdinand in his own tongue. A moment earlier, he had worn the bright and pleasing smile she had seen so often; and on a sudden, as he saw her, there was a touch of sadness, humility, apology in his manner—she knew not what. She had no time to think of it, and in the midst of her astonishment, she had not even the wit to think of it; but there was something in his salute, and something in the look accompanying it, which seemed to say that though he was at obvious ease with these great people, he was less at ease before her. The girl's heart began to beat, and—she could not have told why for the world—but Jousserau, if he had only known it, had grown in that passing moment to be a personage in her eyes; and from that instant forward she never thought of him without the latent understanding that he was cleverer, handsomer, and more distinguished than the common run of men. Only that; and yet, if he had known it, that was something.

(To be continued.)

AN OLD SCOTCH BURGH.

JUST where the estuary of the Forth begins to widen, nestling beneath a stretch of wooded hill, lies the ancient royal burgh of Culross. A couple of centuries ago it was a scene of activity and life, when its 'girdle-makers' were a powerful craft, and its wares were famous throughout 'the north countrie'; but to-day, the grass grows green within its streets, and the clang of the hammer is an unknown sound. Culross has preserved its age in a way that few places can equal in those latter days, for the nearest railway is three miles off, and the bay is shallow even at high-tide. A more perfect retreat for the nineteenth-century lotus-eater could scarcely be imagined. Facing the water is the Town-house, with its quaint Dutch-looking spire; farther up, above the red-tiled roofs of the houses, appear belts of garden; and higher still, flanking the narrow walks, stand the gray terrace-walls, almost covered with branching fruit-trees. So, by various crooked 'wynds' and

narrow ways, the old town creeps up the hill, and at length lays the warm mellow colour of its ancient walls against the cool green of the trees that conceal all but the tower of the Abbey Church.

The Abbey of Culross was founded by Malcolm, Earl of Fife, about the year 1216, and though little now remains of the original structure, there are still proofs sufficient to show that it must have been of considerable extent. What was formerly the choir is now used as the parish church, and is entered through two very fine Norman doorways at the foot of the tower. In the manse garden close by is a large and well-preserved vaulted passage with groined roof and graceful arches. Behind this is a chamber somewhat similar; and farther back still, a flight of stairs, reached through another Norman doorway, leads to the roof. The monastery orchard has had an admirable southern exposure, sloping gently down to the shores of the Firth. Part of it is now comprised in the policies of Culross Abbey, a mansion-house to the east of the church, begun by Lord Bruce of Kinloss, and said to be designed by Inigo Jones.

Close to the Abbey Church is the family vault of the Bruces, where lies the heart of Lord Edward Bruce, who was killed in a duel with Lord Sackville, afterwards Earl of Dorset. The quarrel seems to have been about some lady, and the issue of the affair is fully detailed by Steele in several numbers of the *Guardian*. The meeting took place at Bergen-op-Zoom, in Holland; and 'there,' says Lord Sackville's account, 'in a meadow, ankle-deep in water at the least, bidding farewell to our doublets, in our shirts we began to charge each other.' Lord Bruce at first gained the advantage; but being much excited, he failed to parry a thrust of his adversary's sword, and fell, exclaiming: 'Oh, I am slain!' His body was buried at Bergen; but tradition affirmed that his heart, preserved in a silver case, had been carried to Scotland, and deposited in Culross Abbey Church.

In 1806 a search was instituted, and beneath a projecting portion of the wall two stones were found firmly clasped together by iron bands. On being separated, they disclosed a silver case shaped like a heart, bearing the name and arms of Lord Edward Bruce. When this was opened, it was found to contain 'a heart carefully embalmed in a brownish-coloured liquid.' Drawings were made of the shell, and it was again consigned to its position in the vault, where a brass tablet, with the Bruce motto, 'Fuimus,' now sets forth the tale of the silver heart.

To Sir George Bruce, an ancestor of the unfortunate duellist, Culross owed much of its early prosperity. He was a man of considerable enterprise, and started pans for the manufacture of salt; he also worked coal below the Firth of Forth by planting shafts and surrounding them with walls rising above the water-level. When James VI. visited Scotland in 1617, he invited his hunting-party one day to dine with him in 'a collier's house,' meaning Culross Abbey, the residence of Sir George Bruce. While the king was inspecting the coal-works, he was unexpectedly brought out at the sea-mouth of the shaft, and observing the water all round, his timid mind suggested foul play, and he immediately began to shout 'Treason!

treason!' 'The collier' quickly soothed his unkindly fears by showing him a well-manned boat lying ready for his reception.

Through the influence of Sir George Bruce, Culross was erected into a royal burgh in 1588 by James VI.; and this monarch also granted a monopoly of making girdles, or rather corroborated a previously given charter which had been disregarded. A girdle is a flat plate of iron upon which scones and oatmeal cakes are baked over the fire, and was formerly found in almost every household in Scotland. The girdlesmiths were a very powerful body, and their guild or corporation received a halfpenny on each girdle manufactured, in return for which they permitted the use of the trade device, a crown, a hammer, and the name 'Culross.'

At Preston Island, a low desolate piece of land, farther down the Firth than Culross, and at some distance from the shore, the manufacture of salt, already alluded to, was carried on; but it has long been discontinued, and the buildings have fallen into picturesque decay. From this island the view up the Forth is very fine; the hills beyond Stirling rise in the background; in the middle distance, long points of wooded land jut into the water; and the castellated tower of Dunimarle Castle appears over the dark band of trees that clothe the nearer hillside. A tradition exists that the mansion-house of Dunimarle is built on the site of Macduff's castle; but it is probable that the chieftain's stronghold was farther to the east. Culross Moor, inland from the town about a mile, however, was the scene of King Duncan's battle with Sueno of Norway, described in Ralph Holinshed's *Chronicle of Scotland*, where Macbeth and Banquo are said to have each commanded a division.

Dunimarle Castle was the property of Mrs Sharpe-Erskine, who died in 1872, leaving the house and its contents 'for the promotion and study of the fine arts.' The castle is open to the public certain days in the week, and contains a very fine collection of china, pictures, &c. In the hall are eight finely carved oak chairs, reputed to be by Albert Dürer; and in the staircase window some beautiful stained glass of the sixteenth century, including a 'Madonna and Child' by Holbein, is exhibited. Among the pictures, the finest is a 'St Romaine' by Carlo Dolci; there are also good examples of Hobbema, Ruysdael, Teniers, Wouvermans, and others. Some family pictures by David Allan, a Scotch painter, chiefly known by his illustrations to *The Gentle Shepherd*, are of little note; but among them hang a very fine though unfinished portrait of Erskine of Torrie by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and a painting of the beautiful Miss Kennedy, afterwards Countess of Eglinton.

In the town itself there are many interesting old buildings to be seen as we stroll through its causewayed streets, that give a clattering importance to the movements of every passing cart. Beside the Town-house is a venerable pile popularly known as 'The Palace,' a name derived from a doubtful tradition that the house was at one time the residence of one of the Scottish kings. It properly consists of two houses, one on each side of a passage known as 'the Colonel's Close.' They were built by the great Sir George Bruce; and above the centre window projecting from the roof

his initials, G. B., are carved. The gray old walls have gathered their colours from the rains and sunbeams of many a year, till now their hues are 'mellowed into harmony by time.' Part of the roof is slated with thick old slates, purple, green, and lichen covered; other portions are patched with tiles that long ago have lost their youthful brightness, and taken on a richer, deeper tone more fitting to the dignity of age. The interiors have been richly decorated in their day; the ceilings, painted with scenes from the *Odyssey* and Greek mythology, still bear witness to the former grandeur of the ancient mansion. The old place, like Grunio's story, seems destined to die in oblivion; but it needs no strong effort of the imagination to picture some of the scenes its aged walls have looked upon in the stirring times when Charles II.'s fleet anchored in Leith Roads, and every little town in Fife bestirred itself to repel the invader. From the terraced gardens behind, with their trim close-cropped yews, some maid of old romance may have looked upon a morning 'bright with May,' and watched her lover for the last time sail down the Firth to meet the Bersekers and Flemings. In such gardens as these, Cowley or Cowper would have delighted; there is a staid dignity about the box-fringed walks, and an old-world air even about the flowers themselves—

Gold-dusted snapdragon,
Sweet-william with his homely cottage-smell,
And stocks in fragrant blow,
Roses that down the alleys shine afar.

The summer day is drawing to a close as we wander down the steep old streets to the green beside the shore. Here the children are laughing and shouting at play, while their elders are engaged in a friendly game at bowls. The tide is nearly full, and from a boat in the bay the voices of girls singing steal over the waters. The blue smoke is curling upwards in the stillness of the summer twilight, over the red-tiled roofs, over the dark old trees, into the glowing daffodil sky above, where the rooks are flying homeward to their nests.

LONG JAKE'S TRIP HOME.

CHAPTER II.

MORE than three months passed before Long Jake was again seen at King-parrot Flat; and then, one fine afternoon, he dropped in upon the boys in John Byrne's bar without a word of warning. He was warmly greeted. John Byrne's handsome face lit up with an evil light as he clapped the newcomer on the back with demonstrative heartiness; Jack Rogers, already three parts tipsy, foresaw earlier consummation than he had dared to hope for; and Surgeon-major Wagstaff—late of H.M. Bombay Staff Corps—deemed it a promising speculation to begin business by pledging Long Jake at his, the surgeon-major's, expense. To the speechless amazement of all, this delicate overture was politely but promptly declined.

'No, boys,' said Long Jake quietly, in answer to the questioning faces that were turned indignantly to his; 'I ha'n't come here for a boose—not this time;' and he calmly seated himself on a flour-bag in the coolest corner of the store.

Jack Rogers feebly appealed to his stars to explain what this might portend; the old Anglo-Indian ripened with more than tropic rapidity from pink to purple, and muttered vaguely about 'outraged honour' and 'instant satisfaction;' while the proprietor of the bar confined himself to a peremptory inquiry as to why, et cetera, Jake came there if he didn't mean to take anything for the good of the house—adding that he, for one, as boss of the shanty in question, intended to know the reason why, anyway.

'Reason why?' said Long Jake reflectively, without looking up from the fig of tobacco he was daintily paring in his palm. 'Reason why? Why, to have a bit of a yarn. What else?' But before the menace that trembled on John Byrne's tongue could be discharged, he added adroitly, and with a quick upward glance: 'How's ever, though I'm not on for anything myself to-day—feeling just what you call below par, like—I hereby invites all present company to order their usual, if *you* please.' With that Long Jake added to the painful interest which his abnormal conduct had already created by shifting the clasp-knife to his left hand, thrusting his right deep into his trousers' pocket, and, apparently by accident, jingling a fistful of coins. Then he withdrew his hand without raising his eyes, and resumed paring the tobacco with an impassive face.

Coin of the realm being an almost unknown quantity at King-parrot Flat, where paper-money was in common currency, this master-touch of Long Jake's produced an instantaneous effect. John Byrne turned his back, partly to uncork a fresh demijohn, partly to conceal his emotion. The rest—including even the insulted surgeon-major—maintained a judicious silence. The man from Razorback reserved his final bomb until the first glass all round had been emptied, and until he had rolled his tobacco caressingly between his palms, and filled and lit his pipe.

'Fact is, boys,' he then said, in the same calm deliberate tone, 'I'm going home!'

The silence that had preceded the announcement outlived it half a minute; then, as one man, the habitués of Byrne's bar pulled themselves together.

'What! home to England?' asked John Byrne incredulously.

'Home to England,' said Long Jake.

'Gad! you don't mean this?' exclaimed Surgeon-major Wagstaff.

'My colonial oath on it,' said Long Jake.

'An' when yer goin'?' inquired Jack Rogers.

'Well, not *jest* yet a while,' said Long Jake.

This last reply, being distinctly anti-climacteric, disappointed somewhat.

'Going for good?' sneered John Byrne, veiling beneath a tone of contempt the reasonable annoyance incident to loss of a sure source of income. Jack Rogers, with a vinous wink, suggested: 'No; for bad.' A slight laugh greeted the maudlin sally. But Jake replied gravely: 'Only for a trip. I mean to have one more look at the old dust; that's all.—Fill up again, boys.'

The invitation was scarcely needed; and, under the influence of the whisky and Jake's manoeuvring, the conversation drifted; and he presently turned it into the channel he had all along in view by an innocent inquiry after Widow

Truscott. The gratuitous information respecting this lady which he elicited it would be to no purpose to relate at length; moreover, it would be unfair, since the epithets employed could scarcely have been meant for repetition. But it did appear that Mrs Truscott was, to put it mildly, no favourite at King-parrot Flat. Her airs were worse than ever. She thought herself too good for everybody. She was mismanaging the store, making a mess of everything, and doing no business—each substantive being duly qualified. There were plenty of good men ready to enter the business on the square footing, who would guarantee to make a paying concern of it. Yet she wanted to sell the place—sell a place whose good-will wasn't worth a red cent; she would look at none of them. Here the gallant Surgeon-major waxed peculiarly eloquent and pompous. It seemed that this oriental jewel had indeed gone the length of personally offering himself, body and soul, as a sacrifice at the shrine of this unreasonable woman. Only to be trampled on!

As Long Jake cantered homeward, he could not resist a curious glance at the dwelling of the terrible female. If she treated so maleficiently those estimable men, whose worst offence was a too great admiration for herself, how would she behave to him, Long Jake—as he persisted in regarding himself—the author of her widowhood? Might she not send a bullet through him as he passed? Surely she must be capable of that much. She happened to be in front of the house, training lovingly an infant creeper to the base of a veranda-post—honeysuckle, taken from its native northern soil only a few short months ago. She looked up swiftly at the cantering horseman. As it seemed to him, there was nothing forbidding in the glance; nor did she lower her eyes; but, instead, gazed hard at him with something very like interest in her sad face. Long Jake felt the blood mount hotly to his cheeks, and his hand tighten involuntarily on the reins. For an instant he wavered; then, turning away his head, he spurred the mare round the fatal corner. But he had not galloped a furlong before his first impulse of shame gave place to one of indignation, of which he himself was the object; he fell to cursing himself for a fool and a heartless wretch; and by the time he reached the hut, he had resolved that, next time anything took him to the township, he would not leave it before he had told the truth to the poor widow about that terrible day, now nearly four months ago.

It was a little curious that, barely a week later, Long Jake found another trip to King-parrot Flat necessary. He had never before visited the township twice in so short a space of time. It was more curious, however, that he ended by getting no farther than the outermost vedette of the straggling, weather-board houses—by calling, in fine, at Mrs Truscott's store and nowhere else.

'I must see the woman; I must make a clean breast to her about that day. I must tell her straight that I was blind drunk and riding madly; that if I had been in my sober senses, the accident would never have happened.' Such is a paraphrase and a condensation of Long Jake's conception of his duty, arrived at after hours of slow laborious thought. The logic of the con-

clusion was more than questionable; and as for the prompting that led to it, Jake was simply self-deceived. Even supposing any good sprang up from the unburdening of spirit, it would be reaped by the wrong person; a load would be lifted from Long Jake's heart, not a pennyweight from Mrs Truscott's. Yet, as he reined up at the store, Long Jake honestly believed that he was about to do the next best thing to reparation, which was impossible. Mrs Truscott sat sewing behind the green veranda-blinds—voluptuous extravagances hitherto unknown in the pure air of the Flat. The tall ungainly bushman trembled visibly as he stepped up the little path, crushing his soft wideawake between the twitching fingers of both hands. Instantly, however, the sweet, sad smile with which the young widow looked up at his troubled face disarmed him; that ice-breaking sentence, so carefully prepared, so often rehearsed, went clean out of his head; and Long Jake, for one faint-hearted moment, would have given far more than his credit balance at the station to be safely back in his hut!

Yet a moment later the plunge was made—a veritable flounder of incoherence. Then, coming up—so to speak—for breath, a series of verbal splashes followed, tremulous with rough pent-up emotion; for some seconds the words chased each other tumultuously from his hoarse throat, then ceased. And the widow knew all that had been on the poor fellow's mind for months past.

How did she hear it? Silently, at first; then with a slight catch of the breath; then with quiet tears. And when all was said, she leant forward on her low chair and pronounced, not forgiveness, but words of *thanks*. Thanks for his tenderness to *him*; thanks for his forbearance with her on that awful day. Thanks to him! The man recoiled, and shuddered, and refused to believe his ears. He felt stunned, when no reproach could have stunned him! But a thin white hand was stretched over toward him, and, whether he would or no, it buried itself in his great coarse fist. He dropped it quickly, drew a deep sigh, half of relief, half of bewilderment, wiped his shirt-sleeve across his brow, and without a word, stepped from the veranda.

Mrs Truscott called him back. He must stay a little while, she said kindly, and talk to her: she never talked to any one, you see. Jake sat down humbly; he would have done anything she told him, just then; but what could he talk about? Silence. Jake shifted nervously. Some subtle instinct whispered that he would be evermore disgraced if he left the lady to begin the conversation. So he stumbled into this: 'I'm goin' to clear out o' this soon.'

The widow looked up from her needle-work in surprise, as well she might. 'How do you mean?' asked she, not without apprehension.

'These here ranges: I'm going to leave 'em.'

'Yes?'—in a tone indicating interest.

'Yes'—in one betraying exhaustion of topic.

'And where do you go then?'

'Ha!'—with unexpected relief, and surprise that he should have forgotten what was indeed his point—'home to England!'

Mrs Truscott dropped her work on her lap and looked swiftly up at the speaker. And for a single moment—in spite of her thin worn cheeks,

in spite of the lines that had come ten years before their time—for that one moment the parted lips, the wide-open blue eyes, the sudden flash of strong interest, lit up the woman's face into beauty. The next, the blue eyes filled with tears, the chin drooped, the cheeks went paler than before, and a broken voice repeated in a wondering whisper: 'Home to England!'

'Yes,' said Long Jake softly; 'home! For a trip.'

But he had no sooner uttered the words than he jumped up clumsily without a word of warning and stepped hastily out of the veranda. Almost instantaneously, Mrs Truscott heard a shrill exclamation, followed by a volley of angry words.

'Why, whatever is it? Ah, dear, dear, dear!' she cried, rushing out, with something akin to a fresh pang in her heart.

'It's only this, ma'am,' he cried savagely, throwing out a dramatic arm in the direction of a dark little figure that was racing rapidly down the broad bush high-road towards the other houses: 'that there little snake has been a-hiding behind this here picket-fence and a-listening to every word you and me has been a-saying. Confound her!'

The widow turned; and, though the evening gloom was settling rapidly, it needed but a glance to assure her that yonder skeltering imp was the one human creature in the township in whom she took any sort of interest—little Martha Byrne, whom she had even attempted to teach to read. The hot blood mounted to the woman's faded face. She faced about. But Long Jake was gone. Growing momentarily fainter, his mare's rhythmical canter was borne to Mrs Truscott's ears as the strokes rang out from the flint-strewn track. The widow sighed deeply. Every breath she drew was a sigh; but this one came with new force from a new pain; or rather, from an ever-present pain re-awakened.

'Poor thing!' said Jake aloud, as the mare dropped into a walk at the foot of the steep winding track over Razorback. 'No signs of business, as I could see. Why, the place was never fairly started. Poor thing!'

Nearly an hour later, he put the mare into a canter at the top of the long gentle slope that stretched, through miles of timber, right down to the hut; and then he was thinking of that look of Mrs Truscott's when he spoke the word 'Home!' 'Ay, she'd go home too, fast enough, if she had the money,' thought Long Jake.

With the quickened stride of the mare, the rider's thoughts, too, came the quicker. At first he made no effort to check them; but presently he found himself spurring on the mare in order to leave them far behind. The grotesquely-twisted gums fled by on either hand, bowing mockingly in the evening breeze as he passed; then the round moon shot up and painted the narrow track an ashy gray, and threw into merciless relief, among a world of phantoms, one solitary mortal flying from a Thought. But the Thought was not to be run away from. It twined its tendrils about the man's mind, and grew and grew until he became hardly conscious of the trees rushing by; the long gray track reeling out beneath, the scent of the eucalyptus forest tingling in his nostrils. Suddenly a peal of harsh

grating laughter broke upon the silence. The rider instinctively pulled up. The hoarse diabolical peal was repeated; but this time it was echoed by a low chuckle from Long Jake. He had lived in the bush more years than he could count; yet here, forsooth, he was startled by the bushman's familiar, the laughing-jackass! The momentary sensation, however, had an immediate effect: Long Jake shook himself together and rode slowly and soberly onward. Not that the Thought was expelled; it was allowed to remain, but on a different footing; for now it was no longer resisted, but willingly, coolly, discriminately entertained.

Before starting on the rounds of his paddocks next morning, Long Jake made a calculation with the butt-end of his stock-whip on the sandy soil outside the hut door. When the sum was worked out, he stamped out the figures, as if ashamed. Yet he had merely satisfied himself that in three months' time his gross savings would amount to pretty nearly fifty pounds. 'And on that,' said Long Jake slowly, 'and what the mare brings, we might manage it.'

The spring months that followed were trying ones to Long Jake. He never went near King-parrot Flat. One or two trips he made over to Wattle-town, in order to negotiate for the sale of the mare with a storekeeper there, which ended in a bargain being struck that the mare should be delivered and paid for by Christmas at the latest; but on these occasions Wattle-town observed that the man from Razorback conducted himself very meanly, and that the little money he did spend was in hard cash. In point of fact he made it his first business to cash a small cheque at the bank on entering the township. Then, of course, there were the inevitable visits to the home-station. But only two circumstances happened really to break the monotony of life, which, after years and years of it, became actively unpalatable to Long Jake's temperament for the first time. The first of these was a visit from handsome John Byrne, who slept at the hut on his way to the home-station, where—so he said—he had business with Mr Noble; though, in fact—which he omitted to add—he paid Jake the compliment of travelling many miles out of his way in order to see him, since he came straight from the lair of a lynx-eyed congenial spirit at Wattle-town, and not from the grog-shanty on the Flat. The visitor, however, was too welcome for Long Jake to consider the visit mysterious; and as for sinister glances and cunning questions, Jake neither saw the first, nor was he even aware that the second had been put—and answered.

The other circumstance was this: one day he found lying in the station store an envelope addressed to 'The Boundary-man on Razorback.' It contained a few lines from Mrs Truscott, begging Jake to call at her store before his departure for England, provided he should consent to be the bearer of a message and a trifle or two besides. He spelt through the note with difficulty, then laboriously indited a reply and dropped it into the mail-bag. In his note a day in December was mentioned on which he would without fail present himself at Mrs Truscott's service. After that, with a feeling of satisfaction quite new to him, he inquired for the boss. Mr Noble, who had already heard with amusement of Jake's projected

trip home, was not surprised to hear now that he intended coming in for his cheque about the middle of December. Jake, however, promised to stay until a new boundary-rider should be sent out to the hut, which, it was in turn promised, should be done a day or two before that on which he wished expressly to leave.

As December drew gradually nearer, he grew daily wearier of his daily work. He became restlessly impatient; and his nights were broken by vivid, disturbing dreams. As a rule these dreams bore him back across seas of time and the world to a peaceful little hamlet in Somersetshire. But they invariably ended by the distant and indistinct image of the English village fading before the strong, convincing presentment of King-parrot Flat; or the two places would be fused fantastically together, as is the way with dream-locality.

When at length the great day dawned, Jake set out for the station at sunrise, riding the mare, and carrying all his personal belongings in the swag strapped across the saddle. At the station, Jake received his breakfast and his cheque; the latter—the account coming to a few pounds under fifty—being written for that round sum, thanks to a graceful bonus from the boss. Thus emancipated, Jake rode on to Wattle-town with a heart of air, leading a station horse which Noble lent him for the completion of his roundabout journey to King-parrot Flat. At Wattle-town, the mare was sold, according to previous arrangement, for twenty pounds down in cash. The cheque also was cashed—all gold; so that when Jake rode away from that prosperous settlement at four in the afternoon he had seventy sovereigns in the leather pouch on his belt, which was imprudent, in spite of his modest conviction that not a soul was concerned—and therefore, he argued, not a soul could be acquainted—with the movements of so obscure an individual as Long Jake.

After an hour's easy riding, Jake was once more on thoroughly familiar ground; for half-way between the Flat and his old hut that track was joined by the one from Wattle-town. Never had this man's spirits been so high before, never had the sombre tints of the bush seemed so warm and gay in the glinting sunlight. The gray rough track had never bounded so lightly from the heels of the good old mare; though surely this heavy bony hack was not a patch upon her for speed and lightness. The excitement that had entered his spirit during the last months had given new life and animation to a narrow, silent, well-nigh animal existence. He was no longer the thing that repeatedly, for days, lay helpless at Byrne's bar, and returned to the hut he called home without a pang, without a regret, without a hope. And here it was, in these endless cloisters of smooth round trunks, that the Thought had come to him which had worked all this wondrous change—the Thought that was now at last to be put to the test, whether it was wise or unwise, good or evil!

'Ha, ha! Ha, ha!'

Ah! that could startle him *then*, but not now! Long Jake turned round in the saddle to look at the queer clumsy bird—surely a bird of good omen. But he did not slacken his steady canter.

'Ha, ha, ha!'

This time the laugh did not come from behind. Jake turned sharply. Directly in the track sat a

tall, motionless, masked figure on horseback; and a voice that Jake thought he recognised cried: 'Bale up!'

Bale up!—the seventy sovereigns! Jake's heart quailed and sickened for a moment. The long barrel of a revolver covered him, and glittered in the sunlight. Must he be robbed in broad daylight? With a wild cry of rage and despair, he buried his spurs in the sides of his heavy mount and dashed straight at the highwayman, leaning forward with his face on the horse's mane. The robber, being less heavily mounted, backed a pace; and as Long Jake came on unarmed and reckless, took deliberate aim at the chest of the charging horse. A firm quick touch on the reins caused the heavy brute to swerve; and with a loud ring the bullet struck the near stirrup-iron, thence burying itself in the heel of Jake's boot. The frightened animal thundered on; and in an instant they were past, nearly bringing the smaller horse to earth in their rush. A quick succession of shots and an even louder volley of curses filled the air; Long Jake felt a stinging, burning blow between the shoulder-blades; his brain sickened, and his body reeled in the saddle!

Just as the fiery sun began to dip behind the range, Mrs Truscott heard a furious clatter of hoofs outside. She rose hastily and ran out. So did Martha Byrne, whom the widow had tried in vain to get rid of all the afternoon. Staggering through the little wicket-gate was a strange figure, all dust and sweat and blood, and the ashiest face man ever reeled under. He made his way unsteadily up to the veranda, where he sank down with a deep sobbing sigh; and his head would have fallen back upon the boards had not the widow caught his shoulders and supported him. His breath came thick and short, his eyes seemed closing; yet his fingers fumbled feebly until they had unfastened a leather pouch from his belt. And then his hands were powerless to lift it!

The stricken man looked dumbly upward at the woman; he could just raise a trembling pointing hand to her, then drop it significantly on the pouch. His wan lips moved, and from between them came one faint word: 'Home!'

Little Martha had for once used her long thin legs to some purpose. After one quick intelligent glance at the pallid face of Long Jake, she had rushed like the wind to her father's shanty; and now she was returning, almost as swiftly, with a posse of its choice spirits. John Byrne was absent, and mysteriously absent, from the township; but foremost among them was Surgeon-major Wagstaff, carrying his instrument case and a vastly augmented pomposity of bearing; and devoutly hoping that, whoever the fellow was, he would live long enough to give him (Wagstaff) a show of getting his hand in once more. Jack Rogers was there too, and Paddy Welch, and one or two others. As they came up to the end of the store they could see right along the raised veranda. With the carmine glare of the setting sun behind them, the two figures that met their gaze seemed of carved ebony, both were so black and so rigid! As one man, the little party slackened its pace; Paddy Welch doffed his felt wideawake, and the others did the same; then they moved forward very, very slowly. And Jack Rogers said, just above his breath, but,

somehow, more gruffly than he intended to say it: 'He's gone home square enough now, boys; and for good!'

Yet darkness fell over King-parrot Flat, and the boys still lingered outside the widow Truscott's store. For the Surgeon-major said there was still the ghost of a chance; and the Surgeon-major was sober and on his mettle, and ought to have known, even if he didn't.

That day week they ran John Byrne to earth in the ranges. They dragged him back to the Flat, and would have lynched him in sight of his own bar, but for one circumstance. The ink was scarcely dry on an official bulletin nailed to the door of the now flourishing opposition shanty which set forth that the patient was at last definitely out of danger. And they found its author, the gallant and skilful Surgeon-major, already gloriously drunk after his week of enforced sobriety by the sick man's bed.

So Mr John Byrne, amateur bushranger, was taken over to Wattle-town and handed over, quite nicely, to the police. Thanks to a woman's nursing and a Surgeon-major's experience, Long Jake pulled through. Just when the days began to shorten, and camping on Razorback became mean work, the shutters were put up at the new store. A week later, Long Jake's trip home began. But Jack Rogers turned out quite right after all: the trip was confessedly 'for good.' Nor was it made alone.

THE POSTMAN OF THE ATLANTIC.

'WHAT news, Pat?'

'Sorra a bit, sir;' and Pat proceeds to puff away steadily at his pipe.

The harbour-waters lie so quiet before us, that the lights of the shipping are almost as steady as those other lights which we know to shine from the hills. Beneath us, at the edge of the wharf, the engines of the tender snort and splutter, and, save Pat's pipe, this is the only sound to be heard. The whole world seems in silent waiting for the arrival of the Ocean Postman. Six days and some hours have gone since he sent word that he had started on his race from New York; and soon from the watch-tower of a western cape—upon whose slopes we lay idly, yesterday, watching the waves roll in below—there will be telegraphed word that, far out on the Atlantic, he has been marked steaming fiercely to the eastward with his letters for a hundred thousand homes. Until that message shall come, we must rest; for weary limbs remind us how, earlier in the day, we climbed the cliffs to their farthest verge to watch the great sea-steamers creep past and disappear in the haze of the west.

It is scarcely ten o'clock, yet the little town seems already asleep. A watchful revenue officer pauses to glance somewhat suspiciously, as we near the sheds he guards, but his face brightens when he recognises us.

'A dark night, sir.—Any news?'

'Not yet.—Good-night.'

'Good-night, sir;' and he resumes his lonely walk as we turn up the hill for home.

'Here; wake up; there's somebody below.'

'Eh?'

'Turn out; there's a knock.'

Our friend, well used to being roused at these uncanny hours, is at the open window. 'Who is it?' he asks.

The answer comes in a rich brogue: 'Me, sorr; and Pat says if ye'll please hasten.'—

The night-air is cold, and we are unrobed, so the rest of the message has to be taken as heard in the noise of the descending window-frame.

We have little time to waste. Even as we dress, we know that the keen prow of the swiftest ship afloat is cleaving the dark waters in a mad race with time. Not a trace of dawn. We go down the hill through darkness that can almost be felt; for it is cloudy and the street lamps were put out long since.

At the quay, all is in readiness. The old gray-haired north-country sea-captain looks askance at us as we step on board the tender, and there is a significance in his tone as he draws out: 'Are ye ready now?'

'Yes, captain.—Go ahead.' We turn and walk aft.

The little vessel trembles, as the first stroke of her paddle-blade sends a great ring of foam spreading out into the night. Slowly she turns—labours for a moment, and then, as it were with a glad leap, speeds forward to meet the Postman.

Perhaps you may wonder why he needs to be met? While we steam into the outward channel, and along between the ghostly lines of anchored ships towards those sleeping forts that guard the harbour-mouth, you shall be enlightened.

The harbour of Queenstown, whence we are setting out, is not the harbour of the homeward-bound mail-steamers, which pass on to England. When, however, the tide threatens, as it often does, to keep the incoming mails waiting outside the English port, then, from Queenstown, the ocean steamer is intercepted by our tender, and the mails are transferred, to be forwarded by a special train, through Dublin and Holyhead, to London, where, perhaps, they may be delivered and read before the giant who carried them from the New World has crossed the harbour-bar at Liverpool.

Of those who come out with us to meet him, some are here by necessity, as our friend, who will receive the mails, and the Customs officer, who will see that nothing else is received. By necessity, too, comes the pilot, who, when the mails are discharged, will carry the giant on to Liverpool; and, by necessity also come the burly detectives, good-natured representatives of the powers that be. By courtesy come the news-boys, the railway agents, and the hotel guides; and sometimes the agent of the Central News drops in to steal an early copy of the *New York Herald*, and to ferret out, in the few minutes he will have, all the news that he can of the voyage—who was born; who died; what dangers have been passed, and what strange sights seen.

We are nearing the forts now, and for a moment are at rest, though the engines throb on to fight the incoming sea. Away towards what we know, despite the darkness, to be the land, the light of a lantern rises and falls. It is the boat of the harbour-pilot, who joins us that, in case of trouble, he may guide the ocean steamer to anchorage here. Nearer and nearer the surging light gleams. We can see the faces and arms of four stout boatmen labouring to carry their boat in the teeth of the

tide. Stroke by stroke they draw near until close by, and the pilot waits a wave that shall enable him to clamber on board.

We speed on again. To our left, from the cliff a lighthouse flashes and darkens, as it will flash and darken again and again until the sun by-and-by shall put it out. There is a gray tinge in the far east, and we can feel the little vessel rolling with a new and sickening regularity. We have entered the open sea. We draw our mufflers tighter and press our caps down as we face the mist-laden wind. No one speaks.

The engines move ceaselessly: pulse, throb—pulse, throb; and a long white trail fades away behind us. Every nerve is strained as we gaze to the west, where, we are assured, the ocean steamer's head-light will soon be seen.

'And a fine head-light she has, too,' says our friend proudly; 'we shall sight her miles away.'

Good-naturedly, yet contemptuously withal, the night-glass is handed to us; and somewhat unsteadily we guide it to what we think must be the horizon. Save the solitary lantern of the light-ship due south, not a trace of light is to be found.

The captain paces to and fro beside us, and, careless as he appears, be sure that his eyes scan the western sea anxiously. His voice is first to break the silence: 'Send away there.'

'Mind the sticks,' says our friend as he leads us to shelter. As we move, the rockets leap from the lower deck. Far away to the south-west is seen an almost imperceptible glimmer, the first faint gleam of the Postman's lantern, and, like tiny falling stars, his distant answering rockets flash across the black sky.

Pulse, throb—pulse, throb. The engines quicken. From below, the deck-hands carry up dry gratings, and place them in readiness to keep the mails from the damp deck.

Half an hour passes. The Postman's lantern is rising now like a planet from the waves. Through the glass we can distinguish a black hull dotted with tiny lights, and the white foam leaping from the prow.

We speed on. Very majestically the ocean steamer moves towards us in the gray light. With what terrible strength she comes! Woe to the vessel that should cross her path! Impetuous, like a living thing, she dashes past a quarter of a mile distant, though her engines were stopped long since.

'Go after her!' growls the captain, and our engines throb again until we are alongside.

'Stand here,' says our friend, 'and take care not to get in the way. Time is too precious for ceremony.'

What running to and fro! What casting of huge hempen hawsers to bind us fast to the giant, whose iron wall is outlined with faces of sea-tired passengers!

We slip on board. The saloon and the great palace-hotel that surrounds it are of less interest to us than the mails, and very soon we manage to leave our excellent detective guides, that we may creep quietly up to our friend as he stands by the gangway.

We peep overside. How the great ropes groan and tremble, and how the little vessel leaps beside the apparently motionless giant!

'Forty—two, five, nine; fifty—three, seven,

eight; sixty—one (steady, there!), four, seven; seventy.' Bag by bag the deck-hands are hurrying the giant's letters forth. Some carry but one bag, some two, some four; and the officers at the gangway head tally with a precision born of habit.

Now the hundreds of bags lie snugly piled upon the tender's deck below, and the passengers with their luggage follow. The dainties for this morning's breakfast in the saloon have been carried on board; the last newsboy scuttles out, the gangway is drawn up, and the hawsers cast off.

'Good-bye—Good-bye.'

The friends of a week wave farewell from the receding ship. A faint cheer echoes over the sea; and the huge vessel, with the pilot on board, steams away into the glory of the rising sun.

As we turn back to the now visible hills, among which the harbour nestles, wonders such as only Turner could paint and only Ruskin could describe, flush the sky and gleam again from the sea—wonders of saffron and green, of red and of gold. The passengers as they stand to watch are mostly quiet and very pale. Here and there, some self-confident citizen of New York in a high-pitched tone 'guesses' little of the old country. What wonder! He has none of that strange home-love which, by-and-by, will force this pale-faced Irish lady to set her teeth, and cough ominously, and turn seaward to wipe away her tears.

The lighthouse has done its duty, and has gone to sleep, and along by the fort the flash of the sentry's bayonet may be seen. In the harbour, no one is yet awake; but the ships lie clean cut in the sunshine as we hurry on between their lines to the wharf.

'Stand back, please; stand back there—mails first.'

Passengers, visitors, tradesmen, all are set aside that Her Majesty's mails may pass by.

'One, three, five, nine, ten;' and so on as before.

The engine of the express train shrieks, the doors close, and away the mails go, overland, to distance thus their old friend the Ocean Postman, who has gone on to England by another road.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MR PRITCHARD MORGAN's gold mine in Wales seems to have fulfilled the sanguine hopes of its promoter, for during the past year no less than thirty-six thousand pounds' worth of the precious metal has been extracted from it, in addition to a mass of quartz which awaits crushing, and which, if the yield should continue the same, must contain half a million's worth of metal. The average yield gives a profit of five pounds twelve shillings per ton, which is about one pound per ton more than the richest gold-fields of Australia ever brought to their owners. Improved machinery, facilities of transport, and other circumstances, will of course contribute to this result. It is to be hoped that the Crown royalties upon such property will be dropped, as the tax has an injurious effect upon such an enterprise. A correspondent of the *Times* points out that under the Mining Act of Ontario

all lands are free of royalties and duties in respect to any ores or minerals thereon, and that this exemption from tax has encouraged enterprise and labour, and has thus had a most fortunate effect upon the wealth of the country.

We are glad to note that, in connection with the Agricultural Show at Windsor, the Farriers' Company will offer prizes for the shoeing of horses. These prizes will vary in amount from one to ten pounds, and the competition for them will be limited to Windsor and the metropolitan area. Each competitor will have to fix a fore and a hind shoe, and must be prepared to answer questions with a view to test his knowledge regarding the anatomical structure of the horse's foot. This is a step in the right direction, and we trust that it will be followed by the granting of certificates for the practice of a trade which is too often left to unskilled and therefore cruel hands.

In many philosophical instruments, fine threads are employed. Thus, in the telescope, threads from the spinneret of a spider are used, and in some observatories a special kind of spider is bred, so that the supply shall not fail. In delicate galvanometers, again, the little mirror which, by a reflected beam of light, denotes its slightest movement, has to be hung by the finest fibre of spun-silk. Mr C. V. Boys has, however, shown by experiment how much finer threads than nature affords can be made artificially; how it is possible, indeed, to make one less than the ten-thousandth part of an inch in diameter. His method of production is as follows: He melts in an oxyhydrogen blowpipe flame a piece of rock crystal, which he draws into a rod; then, taking this rod, he once more melts it, and drawing a fibre from it, attaches that fibre to an arrow. Still holding the rod in the flame, the arrow is suddenly shot from a bow, and draws out with it a tiny hair of rock crystal which is hardly visible without a microscope. We may note that something of the same kind is brought about in nature during a volcanic eruption, when ejected stones often have long streamers of glassy character attached to them. This glassy filamentous matter is known as *Pele's hair*. It is produced in abundance at Kilauea, Hawaii. Mr Boys explained his method of producing these quartz fibres at the recent conversazione at the Royal Society, of which he is a Fellow.

Another most interesting exhibit there was that of Mr Brereton Baker of Dulwich College, which indicates a significant discovery with regard to the gas oxygen. We have all seen the familiar lecture-room experiments with this element. In jars of the gas it is shown that sulphur, phosphorus, carbon, iron, &c., will deflagrate with great energy and with abundance of miniature fireworks. Mr Baker has proved that when the gas is thoroughly dried all these substances can be introduced into it in a highly heated state without combustion taking place. Hitherto, this inertness has not been recognised, save that we know that iron will rust sooner in a moist atmosphere than it will in one which is comparatively dry.

The *Lancet* informs us that the practice of hair-dyeing for the concealment of one indication of the approach of age is by no means confined to the wealthy, or to those whose attention to their personal appearance is one of the great occupa-

tions of life. Working women and even men have, we are told, recourse to hair-dyeing, for the reason that when gray hairs show themselves work is difficult to procure, it being a prevalent notion among employers that gray hair means a sure sign of age and weakness. This is, of course, a mistake, for most persons have among their acquaintances those whose hair has changed from its natural colour at quite an early age. The imposture is bad in itself; but the evil becomes intensified by the employment of dyes such as those containing lead, which may have a very mischievous effect upon the general health.

The possible removal of tattoo marks has often formed the subject of speculation, and it will be remembered that it came up during the celebrated Tichborne Claimant trial. Men who, during some idle moment, have permitted themselves to be thus marked, have often in later years, when in another sense they have become 'marked' men, wished that they could eradicate the blue lines upon their skins, and have tried various strong agents, such as vitriol, to burn them out. A writer in a French scientific journal gives the following recipe for eradicating tattoo marks with success. The skin is first of all covered with a strong solution of tannin above the marked places, re-tattooed with a needle, and then rubbed with a stick of lunar caustic (silver nitrate). Afterwards, the skin is treated with powdered tannin several times for some days, with the result that a dark crust is formed, which subsequently comes off, leaving only a redness behind. This, after a time, almost disappears. It is pointed out that only a small patch of skin should be operated upon at a time, so that the person treated can be free to work at his usual occupation without confinement.

Thoughtful persons who visit the Great Exhibition at Paris, and who will possibly ascend the great Eiffel Tower, will be apt to ask of what good is this curious structure beyond showing what iron girder-work can accomplish. That it will prove a great attraction to many visitors from all parts of the world is most probable, for the ordinary sightseer is always pleased with novelty, just as a child is delighted with a new toy. But this pleasing of the multitude seems to be a little thing towards countenancing such a huge undertaking. There is, of course, the commercial side of the enterprise to be considered, and if it be true that ten thousand persons can be accommodated on the various floors of this modern babel without inconveniencing one another, the returns from gate-money will yield a rich harvest. It is to be hoped, however, that anticipations of the usefulness of the structure as a meteorological observatory may be realised. Certainly, observations taken under such conditions have never before been possible, for we cannot compare a shifting balloon with a firm structure such as this presents. It has already been announced that three laboratories will be erected on the Tower, one for astronomical work, another for meteorological instruments, and a third for the periodical testing of the atmosphere. It is also stated that from the highest platform cloud-photographs will be taken daily, with a view to systematic study of cloud-forms over a wider area than has before been possible.

Some Roman remains have recently been

unearthed at the Beddington Sewage Farm, near Croydon, Surrey. These take the form of solid brickwork channels, which doubtless formed the heating apparatus for baths, and are similar in arrangement to structures which have been excavated elsewhere. It is thought probable that this discovery may point to the near proximity of a Roman villa. The site of such a villa was found about a mile from this spot in the year 1860.

Another interesting discovery has been made at Rochester, where, near the beautiful west front of the cathedral, have been found the foundations of an apse. It is believed by some that these remains may belong to a stone church built by Æthelbert in 604, being the year in which the sees of London and Rochester were established by St Augustine. If this be true, these old foundations would represent one of the first Saxon churches built of stone in this country. Archaeologists will no doubt soon settle this interesting point.

A good cement for mending cast-iron which has become cracked through heat, as in the case of any kind of retort, is said to be compounded by mixing asbestos with a sufficiency of white-lead to make a stiff putty. Such a cement can be applied to a retort whilst hot, and it will soon set, and make a permanent and durable joint.

The idea has been mooted that India-rubber roads in London would be a desirable innovation; but we fear that unless some cheaper source for that material be found, the proposal cannot be realised. We may mention that for some years a short length of road has been laid with India-rubber at the *Midland Hotel*, London, to deaden the noise of vehicles passing into the great station.

It was stated some time ago by Dr Zenger, of Prague, that valuable contributions towards weather-predictions might be obtained from photographing the sun, provided that the plates used in the work were those known as isochromatic (a word which very insufficiently describes a gelatine plate which will reproduce colours in their true *tone* relation to one another). Such photographs, he tells us, will indicate with great certainty the coming of atmospheric disturbances of all kinds; for on the approach of storms, the pictures will show round about the sun rings of circular or elliptical shape. If this be the case, it is obvious that at all naval stations where storms are common, the necessary apparatus should be provided for taking daily photographic images of the sun. The recent cyclone, which was so disastrous to the American and German navy, might have been foretold by such means.

Mr A. H. Walker has invented an oil cartridge for use at sea in making rough water smooth. The cartridge is fired from any form of firearm, and is so constructed that, on touching the water, the oil will escape and spread over the surface. In connection with this question of the use of oil at sea, we may mention here that a correspondent of the *Army and Naval Journal* suggests that the ancients learnt the efficacy of the system from the habits of sea-birds. Fish-eating birds, it is stated, have the power of ejecting oil from the mouth, and they invariably do so when captured. This writer has seen such birds floating in spaces of comparatively quiet water, when all round the sea was rough. In both the

South Atlantic and South Pacific, he has noticed this phenomenon, and believes it to be due to the oil ejected by the birds themselves.

Professor Möbius, referring at a recent meeting of the Physiological Society of Berlin to the habits of so-called flying-fish, stated that it was quite an erroneous idea that these creatures possessed any such powers of flight as are characteristic of birds, because the anatomy of their fins and muscles is not adapted to any such action. The fish, frightened at the approach of a vessel, will jump out of the water, as other fish will, and is then supported on the wind by its outstretched and evenly balanced fins. Some have supposed that the fish exhibited true flight, because of the buzzing noise with which its movements are accompanied; but the Professor says that this same noise can be obtained when a current of air from a pair of bellows is directed towards the fins of a dead fish. The rising motion of the fish over the waves can be explained by the upward currents of air which are produced by the horizontal wind striking the curved surfaces presented to it by the water. He thus concludes that all the motions of the fish in the air are quite passive.

The phonograph has lately in the hands of Dr Pinel of Paris done good service in throwing light upon that curious condition called hypnotism, which, ever since the early experiments of Mesmer, has puzzled the thoughtful, and has been a fruitful source of wonder to the credulous. Dr Pinel finds that hypnotic patients will obey the directions conveyed to them mechanically by the phonograph as readily as they will obey living words. He argues from this, and it would seem with much good sense, that the theory of animal magnetism—that is, a magnetic current passing from operator to subject—must be entirely baseless, and that the real cause of the phenomena of hypnotism is due to a disordered mental state. Those who have closely watched experiments in hypnotism, and noticed the comparatively small number of persons who are 'sensitives,' will be inclined to agree with this view of the matter.

It has lately been suggested in France that the patients in hospitals who are suffering from infectious disorders might be placed in verbal communication with their friends at stated times by means of the telephone. The idea seems to be an excellent one, and would confer a privilege that would be much appreciated by both friends and patients. The expense would be trifling compared with the amount of happiness which a realisation of the scheme would bring about.

There will probably be a good deal of photography, both professional and amateur, going on at the Paris Exhibition, for the permission to take pictures is not to be sold as a monopoly to one firm, as is the case generally at Exhibitions. But certain stringent regulations must be complied with before a camera can be carried within the building or its grounds. The most important one is the payment of a fee of twenty francs for four hours' work. But a season ticket conferring the privilege of photographing during certain hours of each day during which the Exhibition is open can be purchased for three hundred francs. We publish these particulars because we have had one or two inquiries upon the subject.

The *American Machinist* recommends a convenient method of obtaining photographic records

of the patterns, or wooden models, used by iron-founders, so as to prevent them being lost sight of as they pass from hand to hand. A sheet of white paper is spread upon the floor, and upon it are arranged the separate patterns, each with a ticket bearing a number placed upon it. Above this paper is suspended a photographic camera, and a negative is produced. From this negative two prints are made, and while one is kept in the office, the other goes to the foundry. It is obvious that by quoting the numbers attached to the patterns in all future communications, mistakes would be impossible. The system is clearly applicable to many other trades.

Mr Neyer, of Ostritz (Germany), has patented in this country a method of preparing waterproof roofing which combines a chemical treatment of fibrous material with a dressing of tarry compound. The method of production is briefly as follows: The fabric of jute, flax, or other suitable material is first of all treated with tungstate of soda and ammonia sulphate in water, to make it incombustible. It is then dried and submitted to an asphaltting process, by being passed through a heated mixture of tar, asphalt, sulphur, and oil. The surplus of this mixture is now removed as the fabric is passed between iron rollers. It is next sanded, and the sand is incorporated with it in its passage between other rollers in its still warm and plastic condition. It is now cooled, and is ready for use.

A curious result of the high price to which copper has recently been run by speculators is seen in an important alteration which has taken place in the American Clock Industry. Most of the movements of these cheap and excellent time-keepers have hitherto been made of brass. But the price of brass being governed by that of copper, the compound metal became so dear that the manufacturers looked out for something cheaper. This they have found in soft sheet-steel, which, placed under the dies formerly used upon brass, gives excellent results. From this accident there is little doubt that most of the working parts of the cheaper kinds of clocks will be made of steel instead of brass, as heretofore.

An interesting paper on the 'Risk of Fire from Steam and Hot-water Pipes' was lately read by Mr A. D. Mackenzie before the Royal Scottish Society of Arts. Mr Mackenzie has made a number of experiments, as a result of which he is able to show that it is next to impossible to raise ordinary pipes used for heating purposes above five hundred degrees, and this heat he could only attain by hard firing and an additional load on the safety-valve. Most apparatus of the kind cannot be heated beyond four hundred degrees; and as paper, wood, cotton, &c., cannot be readily fired until the heat amounts to about double that figure, there seems to be less risk from hot-water pipes than was formerly believed to be the case. He put forward the theory that mice attracted by the warmth of the pipes would be apt to make their nests in close proximity to them, and these nests being of highly combustible material, might prove a source of danger from fire. We may assume, however, that the great proportion of mysterious fires which are not incendiary are due rather to overheated flues than to hot-water pipes. The latter are now considered such a necessary part

of even small houses, for the supply of baths, &c., that it is satisfactory to have an assurance that they are free from danger from fire.

White solid paraffin, which is now used so much for the manufacture of candles, is being made in Brazil from peat. The factory is at Marslin, where an immense deposit of peat more than one hundred and fifty feet in thickness is supplying the raw material. The industry is in the hands of a Company, and three hundred persons are at present employed on the works.

THE GREAT GUN 'PEACEMAKER.'

It is not perhaps known to the general public that in the early days of artillery improvements in the United States—nearly half a century ago—one of the first attempts to leave the beaten track and to construct a very large gun on a new principle was made by Commodore Stockton of the United States navy in 1842 and 1843; nor is it generally known why this gun was withdrawn and never heard of again. The reason is a sad one, and the story will now be told.

Commodore Stockton at the period named was in command of the *Princeton*, a fine man-of-war, and one of the first constructed with a screw propeller. Both propeller and gun were objects of great interest and much curiosity; so much so, indeed, that it was determined by the inventor of the gun to invite a party of about one hundred guests, including President Tyler, most of the cabinet ministers, a number of members of Congress, distinguished foreigners, and private friends, who were assembled on board the *Princeton* on the 28th of February 1844, then lying in the Upper Potomac river, to witness the working of the screw-propeller, and the firing of Commodore Stockton's newly invented wrought-iron gun the 'Peacemaker,' as it was satirically called. This gun carried a spherical shot weighing two hundred and twenty-five pounds, which was considered a prodigious advance on the long sixty-eight, which had held its own in the front rank up to that period. Commodore Stockton, the inventor and manufacturer of the new gun, was very proud of his novel idea, as placing him amongst the first leaders in the advanced movement for the improvement of the existing artillery. He was equally alive to the immense advantages of the new screw propeller, as giving complete command over the rapid movements of a ship in any required direction; and he had accordingly brought his ship to Washington to show what he had accomplished, and to exhibit some experiments before his assembled guests.

All being ready, the *Princeton* steamed away, passing slowly and grandly down the Potomac. The Marine Band was in attendance, the weather was splendid, and all went 'merry as a marriage bell.' When near Mount Vernon, luncheon was served. At the conclusion of the repast, everybody went on deck, all but President Tyler, who remained below to exchange some pleasantries with his affianced bride, Miss Gardner, her father, Colonel Gardner, having gone on deck with the rest. Commodore Stockton, Mr Gilmer, the Secretary of the navy, and Commodore Kennon took their stand on one side of the gun; Colonel Gardner, Mr Upshur, Secretary of State, and Colonel Maxey on the other; whilst Colonel Benton of

the Artillery went to the rear, in order to watch the exact course of the shot. The gun having been carefully trained and all being ready, Commodore Stockton gave the word to fire. A tremendous explosion followed, occasioned by the bursting of the gun into hundreds of fragments, which were scattered around with terrible force, spreading death and destruction on every side. On the smoke clearing away, a fearful spectacle presented itself. The space round the carriage of the gun was covered with dead and wounded. Mr Gilmer, Mr Upshur, and Commodore Kennon were struck by pieces of iron and instantly killed; and Colonel Maxey and Colonel Gardner also, by the extreme violence of the concussion produced by the explosion; whilst Commodore Stockton, Colonel Benton, and a member of the Senate named Phelps, were thrown prostrate upon the deck, deprived of consciousness, and very severely hurt; and many others were also badly wounded by flying fragments. Some of the killed were mutilated and disfigured by being struck in the face and breast by heavy pieces of the gun, and otherwise torn and injured. As nearly all the killed and wounded had wives or relatives on board, the scene of anguish and sorrow which followed this accident can be better imagined than described.

That the gun possessed great merits, and was constructed on sound principles, there can be no doubt; but it was clear that wrought-iron, with which it was made, was not strong or tough enough to bear the enormous strain put upon it by the explosion of a cartridge of powder sufficiently heavy to propel a shot weighing two hundred and twenty-five pounds. Subsequently, Captain Rodman's process came into use, by which guns are cast hollow on a core barrel filled with water, to assist the cooling; then Parrott followed, amongst other inventors of that period, with his huge and curiously shaped guns, which, from their singular resemblance, were irreverently called 'soda-water bottles.' As these were brought forward, they were quickly adopted, and readily employed in the United States navy.

The public were filled with dismay at the failure of this gun, from which so much had been expected, and also with infinite sorrow at the tragedy which had been enacted on board the *Princeton*, and the loss of so many valuable lives. Mr Gilmer and Mr Upshur were buried from the 'White House,' the President and most of the high state officials following the hearses with every mark of sincere respect and sorrow, the general public fully entering into and sharing these kindly feelings.

THE LOST ART OF WELDING COPPER.

The art of welding copper was well known to the ancients; but the secret by which two pieces of copper can be joined so as to present as perfect a union as that made in welding iron was by some accident lost, and many millions have since been spent in resuscitating it from oblivion. The lost art is stated to have been at last rediscovered by Mr James Burns, of Pittsburg. The economic value of the process lies in the fact that, even by the best methods now known to metallurgists, copper scrap cannot be economically utilised because of the difficulty in welding a mass of

pieces into one body. Mr Burns recently demonstrated before a critical audience that his process is not a mere sham. After flattening a rod of copper three-eighths of an inch in diameter, he formed a disconnected ring. The usual 'scarfing' process—forming a union by means of an oblique joint—followed; and then the operator, after sprinkling a certain powder over the piece, proceeded to make a weld which, when cooled, showed a perfect union. He next took the ring, which measured two inches in diameter, and submitted it to a strain until its longest width had been extended three-quarters of an inch, its shorter width being narrowed to a corresponding degree, a circle being thus changed into an ellipsis. This was a more severe test than iron is expected to stand, and demonstrated conclusively that the union of the two ends of the rod was not the mere 'brazing' of the coppersmith.

Mr Burns' discovery opens up a new field in working copper, and will in all probability cause great changes in some lines of manufacture. At present, to make a copper ring for fitting over a joint, or making a gasket or joint, it had to be cut round out of a solid plate, causing great waste. To repair broken or defective pipes, brass had to be used; and should an intense heat strike the brazed part afterwards, the brass would melt and ruin the piece. But by the Burns process the economic use of copper is assured, and copper scrap, now worth but one-third its weight of new copper, would be as high in value as ingot copper. It is said that the ingredients which form the powder used by Mr Burns in welding are very cheap.

A SUMMER SONNET.

It is the Summer-time; sweet odours rise
From flower-lips, breathing fragrance, fill the air,
For Earth's great heart is warm with rich, full life,
And golden sunshine lingers everywhere.
Bright blossoms crown the mountain's rugged brow,
And happy birds make glad the verdant wood,
Where, tinkling low 'neath overhanging bough,
A brooklet seems to murmur, 'God is good.'
Fair roses blush, as wooing breezes pass,
And roseate clouds wait on the radiant morn;
While, from her lowly home amid the grass,
The lark soars far above the ripening corn,
Singing her Maker's praise in strains sublime.
Sing too, sad heart; it is the Summer-time!

E. MATHESON.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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QUEEN ANNE'S CONSERVATORY.

A DREAM IN SUMMER-TIME.

'NOBODY is in town,' says the fashionable world. But we, my literary chum and I, are not of that world; we belong to the three million and odd Nobodies who people at all seasons of the year the now so-called empty streets of London. The blinds may be down in Mayfair, Belgravia may be a howling wilderness given over to grimalkins and charwomen, even the sober regions of Portland Place and Harley Street may have only 'the Master' at home—notwithstanding this, in Kensington Gardens, on a dreamy August afternoon, there are plenty of children pelting one another with the fallen leaves, or sailing boats on the broad pond; plenty of loungers in twos and threes, who seem to find the world quite full enough for comfort and happiness; plenty, too, of lonely folk, who look as if 'the season' made small difference to them one way or the other. And these are all Nobodies! We are quite content to form a part of this negative population, and stroll on over the rustling carpet of leaves through the long straight avenues in search of some quiet shady nook in which to lounge and dream.

Through the branches comes soft summer sunshine, lighting up the greenness, until one could almost fancy that the year were young, and had just donned its spring mantle, so tender is the colouring among the tree-tops. Who first planned these wonderful avenues? and how many years is it since they were but lines of small saplings, swayed by every breath of wind? Now, they tower around us in their magnificent strength, and seem to mock the puny lives of 'poor humanity.' But a winter's blast or a summer storm could shatter their greatness in a moment; humanity lives on through the ages, ever rising, ever expanding, until, perchance, at last there shall come that perfection which— But metaphysics leads us to stone walls, and stone walls break heads, so we will come back into the sleepy sunshine of this everyday world.

When we reach the old Palace, it is quiet enough for the most devoted lover of solitude. We throw crumbs for the pert sparrows that are fluttering happily about careless of our invasion. The news spreads quickly of the feast provided, for in ten minutes numbers are hopping on the pathway in front of our seat, or quarrelling with their neighbours who have secured an unjustifiable share of the spoil.

How pleasant it is to get out of the dust and noise into this peaceful quietness! Yet people will tell you in perfect good faith, if you desire rest, that you must straightway convey yourself to the Sahara or Greenland, or some other spot equally inaccessible and uninviting, for that nothing in the way of repose can be found except in such desolate regions. Other persons less ambitious, but equally unpractical, will say: 'Take a holiday; have a run abroad. Nothing like a thorough change, you know, for setting you up.' And the unfortunate wretch who has perhaps but five shillings to spare for 'a holiday,' sighs over the well-meant advice and turns back hopelessly to his work. He cannot stand 'excursions' with their necessary row and hurry, and the five shillings would not take him out of town from even Saturday to Monday. So he grinds on, quite unconscious that he could find 'bits'—to use a painter's term—in these London parks of ours which are as resting and quiet as any solitude in the world. He could not get grandeur or perhaps perfect stillness; but there is enough of beauty; and the 'roar of London,' mellowed by distance, resembles but the humming of a swarm of bees or the murmur of far-off waves.

We leave our sparrow friends and saunter round to get a better view of the Palace. It looks very sleepy and decayed. The sunshine shows up its smoky stucco urns, and suggests that nobody takes much interest in its well-being. Somehow, as we lean on the iron railings and look across the smooth lawn with its bright flower-beds, it seems as if the old place had died with its former greatness and wanted burying. Even the empty sentry-box has a desolate air. Is it our imagina-

tion, I wonder, which always gives an appearance of decay to a place that has come down in the world? The lawn may be trim, the flowers gay, the windows shining; and yet there is a stillness that is not of life; it is difficult to fancy that people still are born and marry and die within its walls.

Suddenly the sun shines out brightly: free from its accustomed veil of smoke, the face of the Palace sparkles—it has grown young; the flower-beds are turned from ‘ribbon-borders’ into ‘patch-work;’ the trees have transformed themselves into peacocks, teapots, and all the odd shapes that adorn a correct ‘Dutch garden.’ And who are these quaint figures that have stepped out from the portrait-frames to promenade among the pleached alleys or over the smooth bowling-green before attending their royal mistress at supper in the great conservatory? Is not that the model waiting-woman, Mistress Abigail Hill, flirting with her future husband, and anon casting envious glances at her kinswoman whom she is so soon to rival, the haughty Sarah of Marlborough? That, surely, is the ‘handsome Englishman, Malbrook’ himself, who stands aside, listening with deaf ears to the gossip of Dr Trimmel as he angles for that bishopric which is not to be his just yet. The great Duke has something else to think about: his manor of Woodstock, with its fair mansion Blenheim; the municipal and official honours poured upon him; the thanks of a grateful nation for his many ‘famous victories.’ No thought of coming evil crosses his mind as he sees Mistress Abigail pounce upon Mr Speaker Harley, who has just arrived, and draw him into long and mysterious converse. And yet, not long hence, Marlborough and his haughty Duchess will be crashing to their fall, amid the bitter sneers of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, and Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, the latter of whom is at this moment forgetting his state cares in a hot literary discussion with Mr Joseph Addison. This last has not as yet given the *Spectator* to the world, neither has he commenced his unhappy married life at Holland House hard by, concerning which it has been well said: ‘Holland House is a large mansion, but it could not contain Mr Addison, the Countess of Warwick, and one guest, Peace.’ But Mr Addison has just quarrelled with Dean Swift, and the great satirist’s latest pamphlet is being severely handled in consequence by his quondam friend, who observes, in the course of conversation, that—

‘Harry, my dear fellow, are you asleep? It is just six o’clock, and I have an article to finish for the *Scratcher*, and to review that idiot Smith’s book on “Lunatic Asylums,” and heaps of things besides.—Come home, old boy, come home. I’ll bet a fiver you contemplate founding an Asylum—for Decayed Vegetables—and intend taking that old greenhouse yonder as a model.—You’ll never turn your mooning dreams into L. S. D.’

And my literary friend, who, in spite of his wild hair and general bohemianism, is much more alive to the prosaic facts of every-day life than my starched-looking self, hurries me off remorselessly to ignoble tea and chops in our distant Bloomsbury lodgings.

As we tramp homewards, my thoughts linger over the quaint vision which the sight of Queen Anne’s Conservatory, built originally for a Ban-

queting Hall, and frequently used by Her Majesty as such, had called up; and I register a mental vow that, while my friend is making mince-meat of some unhappy rival in the *Scratcher*, I also will for once improve the shining-lamp-lit-hour, and turn my ‘mooning dream’ into a study in black and white.

JOHN VALE’S GUARDIAN.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of ‘VAL STRANGE,’ ‘JOSEPH’S COAT,’
‘RAINEOW GOLD,’ etc.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PRESTO! A change from the yellowing lanes and whitening wheat-fields of late summer to a glistening field of snow. Trees and hedges bare of foliage, but sparkling thick with rime after a night of frost and fog. Snelling sat in his own room chafing his knees before a great coal-fire and staring into the shapes that formed there. One of the chance-presented faces bore a grotesque likeness to Tobias Orme; and Snelling, after glaring at it wrathfully for a second or two, took up the poker and demolished it with as much gusto as if it had been a living bugbear. Snelling knew by this time, what was known to the whole country-side, that the wretched Tobias had betrayed the secret he had meant to keep, and instead of enriching his patron and himself, had enriched the rightful owner of the land on which his precious discovery had been made. Within reach of Snelling’s hand lay a letter; and when he had destroyed Mr Orme’s imagined likeness, he took up this missive with an angry fretful jerk and glanced over it contemptuously. It was written in a somewhat shaky handwriting, which had once been clerkly, and a good deal over-informed with flourishes, and it was couched in the most involved and polysyllabic phrases the writer could discover. It came from Mr Orme himself, and perhaps that fact had helped Snelling to identify his correspondent’s inflamed countenance in the glowing coal. The letter announced the writer’s approaching arrival.

‘Plunged,’ wrote Tobias, ‘from the loftiest pinnacle of hope into the profoundest abyss of poverty, scarcely able to predict at the moment of time at which I indite these despairing lines by what providential opportunity I shall succeed in acquiring the wherewithal whereby to secure the necessary Queen’s-head for its despatch, I venture, sir, with all fitting respect, but at the same time with all the energy of which language is capable, to beseech you to recall from memory the promise made in happier days. In the hope, sir, that that promise has not utterly escaped from your remembrance, I shall venture to present myself to-morrow morning at the hour of eleven, as near as I can make it, at your door—a door, alas! once hospitable, a door to which I have twice borne tidings of the utmost importance to its owner, but a door at which, I fear, I can no longer look forward to that warmth of welcome to which I once fondly dreamed that I might have a perpetual authority to aspire.’

Snelling was not an English stylist, and in spite of his bitter grudge against Tobias, a mournful admiration touched him. He knew for his own part that he might as well have tried to

fly as to write that letter. 'That's where drink can carry a man of learning,' he said half aloud, as Mr Orme's sordid figure and sodden countenance presented themselves to his memory. 'Why, with a power of expression such as that man's got, he might ha' been anywhere at his time o' life if he'd only kept himself sober. I reckon I shall have to see him when he comes; but he's been bitter harm instead o' good to me, and he'll have to suffer for it. If he'd ha' kept his tongue betwixt his teeth, he'd ha' been a rich man this minute.' He turned and struck a bell which lay upon the table. 'Mrs Wilkins,' he said to the housekeeper who silently answered the summons, 'I'm expecting a person of the name of Orme. He's been here before, and you'll know him when you see him. He's pretty shabby, I reckon, but you'll show him in when he comes.'

He had not long to wait, for the housekeeper had scarcely retired a minute when she returned and tapped at the door: 'The person you expected, sir.'

Snelling wheeled slowly round and took stock of his visitor mercilessly from head to foot. The wretched Tobias wore boots that gaped; his coat was out at the elbows, and his trousers were broken at the knees. He had some dreadful kind of black stuff, grayed with dirt, wound about his neck and stuffed into the bosom of his waistcoat. The toper's glow had faded from his nose, the tinge of which had deepened under the winter cold to a pinched purple. He dangled in one hand a wretched relic of a hat, and looked altogether so piteous, that Snelling, who had fully made up his mind to give him nothing, could afford to be compassionate.

'You've brought your pigs to a pretty market,' he said, with well-fed, well-warmed complacency. 'You're better than a sermon agen drink, you are. This is what you've come to.'

'Yes, sir,' answered the wrecked Tobias, 'this is what I've come to.' He took a terrible old red handkerchief out of his hat and wiped his eyes with it. They were watering, half with cold and half with his inward spirituous pathos. 'You can hardly find it in your heart, sir, to be hard upon a man like me.' Here Mr Orme's knowledge of human nature at large, and of Robert Snelling in particular, failed him. It was precisely upon a man like him that Snelling could find it in his heart to be hardest.

'You said you'd come,' Snelling answered, 'and here you are. I wouldn't say I wouldn't see you, for I'm a man as likes to do things straightfor'ard and above-board. If you think you've got anything in the natur' of a claim on me, let's have it in plain words. I made a bargain with you to give you two per cent. on the profits of the news you brought me last summer-time. Where are the profits? If I was to claim two per cent. on the losses up to this minute, you wouldn't fetch the money if you was rendered down and sold.'

'The losses, sir?' asked poor Tobias. 'I hope, sir, that I have led you to no losses?'

'It matters very little what you hope, my man,' returned Snelling, contemptuously dignified. 'It matters very little whether you hope at all, or whether you don't hope at all. D'ye know what your confounded news has cost me? Up to date, not a penny under seventeen hundred and fifty pounds. Whether I shall ever see a penny on

it again is more than I can tell, and more than any man can tell me.'

'But there's coal, sir,' cried Tobias; 'there's coal everywhere.'

'Yes,' said Snelling, nodding at him in a chill anger, 'there's coal everywhere, maybe. That ain't the question, my man—that ain't the question. There's coal there, like enough, but there's sand on top of it.'

'Sand, sir?' asked Tobias, meekly and feebly.

'Yes, sand—a dry, live sand as runs like water. You might as well try to dig a hole in a horse-pond as sink through it. They're making a try to fathom it this very day; but for all I know, it runs down to the bowels of the earth. That's what your discovery has done for me, my man. It's landed me on a job as might break Rothschild. If you'd kept sober and brought me the news you could ha' brought me twenty hours earlier, you might ha' been riding in your own trap by now, like my man Isaiah.'

This intelligence seemed mentally to annihilate Mr Orme for the time being; he stared piteously straight forward, shivering a little with cold, but saying nothing, and except for his utterly dazed look, giving no sign that he felt anything. But in a while he began to whimper, his under lip protruded little by little, and his tears began to flow.

'Look here,' cried Snelling, on whom a display of this kind could be expected to produce but one effect, 'if you want to shed tears, go and shed 'em outside, where it don't matter. I won't have you crying over my new carpet.'

'O sir!' cried Tobias, roused once more to a knowledge of himself by his patron's voice, 'you can't expect to prosper if you leave me to starve.'

'Can't I?' said Snelling gruffly. 'I'll chance that, my man.'

'You can't! you can't!' Tobias moaned. 'I am the Columbus of this America, Mr Snelling. Nobody will ever do any good with my discovery if I am left to starve; I know they won't; I'm sure of it.'

Now, this view of things was natural enough from Tobias's standpoint, but less natural from Snelling's; and yet it struck the latter with an oddly superstitious feeling.

'I'll tell you what I'll do with you,' he said. 'You've got no more claim on me than I should have if I was to go to Barfield Hall and ask my lord for his title. But if you'll undertek to keep away and niver to bother me any more, I'll mek a bargain with you. Provided I get news as this sand can be passed through, I'll give you a ten-pound note; and if it isn't passed through, I shall give you nothing. You've got no more claim to that ten-pound note than you've got on the clothes I'm wearing; but I'll do that much for you. I' the meantime, you can sit i' the back kitchen and have a bite and a sup theer, and I'll give my housekeeper orders to see to you at once. That's the last you've got to look to, and that ain't certain, nor can't be for some hours to come.'

'If you would be so extremely good, sir,' said Tobias, 'as to allow me to wait and see'—

'You can sit i' the back kitchen if you like,' said Snelling; 'you'll be in nobody's way there, and you'll have a bit of a fire to sit by.' With that he rang the bell and gave pompous orders for the bestowal of his miserable guest.

It was out of no pity for Mr Orme's discomforts or disappointments that he did this; it was a kind of sop to circumstance or bid to fortune. Snelling would have scorned the open statement that there was any such thing in the world as that blind foolish deity of luck whom in his soul he desired to propitiate. A man's genuine belief is not by any means that of which he is logically persuaded. The absurd and unreasonable fancies which move him to action are beliefs more settled and profound than the most cherished dogmas which leave him inactive. So Snelling believed that the foolish deity might diminish or increase the obstacle which lay between him and his hope in accordance with his treatment of Tobias. It was like the gambler's consultation of the cards before the game, likelier than not to have its predictions falsified, and yet none the less to be regarded with hope and fear.

He had an appointment that day with Proctor, the renowned engineer, who had been called in to determine whether or not it were worth while to continue the operations. If the verdict went against him, it meant a clean loss of at least a thousand pounds. He had exaggerated things in talking to Tobias, and felt as if he were justified in setting off the figures of great sums against the background of that unfortunate's poverty. If the verdict went in his favour, he was no longer merely a man of solid substance but a man of wealth. He had no need for wealth, and knew as little as any man alive how to put it to any uses profitable to himself; and yet he yearned and burned and thirsted for it. The student of human nature finds himself confronted by many difficult problems, but there are not many of them so puzzling as that presented by the love of money for mere money's sake. Snelling did not propose to himself to do anything with his prospective riches, even to live better or lie softer. It would have been hard to exaggerate or increase by any amount of wealth his sense of personal importance and majesty, and except that he intended generally to make money breed money, he had no designs at all respecting it. And all the same he coveted it, as a saint longs after virtue, or a repentant sinner after forgiveness, or a young artist when he thinks of fame, or a lover who looks forward to his union with his sweetheart. There is nothing desired of men which creates or can create a more preoccupying longing for possession than money excited in his mind.

In due time he mounted and rode away towards the shaft at the bottom of which his hopes lay hidden in darkness. In the neighbourhood of Beacon-Hargate the whole country undulates gently into hill and vale, but the Beacon itself tops everything, and from its summit on a clear day there is an uninterrupted view of at least a dozen miles on any side. Snelling's road led him past its crest, and when he had reached the summit he paused for a moment and looked round on the familiar landscape. The discovery of the earth's hidden treasures had as yet done but little to alter its character, and the broad field of snow almost obliterated even these signs of change. Half-a-dozen pit stacks and an engine-house were in course of construction; but the hard winter weather had stopped the work, and they stood tranquil, with no signs of life about them. Day's farmhouse had vanished from the landscape, to

be sure; and near where it had used to stand, the furnace fires of the new engine sent up a column of smoke, and the panting of the engine itself throbbed faintly audible on the quiet country air. Gazing in that direction, Snelling half regretted his engagement with Orme. He would have given something to have been first in the field, and much to have gone swaggering with the proclamation that he was the first to have recognised the riches of the district. It was Tobias's folly which had robbed him of that splendid chance. Yet he dared not altogether be wroth with him just then, lest the foolish genius he courted should choose not to be propitious. He stifled his anger and rode on.

His own shaft lay at the foot of the Beacon Hill, and within two hundred yards or so of the local line of railway. As he trotted towards it, the engine began to pant and the wheel over the shaft to revolve, and thinking that somebody might be coming to the bank with news at that moment, he shook his reins and hurried onward. There were two or three loungers at the side of the shaft warming their hands at the fire heaped in an iron brazier made by the simple expedient of punching an old bucket full of holes.

'Any news?' Snelling asked as he dismounted.

'Mr Proctor's down, sir,' one of the men responded. 'One of the chaps was up just now. It seems the soundin'-rods was forgot, sir. Better leave the hoss inside, if you mean to wait, sir.'

There was a raw desolate hovel built for shelter, constructed of all manner of odds and ends, and into this Snelling led his horse. There were one or two clumsy stools overturned on the floor of beaten earth, and against one wall a primitive fireplace had been erected. The fire which lay in it filled the rough-cast room with smoke, and Snelling banged the door angrily open before he sat down. He waited for half an hour, and at the end of that time his impatience mastered him.

'Let Mr Proctor know I'm here,' he called; and the fire by this time burning clearly, he drew up to it and fell to brooding. The great mining engineer's entrance awoke him from his thoughts. There had been a misunderstanding, Proctor said. The man instructed to bring the sounding-rods had not obeyed his orders. A messenger had been despatched for them, and might be ready at any minute.

'Look here,' said Snelling, 'I've got other business than this to see to. Give me a Yes or No as soon as you can, if you please.'

'My dear-r sir-r,' the engineer responded, 'I can tell ye nothing till I get the sounding-rods. Then I'll let you know in an hour. In the meantime I've a bit o' business with Messrs Day and Winter. I'm due there in half an hour, and I must get away.'

'My affairs,' said Snelling surlily, 'are about as pressing as Messrs Day and Winter's.'

'Ay, ay, sir!' said the man of science. 'To you, sir, but not to them.' He buttoned up his overcoat and bustled cheerily from the place.

Snelling was left alone with his anxieties for an hour, and at the end of that time a messenger came to say that an accident had happened to the sounding-rods, by which they had been twisted. It would take three or four hours to put them into working order. The anxious man arose in wrath,

and an oath escaped him. He had not been guilty of such a falling-off from respectability for a score of years past; but his nerves, tough and dull as they were, were at a terrible tension. He sat torn between the dread of heavy loss and the expectation of unmeasured gain, and his suspense was almost unendurable. He went outside the hut and tramped up and down, up and down, up and down, wearing a long track in the otherwise unsoiled snow of a neighbouring meadow.

The engineer came back again, and they waited together; and Snelling, too proud to display his anxiety further, sat down in slow torment and scarcely spoke a word for hours. One of the men brought them some coarse food, and the engineer, accustomed to rough fare, attacked it cheerfully; but Snelling waved it voicelessly away.

At long last, as the winter dusk was falling, two men came down the road bearing a dozen lengths of jingling iron on their shoulders.

'Here they are,' cried Proctor; 'and now we'll know in a jiffy.' He made ready to descend.

Snelling felt that he could not bear to look on the slow work of preparation. He shut himself resolutely indoors and stared at the glowing coals. The hungry horse champed at his bit and now and then gave a rattling shiver. Voices from outside told how the preliminary work was going on. Then the engine throbbed for a little while, and there was silence.

The next half-hour was an agony of covetousness and foreseen failure, but the man sat in the dark like a statue.

'If it's all a mistake and the money's lost,' he told himself, 'they shall see no sign in me.'

The engine got to work again and paused again; and Proctor, bearing a lamp, shouldered abruptly into the hut.

'Well?' said Snelling without turning.

'We've proved five-and-twenty fathom sand,' said the Scot; 'and I should just counsel ye to give it up and sink elsewhere. Ye might drop all ye've got into that hole and never see a penny of it.'

After all, Snelling was not without heroism in his way; he reared his great bulk and settled his coat about him. 'If that's so, it's so,' he said quietly. 'Good-night to you.' He shook hands, led out his horse, and mounted. There was a snow-light in the air, but otherwise the night was dark, without a star. He rode calmly enough for a while; but by-and-by his head and shoulders began to droop, and the horse, falling into a footpace, jogged on wearily, as if his master's depression touched him, as perhaps it did. Nearing the top of the Beacon, Snelling heard a wild clatter of hoofs before him beyond the ridge of the hill. He glanced up, and behold the sky was ruddy. Even whilst he stared at it, a figure came galloping wildly over the crest, black against the wild glare of the sky.

'Look out!' roared Snelling. 'Where are you coming to?'

The rider pulled up with difficulty, and cried out in a breathless voice to him if that were Mr Snelling.

'Yes,' cried Snelling with a fierce foreboding. 'What's the matter?'

'The house is afire, sir. A lamp burst in your neveu's bedroom. Mrs Wilkins heard the crash, but she couldn't go in: the place was swimming

with fire. There's nothing will save the house, sir, and we can't find Master John nowher.'

He heard the news without a word, and rode on. Was it possible that fortune had at last so far befriended him?

EPIDEMICS PAST AND PRESENT.

THE late epidemic of Yellow Fever at Jacksonville, on the Atlantic coast of Florida, caused considerable consternation on the other side of the water, and attracted special attention on this side owing to the well-known scientist, Mr R. A. Proctor, having fallen its victim. It is a terrible scourge to the tropical and subtropical regions of America, which are hardly ever entirely free from it, though it rages with special violence only at intervals. Its area, however, tends to become more circumscribed. It used to be common in all the eastern harbours of the United States as far north as Rhode Island; but during the present century it has rarely got north of Charleston except in connection with arrivals from southern latitudes. Its ravages have at times even extended to Europe. During the first twenty years of the present century there were constant and mysterious outbreaks of the epidemic in the principal Spanish ports, and year after year the southern and eastern coast towns of Spain suffered heavily. The last outbreak was in Barcelona in 1821; and since that date the country has practically been free from the scourge, though Lisbon had a serious visitation in 1857, when six thousand persons of all grades of society perished in a few weeks. Yellow fever has rarely visited England, though in 1865 an outbreak occurred at Swansea which was fatal to twenty persons.

The origin of the disease is by no means certain; but it had evidently a close connection with the slave-trade in the first instance, as all its best known seats in America correspond very closely with the ports at which slave-cargoes were landed. That yellow fever is not of African origin is clear; the disease is unknown on the Continent, except in connection with returning ships; and even in America it rarely attacks pure-blooded negroes.

The theory which at present finds most acceptance is that the disease began by the filth of slave-ships being discharged in the American harbours at the end of their voyages, where it fermented in the banks of mud, and spread poisonous germs through the air. Yellow fever is specially associated with seaports, and particularly with the lowest or most alluvial parts of them, and it rarely appears any distance inland. It is a contagious and malignant disease, often attended with a peculiar yellowness of the skin, a fact which gave rise to the name by which it is known. It attacks its victims very suddenly, the first symptoms being weakness and restlessness, speedily followed by faintness, giddiness, and chills. The crisis generally occurs within twenty-four hours of the first seizure, and the young and robust are particularly liable to be carried off by it. Much doubt still exists as to the nature of the contagion, some authorities considering it to be only conveyed by personal infection; while others hold it to be spread by

malarial influences, without direct or indirect contact with a previous sufferer.

Another epidemic, of which we have, unfortunately, had wider and more recent experience in this country, is that of Smallpox. Though this disease does not now commit such fearful ravages as it did in times past, it still remains one of the most serious febrile complaints, and while probably more contagious than any kindred disease, the nature of the contagion is not yet clearly ascertained. It is now pretty generally accepted that smallpox is propagated from germs carried in the air; but of what these germs consist and how they act we have no certain knowledge. Close contact with sufferers will convey the infection, and so will their clothing, even after weeks and months have elapsed; but it seems very probable that the disease is extensively propagated by means much more obscure and indirect. The medical books report a case from America in which germs crossed a river five hundred yards wide, and infected a number of carpenters working on the other side; and cases frequently occur in which it is impossible to trace the manner in which the infection is carried.

The history of the disease is also involved in considerable obscurity. It is believed to have originated in Asia, and was first noticed as a distinct complaint by Procopius towards the end of the sixth century; but the oldest accurate description of it which we possess is that given by Rhazes, an Arabian physician, who wrote in the tenth century. The contact with Asiatics occasioned by the crusades seems to have spread smallpox widely over Europe, and this country suffered from it very severely, especially during the thirteenth century. In 1517 it first appeared in America, where it committed frightful ravages. Like other contagious diseases, it seems most fatal when introduced among populations for the first time. Prescott estimates that in Mexico alone it destroyed three and a quarter million inhabitants; and in Brazil it extirpated whole tribes. In North America it was equally virulent; Mr Catlin in his work on the North American Indians speaks of six million red men being carried off by the hideous plague. The Duke of Argyll in his recent work on Scotland gives records of the terrible ravages it committed in that country in the seventeenth century, when the epidemic spared neither high nor low. It was particularly fatal to English royal personages about this time; William III. nearly died of it, and it proved fatal to his consort Queen Mary, to his uncle the Duke of Gloucester, and to the eldest son and youngest daughter of his predecessor, James II. The introduction of inoculation, and afterwards of vaccination, combined with the gradual importance of sanitary conditions, have considerably reduced its ravages, though the recent outbreaks at Sheffield and elsewhere show it to be still a serious evil.

We may, however, congratulate ourselves on being free from many of the epidemics from which our forefathers suffered; such terrible scourges as the Black Death, the Sweating Sickness, and the Plague, we now know only by name. The first of these is believed to have originated in China, and took its name from the black spots which usually appeared on the person

of the sufferer. These spots were symptomatic of putrid decomposition, and their appearance was nearly always a fatal sign. Beginning with inflammatory boils and tumours, the Black Death produced stupor, mental affections, and palsy of the tongue, the last generally becoming black, as if suffused with blood. The characteristics of the disease were burning, unslakeable thirst, pains in the chest, spitting of blood, and fetid breath. This pestilence attacked Europe in a mild form in 1342, and may be traced as moving in the wake of the numerous caravan routes from the East. Spreading from the north coast of the Black Sea to Constantinople, and from thence to Italy, it radiated from there by many routes over the whole of Europe. Wherever it appeared it committed such fearful ravages as materially to check the increase of population; in China the deaths from this disease were estimated at thirteen million, and the rest of the East lost nearly twenty-four million; whilst a moderate calculation puts the loss in Europe at twenty-five million. London and Venice lost 100,000 inhabitants each; and Paris, Florence, and Norwich half that number apiece. It caused so serious a decrease of population in this country for a time as to create a great dearth of workmen and labourers; and in consequence, a great rise in wages. Professor Thorold Rogers, who has investigated the economic bearings of this disease very thoroughly, states that the working-classes were at no time so well off in England as during the period which immediately followed the ravages of the Black Death in the fourteenth century. It is never known to have made its appearance since then.

A century later this country was attacked by another serious epidemic, the Sweating Sickness, which was so called because, in the words of an old writer, 'it did most stand in sweating from beginning to ending.' It first made its appearance in England, and was generally known on the Continent as the 'English sweat.' It was observed generally to spare foreigners in this country, and also to be specially fatal to Englishmen when it appeared abroad; and it was surmised that the immoderate use of beer, then so common in England, rendered its inhabitants particularly susceptible to the disease. Beginning in 1485, in the army of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., it spread quickly over the country with most fatal results. It seems to have been a species of violently inflammatory fever, which suffused the whole body with a fetid perspiration, the crisis generally occurring within twenty-four hours of the first seizure. Like most other epidemics, it was specially fatal to healthy, vigorous men in the prime of life, and hardly one per cent. of such recovered. In London, where it raged with peculiar violence, two lord mayors and six aldermen died in one week. This first outburst continued its ravages until the end of the year, its cessation being nearly coincident with a violent tempest on New Year's day 1486, which was therefore supposed to have caused its disappearance. Further outbreaks of this epidemic occurred in England in 1506 and 1517, when again London suffered severely; and in 1528 and 1529 not only this country, but also France and Germany, and, in a less degree, Holland, Sweden, and Poland, were visited by

the same pestilence. The last appearance of the Sweating Sickness in England was in 1551, when the disease was particularly virulent in Shrewsbury and the valley of the Severn.

The Great Plague, which attacked Europe at intervals during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, was a very contagious kind of malignant fever, probably nearly akin to what is now known as typhus, and was characterised by swellings of the lymphatic glands, purple spots, and carbuncles. It was a popular belief that persons who had survived one attack of the disease were not liable to another; but that this was quite groundless is proved by well-authenticated cases of individuals taking the infection several times. The first signs of pestilence were shivering, sickness, giddiness, and pains in the loins, accompanied by a feeling of intense weariness; in the second stage the tongue became dry and brown, the gums, teeth, and lips were covered with a dark fur, and livid patches and dark stripes made their appearance on the skin. In fatal cases, the pulse gradually sank, the surface of the body became clammy, and coma or low delirium set in, death usually occurring within five or six days of the first seizure. This disease has always been confined to temperate regions, and has been most fatal in summer and autumn, especially during the month of September. That it is largely due to dirty habits and bad sanitary arrangements is evident from the fact that its greatest ravages were in close, ill-drained towns: as sanitation has progressed the Plague has receded. Its last and most fatal outbreak in this country was in 1665, when London suffered so severely that business was practically at a stand-still. Every street, and in some cases every house in the street, was attacked, and more than twenty-six thousand died in the month of September alone; while the total loss cannot have been far short of one hundred thousand persons. For such large numbers, ordinary burial was impossible, and the dead had to be carted away coffinless and thrown into vast pits dug beyond the then existing walls. In 1720 the Plague destroyed nearly half the population of Marseilles; and seventy years later it raged with great virulence in Russia and Poland. Since that date, however, it has never visited Western Europe, though it still appears in Greece and Turkey, and occasionally in Russia.

UNDER AN AFRIC SUN.

A NOVELETTE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER I.

'WELL, 'pon my word, Fraser!'

'What's the matter now?'

'I'm staggered; I am, really.'

'What about, boy?'

'To think I could be such an absolute noodle as to let you morally bind me hand and foot and bear me off into a desolate island in the Atlantic, to carry your confounded specimens; be dragged out of bed at unholy hours to walk hundreds of miles in the broiling sun; to sleep in beds full of the active and nameless insect abhorred by the

British housewife; and generally become your white nigger, cad, carthorse, and'—

'Have you nearly done?' said Horace Fraser, with a grim smile upon his dry quaint countenance.

'No; that was only the preface.'

'Then let's have the rest when we get home in the shape of a neatly printed book, a copy of which you can present to me with a paper-knife of white ivory; and I promise you I will never cut a leaf or read a line.'

'Thanks, Diogenes.'

'Diogenes indeed!' cried Fraser with a snort, as his crisp hair seemed to stand on end. 'Now, look, Tom Digby; you are about the most ill-conditioned, ungrateful, dissatisfied English cub that ever breathed.'

'Go it!' said the good-looking young fellow addressed, as he flung himself down among the ferns and began to untie his shoes, after wiping his steaming brow and taking off his straw hat, to let the hot dry breeze blow through his crisp wavy brown hair.

'I mean to "go it," as you so coarsely term it, sir,' continued Fraser, crossing his arms on a roughly made alpenstock. 'I came to you in your black and grimy chambers, where you were suffering from a soot-engendered cold. I said: "I am off to the Canaries for a three months' trip. Leave this miserable London March weather, and I'll take you where you can see the sun shine."'

'See it shine? Yes; but you didn't say a word about feeling it,' cried the younger man. 'Do you know the skin is peeling off my nose, and that the back of my neck is burnt?'

'Don't be a donkey, Tom! I ask, did you ever see anything so lovely before in your life?'

'Humph! 'Tis rather pretty,' grumbled the younger man.

'Pretty!' echoed Fraser contemptuously, as he took off his hat, as if out of respect to Nature, and gazed around him at sea, sky, mountain, and hill, whose hues were dazzling in their rich colours. He then threw down his alpenstock, drew a large geological hammer from his belt, and seated himself upon the grass, while his companion brought out a cold chicken, some dark bread, and a number of hard-boiled eggs, finishing off with a bottle and silver cup.

'Look at that wonderful film of cloud floating toward the volcano, Tom! Look at the sun gleaming upon it! Just like a silver veil which the queen of mountains is about to throw over her head.'

'Poetry, by jingo!' cried Digby. 'Brayvo old stones and bones, I say! Look at the golden yellow of the hard yolk lying within the ivory walls of this hard-boiled egg; and at the— There; I'll be hanged if I didn't forget to bring some salt!'

Tom Digby made a sound with his tongue as he tasted some of the wine he had poured into the cup; then he made a grimace.

'I say, Horace, old chap, it was all very well for the old people to make a fuss about their sack and canary; but for my part a tankard of honest

English beer is worth an ocean of this miserable juice.'

'Don't drink it, then,' said Fraser, eating mechanically, as he gazed about him at the glorious pines around, and then down at the tropical foliage of banana, palm, orange, and lime, two thousand feet below, where it glorified the lovely valleys and gorges which ran from the black volcanic sandy shore right up into the mountains.

Then a silence fell upon the scene, which continued till the *al fresco* repast was at an end, and Tom Digby deliberately lit up and began to smoke.

'What an enthusiastic young gusher you are, Horace!' cried Digby banteringly. 'For a man of forty-one, you do rather go it.'

'And for one of twenty-five, you assume the airs of a boy,' said Fraser grimly.

'Well, I feel like one, old chap, out here. Why, it's glorious to breathe this delicious mountain air, to gaze upon the clouds above, and below at that wonderful blue sea, and at the yellow pines which look like gold. Yes,' he added, as he sprang up and gazed about him, 'it is a perfect Eden! What a jolly shame that it should belong to the Spaniards instead of us.'

'I daresay they appreciate it.'

'Must have done, or else they wouldn't have taken it from the—the—the—what did you call the aborigines?'

'Guanches.'

'What a chap you are, Horace! You seem to know a bit of everything.'

'I only try to go about with my eyes open, and take interest in something better than colouring a meerschaum pipe.'

'Severe!'

'Well, you do annoy me, Tom, you do indeed. A man with such capabilities, and you will not use them. Why, you haven't even tried to learn Spanish yet.'

'What's the good? You know plenty for both. I'm well enough off not to bother my brains about Spanish.'

'Ah, Tom, Tom! if you only had some aim in life.'

'Rather have some of those delicious oranges.'

'Eating again?'

'No, for drinking. Thirsty land, Horace, and I never knew what an orange really was before. And why should I worry myself about languages? I've a lively recollection of your namesake at school, and Virgil and Homer and all the other dead-language buffers.—I say, though, that's fine.'

They had come suddenly upon one of the gashes in the island known to the Spanish as *barrancos*—a thorough crack or crevice in the rocky soil, with perpendicular sides clothed with mosses, ferns, and the various growths which found a home in the disintegrating lava of which the place was composed. Here the various patches of green were of the most brilliant tints, and kept ever verdant by the moisture trickling down from above.

'Mind what you are doing!' said Fraser, after stooping to chip off a fragment of perfectly black lava from a bare spot.

'Yes; it would be an awkward tumble,' said Digby, as he leaned forward and peered over the ledge. 'Five hundred feet, I daresay.'

'More likely a thousand,' said Fraser. 'The distances are greater than you think.'

'Ah, well, don't make much difference to a man who falls whether he tumbles five hundred or a thousand feet.—Going along here?'

'Yes; the track leads to a steep descent. Then we can get up the other side, and round over the mountain, and so back to the part where, after dinner, we can go and call on Mr Redgrave. I did send on the letter straight from London.'

'All right, old chap. I'm ready.—How many miles round?'

'Not more than ten. You will not mind the climb down?'

'Well, if it's like this—yes. Hillo, what's he doing?'

Digby pointed across the *barranco* to where, a couple of hundred yards away, upon the opposite rock-face, a man seemed to be slowly descending the giddy wall.

'After birds or rabbits, perhaps,' said Fraser.

'Take care of yourself, old chap!' shouted Digby; and then, as his voice was lost in the vastness of the place, he followed his companion seaward for a few hundred yards till the track led them to a zigzag descent cut in the wall of rock, down which they went cautiously and not without hesitation till they reached the little stream at the bottom, crossed it, and ascended the other side, a similar dangerous path taking them to the top.

'By George, this is a place!' cried Digby as they paused for a few moments.

'Listen!' whispered Fraser, stopping short; and there beneath them was a panting and rustling, followed directly after by the appearance of a dark face with a band across the brow, a man with a basket supported on his back by the band, to leave his hands free, climbing up from a hidden path among the ferns, and pausing before them to set down his load.

'What have you there?' asked Fraser in Spanish.

'Dust of the old people, señor Inglese,' said the man, smiling. 'That is one of the caves below there where they used to bury them; and he pointed to an opening just visible amongst the growth where the side of the *barranco* sloped.

'Buried? There?' said Fraser.

'Yes, señor; there are plenty of such places as this in the sides of the mountain.'

'Curious,' said Fraser, eagerly peering into the basket of brown dust, stirring it with the end of his alpenstock, and uncovering something gleaming and white.

'Why, it's a tooth!' said Digby, stooping to pick it out of the basket, but dropping it suddenly. 'Ugh!' he ejaculated; 'why, they're bits of bone.'

'Yes; very interesting,' said Fraser. 'Dust of the Guanche mummies. I knew there were remains to be found.'

'Disgusting!' ejaculated Digby, recoiling.

'Why do you get this dust?' asked Fraser of the man.

'For my garden, señor. The potatoes and onions like it, and it is superb.'

'What does he say?'

'They use it for manure for their gardens.'

Digby seized his friend's arm. 'Come away,' he said. 'No more vegetables while I stay in Isola. Hang it all, Fraser, I hope they don't put it among the orange-trees.'

'Possibly! Why not? This is the debris of mummies, the remains of the old dwellers here, made of the dust of the earth, returned to the dust of the earth; and the salts here are taken up by plant-life by Nature's wonderful chemistry.'

'I say, don't preach science,' cried Digby. 'Come along.'

'Yes, we must go on now,' said Fraser thoughtfully; 'but we shall have to come and explore these caves. I should like to take back a few perfect skulls.'

For the next two hours they wandered on through scenes of surpassing loveliness, following the faint track which led them over the mountains till they could see the sea on the other side of the little island, as they began to descend. Fraser was always busy chipping fragments of pumice and lava; picking rare plants, and making a goodly collection for study at the little *venta* or hostel where they had taken up their quarters, when a rabbit suddenly darted out across the verdant path they pursued.

'Rather disappointing place as to game,' said Digby. 'Few birds, too. I say, I expected to see the place with canaries as yellow as gold singing on every bough.—Pst!'

He caught his companion's arm, and they both stopped short to listen to a sweet pure voice singing the words of some Spanish ditty, the notes ringing out melodious and clear, though the singer was hidden among the trees through which the path led.

'There's one of your Canary birds,' said Fraser in a whisper; and directly after there was a rustle among the bushes, which were thrust aside; and Digby stood enthralled by the picture before him, as a beautiful girl of about nineteen bounded down from a rocky ledge above the path, her straw hat hanging by its string from her creamy throat, and her sun-browned face turning crimson at the sight of the strangers, who made way for her to pass, laden with flowers, which she had evidently been gathering in the openings among the trees.

'Horace, old fellow, did you see?' whispered Digby, his eyes sparkling with excitement.

'Yes,' was the quiet reply.

'Why, you old ascetic!' cried Digby. 'An angel. Violet eyes—brown hair—a complexion of which Belgravia might boast. I did not think the Spaniards had it in them.'

'Yes,' said Fraser slowly. 'Some of the old race possessed that fair hair. Mary's Philip was fair.'

'But did you notice her mouth?—Fraser, don't talk of such a vision of beauty as if she were a natural-history specimen.'

'Well, don't go on like that about the first pretty woman you see. Only yesterday, you were grumbling about their plainness, and saying that though the women here had lovely eyes, they had men's moustaches—they ought to shave.—This way—to the right, I think,' he added, for the road had suddenly forked.

'And—— Well, she is beautiful,' cried Digby. 'I wonder who she is.'

'A Spanish settler's descendant, whom, in all human probability, you will never see again,' said Fraser quietly; and they both went on for half an hour in a silence which was broken by Fraser.

'Going wrong, evidently,' he said; 'this can't be the way round to the town.'

'Well, I thought we were going up hill again.'

'Ought to have taken the other turning.'

This was so evident, that they turned back, retracing their steps till, close upon the spot where they had diverged, they came suddenly upon a tall, handsome, well-dressed man, who started and looked at them curiously.

'Will the señor direct us to the town?' said Fraser, in Spanish.

The haughty searching look gave place to a winning smile, and the stranger volubly indicated the right road, and then said laughingly in English: 'But do you understand me?'

'Yes, perfectly,' replied Fraser; 'and I wish my Spanish were as good as your English.'

Then punctilious words were exchanged, and the stranger passed on.

'Do you believe in first impressions, Horace?' said Digby, glancing back, and then uttering an impatient exclamation.

'No.—What's the matter?'

'That fellow was looking after us.'

'Well, you were looking after him, or you would not have seen.—What do you mean by your first impressions?'

'I don't like the look of that fellow.'

'Insular prejudice.'

'Don't care what it is; I don't like him, and I'm sure I never should.—Why, Horace, look there!'

Not twenty yards in front was the girl they had so lately met; and as Digby drew attention to her presence, he stopped and hastily picked up a twig of flowers such as he had seen her carrying, and which her despondent attitude suggested that she had dropped. For she was walking slowly on with her face buried in her handkerchief, evidently sobbing bitterly; and as they followed, she let others of the flowers she had gathered fall.

'Stop!' whispered Fraser hastily, as he caught his companion by the arm.

'Going to see if I can'—

Digby did not finish his sentence, for the girl had evidently heard the harsh whisper. She turned, gazing back at him in an affrighted way; and as they caught sight of the tearful convulsed face, she darted down a side-track, and was gone.

'What do you think of that?' cried Digby excitedly.

'A Spanish woodland romance,' said Fraser dryly.—'What do you think about it, Tom?'

'That I should like to go after that haughty-looking Spanish customer and ask him what it all means.—Shall I?'

'No. Be sensible for once.—Ah, you can see the town from here.—Come along.'

CHAPTER II.

The accommodation at the *venta* was of the humblest description; but the place was cleanly,

the hostess was attentive, and she was evidently proud of being honoured by those she termed the illustrious strangers, who had come from the main island to her unfrequented house.

The homely dinner was discussed, the cooking declared to be not so very bad, the Malvasia an outrage on the name of wine, and the magnificent view from the open window a banquet in itself.

'Yes,' said Fraser; 'I'd have braved a worse voyage to see what I've seen to-day.'

Digby, who was toying with an orange which he had begun to peel, and then left untasted, looked up sharply, and his face flushed a little as he exclaimed: 'Yes; wasn't she lovely?'

'I was talking about the scenery,' said Fraser coldly.

Digby turned impatiently away, and began to fill his pipe as he gazed out over the flat roofs of the houses among which the leafy crowns of stately palms arose.

'Don't turn like that, Tom,' said Fraser, after a few moments' silence; and he rose to lay his hand upon his young companion's shoulder.

'Turn like what?'

'Huffy, my dear boy. I wouldn't, Tom; let's be sensible. You must not be so inflammable. We have come to admire the beauties of Nature and to collect in this, one of the least visited of the Canaries. You must not try to work up a romance by taking a fancy to the first pretty Spanish maiden you see.'

Digby flushed more deeply, and as he gazed up in his companion's face, sober quiet Horace Fraser could not help marking what a frank handsome young Englishman he looked there, with the golden rays of the westering sun bathing his countenance in its glow.

Digby's eyes for the moment looked resentful; but a smile came upon his lips directly. 'All right, Horace,' he said. 'I am an awful donkey, I know; but that girl's sweet face impressed me; and then seeing her evidently in trouble directly after that Spanish chap had left her, seemed to raise my bile.'

'How do you know that gentleman had just left her?'

'Eh? Oh, of course! I couldn't know, could I?—There; it's all over, and I'll return to my duty like a man.—Let's have a look at to-day's collecting; and to-morrow I'll swallow my repugnance, and we'll do some of your ghoulish ethnology in the mummy caves, eh?'

'And to-night, let's go up in the cool and call on Mr Redgrave. I want him to give us a few hints about what we ought to see and how to get a guide.'

'Right. Let's go at once, before sunset.'

The walk was delightful, the western side of the island being glorious in the glow of radiance in which it was bathed, while the sea and the islands around seemed glorified by colours that were almost beyond belief.

'Better than sitting in that stuffy little room, Tom.'

'Bless you, my son, for bringing me here,' cried Digby merrily.—'Cheerful kind of growth to tumble among,' he added, pointing to the prickly-pears which abounded on one side of the narrow rocky path they were ascending, the

other side being furnished with an abundance of ragged-leaved bananas.

'There's a house in that nook yonder,' said Fraser; 'that must be it.'

'And this chap coming is our man, for a shilling,' said Digby, as a tall, sturdy, middle-aged personage came toward them smoking a huge cigar. 'An Englishman, by the way he keeps his hands in his pockets.'

'Hush!' whispered Fraser, as the man approached; and then, addressing him in Spanish, he asked to be directed to Señor Redgrave's house.

'Suppose you ask me in English, sir,' said the other bluffly. 'You are Mr Fraser, I presume; and this is Mr Digby?—Glad to see you, gentlemen. I had your letter, and was coming down to the *venta* to hunt you up. Don't often see a countryman here; so, before we say any more,' he added, after warmly shaking hands, 'I'll give orders for your traps to be fetched up here, and you can make this your home while you stay.'

But Fraser would not hear of it. 'We are in capital quarters,' he said, 'and will not impose on you.—But if you will have us, we'll come up pretty frequently for a chat.'

'You shall do as you like, gentlemen.—In here, please.'

'By George!' cried Digby involuntarily, as they passed through a gate into a lovely villa-garden, 'what a paradise!'

'Well, pretty tidy. You see, everything rushes into growth here with little trouble. I am a bit proud of my home, and make it as English as I can. It was my poor dead wife's favourite place, the garden.' He raised his hat slightly as he uttered the last words, and a silence fell upon the group.

'Forgive me,' said the host the next moment, as he looked in the eyes of his two visitors. 'You are Englishmen, and can sympathise with one who has lost a dear companion out here in a strange land. But there, that's fourteen years ago, gentlemen,' he said cheerily; 'and I'm not quite alone.—Here, Nelly!' he cried; 'where are you? Visitors from home, my dear.'

The sun was very low now, and it turned the porch, covered with Bougainvilleas and a lovely scarlet geranium, into a frame of gold, into which suddenly stepped, as it were out of the inner darkness, the picture wanting to complete the scene.

'My daughter Helen, gentlemen,' said their host; and both the visitors stood speechless, Digby even spellbound. For there before him, winning in her beauty, stood the lady of the semi-tropic wood, whose sweet notes he had heard, and whom he had seen in smiles and tears; while, as he gazed at her, the bright look of welcome in her eyes changed to one of pain, and it was as if a dark shadow had been cast across her.

It was no seeming. The edge of the sun was kissing the western wave, and the tall dark shadow of a man was cast across her as a click of the gate was heard, while Mr Redgrave turned sharply and said in rather a constrained tone of voice: 'Ah, Señor Ramon, you here?'

Digby and Fraser turned sharply, as if to seek

the cause of Helen Redgrave's troubled face. The Spanish gentleman they had encountered in the woodland was coming toward them hat in hand.

NORWEGIAN FOLKLORE AND SUPERSTITIONS.

THERE is perhaps no country in Europe richer in legendary lore than Norway. Until very recent years, the communication of the dwellers in the more remote country districts with the outside world was small indeed, and old-time superstitions have lingered long and die hard among these simple and credulous people. To listen to their tales of goblins and sprites, of trolls, gnomes, and other uncanny creatures, brings back memories of childhood's days and the nursery stories with which our youthful minds were both delighted and scared. The mountains and forests, the valleys, streams, and fjords are by their imaginations peopled with curious beings, endowed with supernatural power, and with whom it is well to keep on good terms. Can it be that in these superstitious beliefs there linger traces of the nature-worship of the earlier inhabitants of Scandinavia? During a short tour in Norway last summer we collected a few of the legends believed in by the people of the Sogne district, which have, we think, never been previously published.

There is a belief among the peasantry that the *sæters* or upland farmhouses, which are inhabited in the summer by those who are banished at that season to the high and distant pastures to look after the cattle, are in the winter taken possession of by a race of little people, who are resentful of any interference with their privileges, and are offended if the cattle are brought up earlier or kept later than usual. The following tale was told us in the Aardal Valley. One fine autumn, a man named Knut Kvigne had kept his cows and horses at the *sæter* a week later than usual, and he found that he experienced a great deal of trouble in collecting them together in the morning. One night, he was sitting eating his oatmeal with a wooden spoon cut by himself from a birch-tree, when he heard a knock at his door. Startled by such an unusual occurrence as the advent of a visitor in so remote a place, he called out somewhat timidly, 'Come in;' but there was no response to his invitation. Thrice was the knock repeated and thrice was the stranger bidden to enter; and then there appeared through the partly open doorway a hideous head with two long ears like those of a pig. Knut was a daring fellow, and he seized the creature by its ears and compelled it to enter. On being questioned, the visitor confessed that he was a *burga-tradel*, and said he occupied the *sæter* hut in the winter, and demanded that it should be given up to him. High words were followed by blows; and in the struggle that ensued, although he was a strong man, Knut was in danger of being overcome.

He swore at the creature, and each time he did so, he found that his adversary grew stronger; and then he called to God for help. When the sacred name fell from his lips, Knut began to prevail, and ultimately he triumphed. He secured the creature, and would not release him until he had extracted from him a promise never again to interfere with the people in the *sæter*, and always to drive the cows and horses close to the hut in the morning; and he ever afterwards kept his word.

There are in Norway large barrows on the hillsides, which have been found to contain swords and arrow-heads, the weapons of an earlier race of inhabitants. These have probably given rise to the stories which are current of the existence in former times of a race of giants, who in quite recent days have again occasionally appeared, and wrought mischief on those who fell into their hands. An inhabitant of Lærdalsoren, on the Sogne Fjord, told me a story which he said was generally believed. One night a man was riding a spirited horse along the valley at the back of the village, and on passing one of these barrows he pulled up and called to the giant who was supposed to be buried there: 'Come out, and let me taste your ale.' A huge figure slowly emerged from the hillside, carrying a great horn of ale, which he presented to the man, who pretended to drink, but really threw it over his shoulder, and put spurs to his horse, intending to keep the horn. The giant pursued, and there was an exciting chase; but eventually the man won, and retained the coveted horn. When he reached home, he found that some drops of the ale had fallen upon the horse, burning off all its skin and hair. The very intelligent man who told me this tale assured me that he did not give credence to giant stories, but that several strange things had happened to him which could only be regarded as supernatural occurrences. These stories, though trifling and somewhat puerile in themselves, are worth repetition, as they show how superstitious and credulous are even the more intelligent among the Norwegian working-classes.

My informant told me that once, when he was out walking, a white dog had appeared, and followed him for some distance; but suddenly, while he was looking at it, the animal sank into the earth and disappeared. On another occasion, when he was a boy, he had driven a cow home for an old lady, who promised him a *Kringle* cake for his pains; but she died suddenly without keeping her word. Lad-like, the loss of the cake preyed upon his mind for a time; but he had forgotten all about it, when one night, on his way home from the woods, the old lady appeared to him, leaning upon her stick in the same way in which her lameness had compelled her to do in life. He was frightened, and ran away; but in his flight he lost his shoe. Not daring to go home without it, he returned to the spot, and again saw the old woman; but he could not muster courage to speak to her. Stories like these might, of course, be accounted for in lots of ways; but my informant could not be induced to look upon them as other than supernatural visitations.

In the Evil One and his works and appearances

upon earth the people have, or had within quite recent times, as strong a faith as had our own ancestors a few centuries back; and some of the clergy were supposed to be in league with him. There is a story told of a priest who lived at Dale, and was supposed to practise the black art. We visited his old church, situated near the picturesque village of Dosen, on the banks of the fjord. It is a curious old stone-built edifice, and in it is hung a picture of this severe-looking priest with his wife and seven children. He frequently indulged in nocturnal rambles, and the rumour was current that at such times he was not engaged in business that could bring any good; so his wife became alarmed, and begged an old man-servant to follow him. The idea entered the man's head that he would give his master a fright, and cure him of his love of strolling about alone at night; so he managed to procure one of his mistress's night-dresses; and having discovered the preacher standing on a flat rock by the roadside, he suddenly appeared in his ghostly disguise. The priest demanded who he was; and obtaining no answer, muttered some cabalistic words, and as a result of them, the man sank up to his knees in the rock. The priest repeated his question, and again there was no answer, so this time the man became entombed to his middle; and on refusing to disclose himself on the third demand, he sank to his shoulders. Thoroughly frightened, the poor fellow confessed all; but the priest declared that it was too late, as his master had claimed him; and the victim disappeared altogether.

We were also told of another priest who had dealings with the Evil One, and who was tried at Christiania and condemned to die. He begged hard for his life, and was only reprieved on condition that he would exhibit his supernatural powers by preaching the same day in Trondhjem Cathedral, some three or four hundred miles away. This he promised to do; and, summoning a bad spirit, said to him: 'How fast can you carry me to Trondhjem?' He replied: 'As fast as a horse can go.' But that would not do; so he called a second spirit, who promised to take him as quickly as a bird could fly. But his offer, too, was declined. A third spirit promised to take him as quick as a thought, on condition that he might have the souls of all who went to sleep during the parson's sermon. He hastily closed with the offer, and they started. The Evil One went round the coast, and when out at sea, endeavoured to make the priest repeat the name of God, knowing that if he did so he should be compelled to drop him. But the priest was too sharp to be caught napping, and only urged his unwilling steed to greater exertions. When they arrived at Trondhjem, the sermon was delivered; but so earnest and powerful was the preacher, that, contrary to custom, not a soul went to sleep, and the Evil One was cheated of his prey.

These are specimens of the tales believed in and told round the blazing pine-logs during the long and dreary nights of winter. Many more stories, doubtless, might be collected and preserved, if only some among the increasing number of summer tourists to this lovely land, which is now being brought so close to us by the fast and commodious steamers of the Wilson and other lines, would take the trouble to look out for and record them. Education is now compulsory in

Norway; ignorance is fast disappearing, and with it many of the old beliefs of the people, so that in all probability these old legends of folklore will soon be lost.

DEAN MALTON'S RESOLVE.

THE STORY OF A COLLEGE LIVING.

THE rector of Wilbury was dead. He was an old, old man, who had been born at the very end of the last century, and, after successively filling the posts of Scholar, Fellow, and Tutor of his college, with great credit to himself, his college, and his university, had in his old age, despairing of ever obtaining the Mastership, accepted the living of Wilbury. There in the little village, hidden away in a narrow valley that ran like a long furrow through the plains of Downshire, the brilliant mathematician had passed the evening of his life, forgotten by the world, buried in his books, corresponding with a few learned Societies, and giving his parishioners a kindly nod and word on week-days, and on Sundays a sermon which they valued all the more because they could not understand its learning.

The end had been expected for some time, and yet there was no little commotion in the Combination Room of St Martin's when his death was officially notified to the college; for it was a tradition that the living, although it was of no great value, should be held by a scholar of reputation and attainments. For nearly two centuries a succession of the most learned men in the college had retired to spend their last days in the old rectory on the edge of the Downs; and to have the refusal of the living was a high compliment, and an honour that set the seal to a notable career.

That evening after Hall, the Combination Room was fuller than usual; the younger Fellows, instead of looking in for a moment and then hurrying off to some musical party, or returning to wife and family in a brand-new villa residence in the outskirts, hung about in groups talking nervously and fidgeting from one leg to the other, avoiding the topic of the vacant living, and yet unwilling to go and leave the field to others. Not that there was any great choice of candidates for the Downshire rectory; most of the junior Fellows were laymen, and the senior Fellows who were in orders either held college offices or better livings than Wilbury.

The Bursar, the master-mind of the college, sat in his accustomed armchair by the fire, every now and then glancing with grim amusement at the unwonted assemblage, but uttering no word. Opposite to him sat the senior Tutor, a thin shy man, with a painfully nervous manner, whose habitual unrest was aggravated by the feeling that all men were thinking of him as the new rector. He sat twiddling his fingers and shaping the castles of his youth in the glowing embers of the fire with twitching lips and elevated brows. The younger Fellows stood in a wide circle round the hearth or by the table, discussing the situation in low tones, until the old French clock that ticked solemnly on the mantel-piece warned them that the occupants of the modern villas were awaiting their coming with impatience. One by

one they trooped out until only the usual three or four remained, and then at last the Bursar spoke: 'I suppose you will take the rectory, Bowles?'

The Tutor started guiltily from his day-dream. 'No, I think not,' he stammered. 'I am too old; I am unfitted; and I could not leave the college.'

'Well, well. Best have some leaven in the mass,' growled Roebuck, the Bursar, glancing contemptuously towards the door, which had just closed on the youngest Fellow.

'Poor old Cawthorn!' went on the Tutor after a pause; 'he was a clever man.'

'Born three-quarters of a century too soon. If he had deferred his entry into the world, he might have had as many "pups" and have made as much money as any "coach" in the university.—I think that is the correct form of words, is it not, Malton?'

The man addressed by the Bursar answered in a low soft voice rather laboured in its precision of accent and phraseology: 'I believe so: I have heard some such expression made use of by members of this college.'

'There are few men of his standing left,' said the Tutor, still thinking of the late rector. 'I suppose it will be offered to Thompson.'

'He won't take it,' said Roebuck; 'his own place is much better, and not such an exile. —You'll have to take it, Bowles.'

'I? Oh no. I should never make a parish priest; I could not live away from the college.'

'Then Malton must have it.'

Malton blushed. He was a man not much over thirty, with small eyes, no features to speak of, a complexion like pale yellow soap, and on each cheek a wisp of black whisker that looked as if it had accidentally slipped down from his hair. He hesitated, and muttered something about the offer being a great compliment. Here was a new idea, and one that seemed likely to be the ultimate solution of the difficulty. Somehow the suggestion seemed to have put an end to the conversation. They sat in silence, looking into the fire and turning the matter over in their minds, but without pursuing the subject any further. As usual, Malton was the first to retire, leaving the two elder men sitting by the fire, with the founder of the college, a chancellor, three bishops, and several noblemen looking solemnly down at them from the walls.

The Rev. Joseph Malton went back to his rooms with his mind in an unusual state of ferment. He lighted his lamp, which his gyp had placed ready for him, and seating himself at his desk, tried to take up the thread of his work as on every other evening. He was engaged on a learned treatise, which the undergraduates averred dealt completely and exhaustively with the subtler properties of the common pump; but his hand had lost its cunning and strange visions kept floating before his eyes. He sighed, put away his papers, and drawing his heavy arm-chair nearer to the fire, settled himself down to read—but to no purpose. The Bursar's suggestion that he should be the new rector of Wilbury had strangely agitated him. After all, why should he not take it, and—he only thought it in a whisper—marry? It was true he could marry as he was; but the position of a married

Fellow, with a wife and family in a draughty villa outside the town, did not appeal to his imagination; whereas the status of rector in a country parish seemed to him full of dignity and of all that gives interest to life. The book he was trying to read slipped from his grasp and slid into the fender; but he took no heed of it, he was so absorbed in his reflections. He was thirty-five, and Fellow, Dean, and Classical Lecturer of St Martin's. He had almost reached the summit of his ambition; but never till that evening had the idea of merging the college don in the country rector crossed his mind.

The entry of his gyp Turner to put out the tea-things and give a last look round interrupted his reverie. Turner was an untidy, shiftless creature, with a talent for breaking china, and with a Cockney accent ingrafted on the intonation of East Anglia. The undergraduates on his staircase were always at war with him on account of his forgetfulness and incapacity, and he lived in a constant state of expostulation and self-excusing. He did his best with the Dean, for he knew it was well to have the authorities in his favour; but the other resident Fellows agreed that only a man so little exacting as Malton could have stood Turner's peculiarities so long.

Turner finished his perfunctory look round the room, and having placed the tea ready, said: 'Shall you want anything more to-night, sir?'

'No, thank you,' replied the Dean.

'Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night, Turner.'

The door closed upon the gyp, and abruptly shut out a war-whoop that rang up the staircase to summon Turner to one of his indignant undergraduate masters.

The Dean picked up his book, made his tea, and resumed his reverie; but Turner's entrance had given his thoughts a new direction. His memory cast back to his boyhood, to his hopes and ambitions as a growing lad, to the work he had set himself to accomplish, and to the life, devoid of pleasure and almost of recreation, that he had led till within the last few years, when his mode of living had become stereotyped, and his nervousness in society confirmed. He saw himself once more a little boy in the house of his father, who had been a small tradesman in the town; and it was almost with a shock that he remembered how in those far-away days he had actually looked up to his shiftless gyp Turner, and had listened with awe and reverence to the stories of dons and undergrads that his playfellow used to retail. Five-and-twenty years ago Turner's father had lived next door to the Maltons, and the Turners held their heads high, for Turner was gyp, and his wife bedmaker at St Martin's; and they considered themselves as belonging to the university; whereas old Malton and his wife only belonged to the town. He remembered how he had envied young Turner his intimacy with the ways and traditions of college and university life, and with what absorbing eagerness he had swallowed all the accounts of the respect with which the Master and Fellows of St Martin's asked for and followed the advice of their gyp and bedmaker; and how he had always considered old Turner as virtual ruler of St Martin's, and as a personage to whom even the great vice-chancellor himself owed no small por-

tion of his glory. In his mind he ran over his entrance with Turner at the grammar-school, how he had worked and slaved even as a lower school-boy, with the hope of being able to win a scholarship, and see that glorious university life at first hand and with his own eyes; and how the idleness and mischievous tricks of young Turner had been the despair of the masters and the admiration of his schoolfellows.

The intimacy between the two had naturally lessened when Turner was taken from school and sent for two years as boots to a London hotel, before joining his father as a sort of assistant gyp at St Martin's. In London, Turner had further studied the art of giving the maximum of importance to a minimum of work; while Malton had been rising steadily to the head of the school, and had succeeded in persuading his father that he was not a useless dreamer after all. The Dean smiled a little sadly when he recalled the overwhelming rapture with which his election to a school exhibition had filled him, and his hopes and fears as he entered for scholarships at several colleges, finally becoming senior classical scholar of his year at St Martin's. Old Turner had been the first to bring him the news of his election, and the Dean well remembered the half-patronising, half-deferential manner with which the old man had congratulated him. He could have wished that his success had been gained at some other college, for the Turners were inclined to presume on old acquaintance and to be unpleasantly familiar with the new scholar; but as they all became more used to their respective positions, this feeling of awkwardness wore away, and there remained only so much friendship between them as could be expected to exist between a university man and a gyp.

Then another figure crossed the field of the Dean's recollections, the figure of the girl who had prompted the idea of marriage in a country rectory. Mary Andrews had been the only girl the Dean had ever so much as thought of admiring; she had been the Chloe and the Delia of his school and college compositions, and on her shrine he had secretly heaped all the well-worn and exaggerated compliments that are the stock-in-trade of lyric and elegiac verse. He had been very fond of her, or rather of the ideal he had created from her, in his quiet subdued way; but he could not help confessing to himself that Turner with his impudent assurance and fund of anecdote had been more in her good graces than ever he had been. It was with a sort of guilty feeling that he remembered that he had not even seen his Chloe for ten or twelve years, and that by now the little short-frocked maiden, with the laughing blue eyes and tangled golden hair, must be a full-grown young woman of twenty-five or twenty-six, if she were not long since married.

The Dean excused his remissness to himself by the reflection that he had always been too busy to think of love-making. He remembered how hard he had worked as an undergraduate in order to become Seventh Classic, and to get a place low down among the Senior Optimes; and since then how his duties as Fellow, Classical Lecturer, and Dean, had taken up all his time and thought. Anyhow, if she were still unmarried, twenty-six was a very good age for a clergyman's wife, especially for one who would have

to support the responsibilities which a country rectory entails. The Dean's mind was easier; he would accept the living of Wilbury if it were offered to him, and with that as a wedding gift, would go in search of a wife. Thereupon, he roused himself, made his tea, resumed his studies, and finally went to bed determined to sleep upon the matter.

When the Dean awoke next morning his resolution was unshaken. The project seemed as excellent by daylight as by candlelight. He shaved himself, and conducted morning service in the college chapel to a strange undercurrent of thought that perhaps he had only a few more weeks in the dear old place. The idea filled him with a subdued sadness; but when he returned to his rooms he noticed for the first time how dull a solitary breakfast is. He was not in love with Mary Andrews, he knew; he had not seen her since she was grown up; but he thought of the pretty little girl who had been the object of his silent boyish admiration, and determined that he would be a married rector without delay.

Turner seemed possessed with a spirit of uneasiness that morning while clearing away the breakfast; he banged the things about beyond his wont, and was more than usually reckless with the massive stoneware cups with which the Dean had in self-defence provided himself. The Dean marvelled at this agitation, but held his peace.

Old Turner had now been dead some years, and his son had, chiefly through the Dean's influence, been given the staircase, on which the widow still continued as bed-maker. When everything had been hurled into the gyp-room, Turner approached his master and coughed meaningly. Malton recognised the signal, and looking up, said: 'Well, Turner, what is it?'

'Beg pardon, sir,' said the gyp; 'mother's growing old.'

'Is she?' replied the Dean, who had noticed no alteration in Mrs Turner's appearance for the last twenty years. 'I'm sorry to hear it,' he added rapidly.

'Yes, sir,' went on Turner; 'she ain't what she was.'

'She's not ill, I hope?'

'No, sir; not ill, sir; but I was thinking she might want a little help. The gentlemen's beds is heavy, you know, sir.'

'Dear me,' said the Dean, 'perhaps she can recommend some one to the college?'

'Well, sir, yes, sir,' stammered Turner, blushing furiously; 'the fact is, sir, begging your pardon, I was thinking of getting married.'

'Dear me,' thought Malton; 'how very curious; just what I was thinking of myself; but he only said: "Indeed?—Oh, I see; you would like your wife to succeed your mother?"'

'That's it, sir,' cried Turner, greatly relieved; 'if you could speak for me, sir.'

'Certainly, I will do all in my power,' replied the Dean; 'you may rely upon it.'

'Thank you, sir, thank you,' said Turner, knowing that the matter was as good as settled.

'And when is it to be, Turner?'

'Directly, sir; and I took the liberty of sending her with mother to-day, sir, just to help, like.'

'Certainly, certainly. Is she here now?'

'Yes, sir,' replied Turner; and without more

ado, he opened the door and beckoned to some one outside.

The astonished Dean saw his rooms invaded by a woman, other than Mrs Turner, for the first time during his occupancy of them. It was now his turn to blush, as a stout young woman with rosy cheeks and a quantity of straw-coloured hair entered shyly and began courtesying to him. He quickly recovered his composure, however, and remarked: 'So this is your future wife, Turner? Well, I'm very glad to see her. And when is the ceremony to be?'

'We did think of next Sunday, sir,' said Turner doubtfully, and as if his banns had not been duly read for the three necessary Sundays.

'You must allow me to marry you,' continued Malton. 'I shall take it as a favour on your part.'

'Thank you, sir; I was going to ask you if you would be so kind.'

'And I will see that Mrs Turner is allowed an assistant. After so many years' service in the college, she has some claim upon us. You may depend upon me.'

With many expressions of gratitude, the gyp and his promised bride left the room; and the Dean prepared to take the Classical Lecture, all the while meditating on the curious coincidence that both Turner and himself should contemplate matrimony at exactly the same time. His gyp's success seemed a good augury for the prosperity of his own schemes, and he gathered up his books and papers and quitted his rooms more resolved than ever to accept the college living.

Turner had lost no time in making sure of his betrothed's position in the college. The Dean found the young woman on the staircase preparing to wash the stairs under the eagle eye of Mrs Turner. He nodded good-morning to the old woman, and as he did so the younger one stood aside to let him go past. The light fell upon her face, and something about her struck him as familiar. He stopped and asked her name. With an accent of surprise and reproach in her tone, she replied: 'Mary Andrews, sir!'

The Dean went down the stairs and across the quadrangle to the lecture-room. His castle in the air had collapsed like a house of cards. The Mary Andrews of reality was far from being his ideal; he had hardly recognised her. He felt that Wilbury rectory would never have owned her as its mistress had she been free. He sighed once over the grave of his hopes and passed on.

The Rev. Joseph Malton is still Dean of St Martin's, and his old schoolfellow and his first and only love are respectively gyp and bedmaker on his staircase.

THE 'DRY-ROT.'

DRY-ROT is one of the most dreaded enemies of the builder and house-proprietor. No one of all the fungus tribe is more insidious and deadly in its attacks. For in its very nature it works unseen and unsuspected, and its presence is only too frequently detected after its ravages have made irreparable inroads into the soundness and stability of a building.

The writer was recently called upon to examine a building erected only half-a-dozen years ago in

a most substantial manner, and elaborately fitted up and used as a Sunday school. But unfortunately, through some oversight or neglect, no adequate ventilation underneath the floor had been provided for, whilst the fact of its being only used regularly on one day a week would tend to induce stagnation of the air and prove favourable to fungoid growths. For some time a fusty smell had been noticed; and latterly, in certain corners the wood was observed to be decayed; so it was resolved to take up the floor and ascertain the cause. When this was done, the sight disclosed was marvellous, rivalling the ideal scenes of fairyland. In some parts the joists were completely clothed with a light, cottony, cobwebby substance, hanging here and there in tassels and fringes. The dormant walls and ground underneath the floor, with all the rubbish of chips, broken bricks, &c., generally found in such places, were covered with the same ethereal-like substance, of the most delicate texture, white and fleecy as wool, rivalling the fairest unsullied snow in lustre. Indeed, in many places the deposit much resembled freshly drifted snow when it is blown through small crevices.

This represents the youngest or immature stage of dry-rot. When more luxuriant, it forms cobweb festoons in the corners, which are often traversed by threads of the most lovely orange, purple, and magenta hues, and distilling drops of an amber tasteless fluid. Sometimes it is aggregated in large masses several inches thick, of a pasty doughy consistency, retaining the impression of the touch, and clinging to the fingers when handled. It may be torn from the walls or beams in great sheets, strongly resembling cotton wadding—with the under surface felted into a paper-like texture—and traversed by branching anastomosing veins, like roots ramifying in every direction. The strong dormant walls which support the floor-joists are two feet thick, and built of stone and lime, yet they are so permeated by the fungus in every part, that when broken down, every stone is seen to be encircled and sheathed by the thread-like roots, often an eighth of an inch or more thick, and so tough and matted that they can be dragged out in ribbon-like shreds; and the mortar has become so friable that the walls can be pulled down by hand. The internal walls have been wainscoted four feet high with varnished pitch pine; and in various places the fungus has crept to the very top between the walls and the wood, and adhering to both.

So far has been descriptive of the *mycelium* or spawn, which is the vegetative portion of the fungus, analogous to the roots of ordinary plants, and is the part of dry-rot most commonly seen and noted. But I was fortunate enough to secure several magnificent specimens of the fructification or spore-bearing portion, analogous to the flower, fruit, and seeds. On some of the beams the fungus could be seen foaming along the apparently sound wood, the advancing crest showing a well-defined margin an inch in height, of the

consistence and appearance of well-whipped white of egg. An inch or two from the edge of this frothy mass it became marbled with coloured streaks, soon merging into a uniform ruddy-brown hue. The texture becomes firm and leathery; and the surface is rugged, and corrugated with the most exquisitely wavy cell-like reticulations, excelling the most intricate fretwork patterns, and showing the most involved network of ridges with flexuous outlines, forming shallow cavities, but not true pores. These in the early stages are filled with fluid, but soon produce spores with an amazing fecundity; these are of a bright ferruginous tint, and in this case were so abundant that all the ground and every object for many square yards was completely covered with the brown dust, as if the place had been sown with ground cinnamon. These spores finding a suitable nidus, speedily germinate, and form independent centres, from which the disease spreads. This spore-bearing portion may be stripped off in sheets, when it has the most fantastic resemblance in every way except colour to a piece of tripe! When removed from the beam it leaves the wood fair and smooth and apparently uninjured; but it is only so in external form, for it has been saturated with the *mycelium*, which has devoured all the cell-contents, leaving only the external shell. The seemingly sound beam can be cut like a piece of soft cheese, and in a few months will crumble into an impalpable powder. And so the cycle of life goes on—one organism preying on another, and thus fitting it for the sustenance of a third.

Obnoxious as the attacks of dry-rot may be to man, it is only because he interferes with 'the balance of Nature,' and by endeavouring to preserve the monuments of his industry, prevents Nature from remoulding them in her great chemical and vital laboratory. The fungus which preys upon the dead or decaying tree only the sooner hastens its restoration back to its original elements, to again fit it for sustaining another and it may be a higher type of life.

So destructive are the depredations of dry-rot, that it may well be called the terror and despair of architects and carpenters. No care or precaution can be too great to prevent its entrance into a building, for if once it finds a lodgment, its eradication is a herculean if not an impossible task. Professor Burnett, a competent authority, graphically relates how a house he occupied was twice renovated in four years, and had ultimately to be pulled down. In the old era of oak-built ships, they were sometimes found to be unseaworthy before they left the stocks, with such celerity does it do its deadly work. As for remedial measures, prevention is the only certain cure. The selection of sound well-seasoned timber is as essential as the avoidance of damp, and the securing of adequate ventilation in every part of the structure. The most efficacious prophylactic is saturating the timber with creosote under high pressure, so as to thoroughly permeate every portion of the wood. This has been practically proved in coal and other mines where this destroyer runs riot, and its ravages entail much expense and insecurity, and where its waving flakes of fleecy white have a most weird and ghostly effect in the 'darkness visible' of the pit. In certain mines in the north of England where

only creosoted timber has been used for the last thirty years, the extra cost has been amply repaid by the comparative indestructibility of the timber thus treated. In housebuilding, a wise precaution is the well smearing of all underground floor-bearing walls with tar or pitch, which prevents the *mycelium* finding a lodgment amongst the mortar in which it revels and disintegrates its adhesive property.

The popular name of dry-rot has no reference to its occurrence in dry places; on the contrary, a certain degree of dampness is absolutely necessary for its growth; but it refers to the fact, that it so completely extracts all moisture from the wood on which it feeds that it ultimately crumbles into dry dust. Its botanic name of *merulius* is essentially the same as *merula*, a blackbird—why, it would be hard to divine, as there cannot be much mirth or singing associated with the fungus, whatever may be the case with the bird. It may be because it loves darkness=blackness. The name was formerly applied to the genus now called *Morchella*, and we still have in common language *moril*, a mushroom, and *merle*, a black-bird. The specific name of *lacrymans* refers to the drops of fluid exuded by the plant when in full vigour. But it might more aptly be applied to the tears shed by the proprietor who suffers from its destructive attacks.

AN UNFORGOTTEN COUNTRY.

My friend, I may not see your face,
Nor watch each well-remembered grace;
But you will always hold a place

Within my memory, though we stand
So far apart. The sea and land
Divide us; and we clasp not hand.

Yet, dear, I know, though some forget
The past, you will remember yet
The country where we two first met.

Deep in your heart it will remain,
With all its mingled joy and pain;
The past is past, and not in vain.

We would not have it back once more,
From that far-distant, silent shore
Where there is rest for evermore.

Nay, rather let us turn our eyes
To where the future hidden lies
From us. Beneath the clear blue skies

The world may have for you in store
A gift we dream not of; ay, more,
Beloved, than it gave of yore.

But, dear one, you will ne'er forget
The country where we two first met—
The country that you love so yet.

F. P.

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UPON RED-TAPE.

THE redness of red-tape is itself a specimen of red-tapeism. Why should not a tribe of original lawyers and politicians arise who would 'burst the bonds of use and wont' and tie up their bundles in green or blue or yellow? But we pass on from that trivial inquiry to the consideration of the essence of red-tape; and we find it consists in the distribution of papers into ticketed parcels, each parcel being a distinct business. So far good. We see the spirit of order at work, and no man of affairs can laugh at the spirit of order. But when the spirit of order, having arranged his bundles, proceeds in a carnally lazy way to go to sleep upon them, then we are entitled to begin our gibes. 'Order is heaven's first law,' and the initial arrangement of papers into bundles and pigeon-holes gives a whiff of celestial air. But it is disgraceful to tie up our souls in the same bundles and put our faculties into pigeon-holes.

'Freddy, my dear, come and let me see whether you have learned your alphabet.—What is the first letter?'

'A, mamma.'

'And the next?'

'I tell you what, mamma! Let's call all the others A.'

The alpha of business is orderly arrangement. It is a bower adorned with red-tape; but we must not linger there; beta awaits us, gamma calls us, delta beckons us; we may not rest till we have planted our alpenstock on omega.

'Well begun is half-done,' says an old motto; but it is only true when the spirit of progress sits on the box-seat of the *Well-begun* coach. It is well to disturb the fatuous satisfaction with which we or others contemplate the first step of a right course, the stage of red-tape, the stage of bundles and pigeon-holes. For it is indubitable that reasonable contentment with ourselves upon taking that stage soon passes into somnolence. Some people's consciences are like cats; as soon as they are stroked the right way, they purr and—go to sleep.

The second form of the disease is a multiplication of the bundle and pigeon-hole system, a dread of free action, and a passion for routine. The elementary cell becomes a cellular structure. Pigeon-holes open out into pigeon-holes, like the 'Maze' puzzles that please children, and the rules of the game must be observed. To get to the heart of the maze you must find the clue; and to break through a wall or jump over it is treason. The aged monarch is burned to death whilst the order to pull him out of the fire is passed downward through the inverted hierarchy of servants.

A luxuriant example of this form of red-tape was exhibited by Captain Vivian to the admiring House of Commons some years ago in Committee on the Army Estimates. The initial fact was the need of a pair of bellows in the Curragh Camp. After a preliminary whetting of the appetite of the red-tape dragon by a lengthy correspondence, the operation of getting this pair of bellows proceeded as follows:

February 12.—War Department gives authority to the local commissariat officer to indent [that is, give an order] on the Royal Engineer Department for a pair of bellows.

Same date.—Local commissariat officer applies to district engineer officer for a pair of bellows.

Feb. 16.—District engineer officer applies to military store officer at Dublin.

Feb. 19.—Military store officer informs royal engineer officer at Dublin that he can supply the bellows on requisition.

Feb. 20.—Royal engineer officer at Dublin forwards this information to royal engineer officer at the Curragh.

Feb. 21.—Local engineer officer at the Curragh informs royal engineer officer at Dublin that he has no form of requisition.

Feb. 22.—Local engineer officer at the Curragh asks the local commissariat officer if the proposed bellows would do.

Feb. 23.—Local commissariat officer replies 'Yes.'

Feb. 24.—Local engineer officer informs local commissariat officer that he must apply to the

royal engineer officer, Dublin; and application is made accordingly.

Feb. 26.—Military stores officer at Dublin answers that he will supply the bellows on an order from the War Office.

Feb. 28.—Local commissariat officer produces authority from the War Office and reads it to local engineer officer.

March 1.—District royal engineer officer declines to have anything to do with a service not brought to his notice through the proper authority; and local commissariat officer refers matter to commissariat officer in Dublin.

March 2.—Commissariat officer in Dublin relegates the question to the deputy quartermaster-general, Dublin.

March 3.—Deputy quartermaster-general passes on the requisition to quartermaster-general, Horse-guards.

March 5.—Horse-guards refer to War Office, and War Office refers to commissariat-general-in-chief, London.

March 10.—Commissariat-general-in-chief asks director of stores to give authority; director of stores states that the commissariat officer should include the bellows in the annual estimate; and commissariat-general-in-chief writes to the Horse-guards and to the commissariat officer, Dublin.

March 20.—Commissariat officer at the Curragh writes to know why he does not get his bellows.

Whether he ever did get them, we do not know; but it ought to be some satisfaction to him to know that his need of a pair of bellows engendered a morbid growth of red-tape, which, for complexity and extent of diseased cellular structure, can hardly be surpassed in the bottles of any surgical museum. It is a beautiful case, and being a military specimen, it reminds us of that early piece of intricacy set by Gordius, king of Phrygia, to Alexander, and which was so hastily marred by the conqueror's sword. Masterful natures are apt to make short work of red-tape entanglements.

Another variety of the red-tape disease consists in words, phrases, functions, and ceremonial observances out of which the spirit has fled, or the understanding, or both. Our ordinary social life is largely built on structures of this material, as cities stand on vast thicknesses of chalk composed of the deserted habitations of countless myriads of tiny creatures long deceased. Our words are sepulchres. We cannot name the days of the week, or 'consider the heavens,' or buy an ounce of spirit of camphor, without treading on the graves of thoughts. But in such cases all the offensiveness of decay is gone, and the gentle wash of the tides of Time during many centuries has converted the products of decay into a pure and beneficent substance. But a nearer approach to the dissolution of thought and the giving up of the ghost by words is not so agreeable. A Hampshire vicar assured his readers some years ago that the well-known marriage service of the Church of England as uttered by his brides and bridegrooms exhibited curious deterioration. One of the sentences which Edwin has to utter was quite commonly rendered thus: 'With my body I thee wash up, and with all my worldly goods I thee and thou;' which was matched, and even exceeded, by Emma's variations of her part, in promising to

take her husband 'to 'ave and to 'old from this day forth, for betterer horse, for richerer power, in siggerness else, to love cherries and a bay.'

Edwin and Emma knew they were being married, and that this marvellous coil of red-tape was somehow a necessary part of the function; but the attempt to explain how and why would have smitten them with paralysis. The distorted sentences, texts, hymns, thus repeated by thousands of good and simple souls daily would stagger us if statistics could be obtained.

Child-piety is a beautiful and simple thing, and is often in danger of being throttled by red-tape; but generally is lissome and buoyant enough to escape. In what sweet freedom of all meaning the scallop of a child's soul will dance over a sea of words, neither knowing nor caring for the profundities below. We confess it more frequently moves us to laughter than to grief, knowing that the real spring of child-piety does not lie in those twilight deeps where swim the solemn shadowy forms of the Fathers, the Divines, the Scholiasts, and the Commentators. Captivating specimens might easily be given as illustrations, but collections of them are so frequently going the round of the press that it is scarcely worth while. That it is not children only who are ready to gabble words without meaning, if they are supposed to be part of a function, was finely shown by the parish clerk's version of a notice entrusted to him by his minister. The notice was this: 'On Sunday next the service in this church will be held in the afternoon, and on the following Sunday in the morning, and so on alternately until further notice.' What really greeted the ears of the congregation was this version of the minister's message: 'On Sunday next the morning service in this church will be held in the afternoon; and on the following Sunday, the afternoon service will be held in the morning, and so on to all eternity.' The children may now make their bow to the parish clerk, and present to him the fool's cap with festoons of red-tape.

We conclude with that variety of red-tapeism which consists in the conservation of decrees, orders, customs, ceremonies, from which the *raison d'être* has perished, as the snails out of the dry snail-shells that roll about chalk downs. Even the dog is subject to this complaint when he turns round three times before lying down because his ancestors did so to make a bed in the long prairie-grass. 'Leave your stick, sir,' said a doorkeeper to a gentleman who was passing into an Exhibition.—'But I haven't got a stick,' the visitor replied.—'Then you must go and buy one; the orders is as every gentleman is to leave his stick.' The well-known instances of the two Russian sentinels are in point here. One stood at the entrance of a passage and cried, 'Keep to the left!' the other mounted guard in the middle of a grass plot. The origin of the first regulation was traced back, through a generation, to an occasion when the right wall of the passage had been painted; and the second sentinel quite unconsciously commemorated the advent, in a previous century, of an unexpected little snow-drop which charmed the Empress of that day, and was ordered to be guarded.

How stupid people can be if they try was illustrated by a circumstance mentioned to the

writer by a superintendent town missionary. He asked an army chaplain whether he ever spoke to the soldiers privately about their souls.—'No.'—'Why?'—'Because a chaplain is an officer, and the rule of the service is that an officer cannot speak to a private soldier except in the presence of a non-commissioned officer.'

What has Nature to teach us about red-tape? Well, having vilipended red-tape through all the foregoing article, we will admit that it has the merits of its defects. It has its uses. Bonds and freedom, steadfastness and progress, constitute a see-saw which we shall never wholly escape, and which has its analogy in the physical world. Automatic action is Nature's red-tape, and we should creep along very slowly without it. A series of voluntary actions result in automatic action, and automatic action is an economy of brain-power. It does occasionally happen that the reason, the final cause, of the action evaporates; but the action being automatic, is continued. This is Nature's red-tape. But she forthwith sets about the correction of the useless function, as the history of the divergence of species proves. It is reserved for man to perpetrate the absurdities and the costly vagaries of offices, sinecures, dresses, customs, from which all use and meaning have perished as wholly as the pious sentiment, 'God encompasses us,' has perished out of the sign of a metropolitan hotel known as the *Goat and Compasses*.

It is clearly the duty of Society to return dead things to dust as soon as possible, and not to bury them in oak coffins, resisting the kindly influences that make for dissolution. Life, we are told, is the sum of the influences that resist dissolution; there is therefore some life in red-tape, but it is not a wholesome life. Where a creed or custom is dead, call in the burying-beetles, and let them forthwith undermine it and inter it. It is dreadful that a thing be kept alive by red-tape after it is dead, like that wretched man in Poe's tale who was mesmerised *in articulo mortis*, and, when at last released, fell into the crumbling relics of a death of long-ago. We do not advocate cremation. There are always some devotees whose feelings would be harrowed by the visible smoke and flame; but do not deliberately obstruct dissolution. 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes.' It is only worthless creatures like subscribers to magazines or newspapers who promise to pay up 'next Tuesday week if they are alive,' and, failing to fulfil their promise, must be dead, but are subsequently seen walking about, to save funeral expenses.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WE must go back a step or two to find out exactly what had happened. Isaiah in his new-found prosperity was not unmindful of old acquaintances. Motives were mixed with Isaiah, as they are with most people, and though he would never have dropped the Vignes under any conditions while circumstances put them within his reach, he was all the better pleased and the more willing to visit them when he could drive to their door in a two-horse brake of his own, and could pre-

sent himself before them stiff and shining in unaccustomed broadcloth.

The Vignes had gone to live, as necessity bade them, near the great establishment in which Monsieur had found employment. It was a grimy, dirty, and smoke-darkened district, and as little like their last abiding-place as it well could be. They were placed in the centre of a straggling street a mile long or thereabouts, where every here and there an unkempt field broke the line of houses, and left open to the eye an expanse of country dotted with pit-stacks and heaped with mounds of refuse. The mud of the street was black with coal-dust, the very brickwork of the houses was sodden with old smoke. Day and night, and winter and summer, a pall of smoke hung over the land, and a feeble haze of blue was a midsummer day's dream.

Vigne went to his new employment with excellent testimonials, and made better money there than he had ever earned before, so that the ugliness of his surroundings was not without compensation. He was in the midst of a French colony, too, and in that portion of the street in which he lived his native language was more commonly to be heard than English. Madame had taken upon herself the household arrangements, and had created a cheerful home over an undertaker's shop. Thither, on the afternoon on which Snelling sat waiting in the hovel at the top of that disastrous shaft of his, drove Isaiah, in the brand-new brake and the brand-new raiment behind the pair of horses, not too well assorted in point of size, colour, or style, but glorious to their owner's eyes. The undertaker received Isaiah with respect, and sent out a boy to lead the equipage up and down, to prevent the horses from catching cold, whilst the visitor mounted to Madame Vigne's apartments. The good lady, who was already attired as if for a journey, gave Isaiah a cordial welcome.

'I shall ask you one thing, Mr Vintare,' she said, laying a hand on each broadclothed shoulder. 'I have seen Achille, and he has told me that to get to your new house you can pass by my boy. The road is only a little longer. Do, please, pass by my boy. I will not trouble you more than that. I will not want to see him or to speak to him; but let me go by where he lives. That shall content me altogether, because when I think of him he will not any longer be in no place. I shall have a place to put him in when he comes into my mind. He is often in my mind,' said the good creature, emotionally, 'for Anatole and I we have no children.'

'All right, mum,' responded Isaiah. 'It's only two or three hundred yards out of the way, and with a pair o'steppers like them, two or three hundred yards ain't much. Come and look at 'em.' He waved Madame to the window, and pointed a finger towards the muddy street. 'Look at that brace o'steppers, mum; ain't they prime?'

Madame, who had no notion as to what Isaiah was pointing at, lifted her eyebrows and laid the palms of her hands together in pure complaisance.

'I bought that pair of hosses, mum,' said Isaiah, 'for sixty-five guineas, money down, and throwed in a very old dogcart as the hoss-dealer took a fancy to. Call it seventy pound, and tell me it's a bargain; and if you can't say so in your heart of hearts, you're no judge of hoss-flesh.'

Madame being thus enlightened as to the identity of the pair of steppers, acknowledged their excellence volubly with her hands in the air. 'Ah, Mr Vintare, you have prospered.'

'Yes, I have, mum,' said Isaiah. 'And I'm humbly and respectfully thankful for it.'

'You will not forget my boy because you are rich?' she said, searching for a handkerchief to wipe her eyes.

'I don't think he'll grow up to forget me,' Isaiah answered. 'He'll be one of the richest men for miles and miles round before he's one-and-twenty. I shall have no temptation to forget Master John. Apart from which, I've got a kindness for him.'

'Oho!' said Madame, with her hands in the air again, 'you nice, dear, stupid, English people, who will sooner die than say you love anything. Come along to the pair of steppers; I am quite ready.'

Isaiah opened the door and led the way downstairs into the street. Two or three dozen slatternly women with babies had come out to see the show, and looked on whilst Madame mounted and bestowed about herself the plenteous supply of rugs with which the vehicle was provided. Isaiah assumed the reins, gave a crack of the whip, and drove away.

The purpose of his visit to Madame Vigne was to introduce that excellent person to his wife. Mrs Winter had heard much from her husband of Madame's virtues, and was, as a natural consequence, rather ill disposed to her. She had on several occasions flatly declined to encounter Madame; but had, unfortunately for herself, based her sole objection on the ground that the lady was a foreigneering Papist. This figment having been dissipated by the vicar, whose authority was of course beyond dispute, Mrs Winter was left without defences, and was compelled, though sorely against her will, to accept the visit.

She had her compensations in the fact that she was by this time inhabiting a house which by its splendours could do little less than crush the female invader who ventured on her territory. Isaiah had always been a solid man, and within his own limits was intensely respectable, so that when his circumstances enabled him to do justice to his own conceptions, he furnished his house in a solid and intensely respectable way. He bought the stickiest and shiniest mahogany to be had for love or money, and had it upholstered in the stiffest and most uncompromising horse-hair, a stuff that would be glacial even in the summer-time, and penitential all the year round. The carpets and wall-papers were of the brightest patterns. There was a chest of drawers of brass-fitted mahogany in every room of the house; and in the drawing-room there was a rosewood pianoforte with a surface like that of court-plaster. Nobody in the house could play upon it, and that, considering the internal quality of the instrument, was perhaps rather a blessing than otherwise. Everything was rigidly and exquisitely uncomfortable, and Mrs Winter and her husband were proud in proportion to the distress their new surroundings gave them.

'You will not forget,' said Madame, belaying a finger on Isaiah's arm when they were once clear of houses and had come upon the open country—'you will not forget to pass my boy's house?'

'No,' said Isaiah; 'I shan't forget. As a matter of fact, I've never done it yet, because I don't want to look like bragging over him. He g'ven me the sack only a few months ago, and here I be as well to do as he is, or anyhow as well to do as I want. I've had good-luck, and he's had bad; and if I was to drive by him too often with a turn-out like this, he might tek it into his head as I was bouncing.—I don't care,' pursued Isaiah, with a defiant crack of the whip, 'what Bob Snelling teks it into his head to think about me; but I'll tek care, and jolly good care too, as he has no right to it.'

The afternoon shadows were growing deep already as they bowled along the smooth and well-kept country road. 'We're comin' to it,' said Isaiah in a while. 'It's the next house round the corner on the right-hand side. I'll slow down a bit, so as you can get a good look at it. Master John won't be at home yet a while, because the gaffer's sent him to school in Birmingham. He goes to the Grammar-school there, and wears a mortar-board atop of his head, like a parson. It's half-past five before he's at home, because he has to catch the train, and it's a mile from here to the railway station.—Look there; that's his bedroom.—No; not up-stairs; on the ground-floor. I used to sleep i' the same room afore Bob Snelling g'ven me the sack.—He thought,' said Isaiah, lowering his voice, 'that he was going to hurt me when he did that; but if he'd never done it, it might ha' been many and many a bright thousand in his pocket.'

Isaiah's new house was within half a mile of Farmer Shorthouse's residence. Tea was laid out in lonely splendour in the arctic parlour, which even the generous coal-fire could not warm. But if it failed in that direction, it succeeded admirably in another, and brought out the odours of French-polish to perfection. Mrs Winter was pilloried in a stiff black silk, and was on such terms of ceremony with her visitor that no overtures of foreign good-nature could make a passage beyond her intrenchments. Isaiah nudged, frowned, and nodded, and once or twice offered a stage direction in a stage whisper: 'Brisk up a little bit, missus; don't spread the company-manner too thick.'

Madame's visit under these conditions was not likely to be prolonged. The hostess's best approach to geniality was made when she appraised the furniture. 'We warn't brought up to it,' she explained to her guest; 'and I doubt whether Providence will tek it kindly. I've no mind for show myself; but our Isaiah is a man as'll have his way anywheres, and allays would. It's his doings, and I humbly hope as worldly pride may not have a fall.'

'My boy will be at home by this time,' said Madame, when the chilling function was once more seated in the brake behind Isaiah. 'Let me see the house while he is in it; it will be more home-like then.'

Isaiah, anxious to atone for the cold magnificence of Madame's reception, assented willingly. 'It's pitch-dark now,' he answered, 'and the gaffer can think nothing of my driving by.'

A thin snow was in the air, and Madame Vigne veiled herself from it until Isaiah pulled his horses to a walk and touched her with the butt

of his whip. 'Theer,' he said—'theer's a light in his window.—Why, theer's Master John his very self!—Look! D'y'e see him? He's pulling up the window.'

In effect Master John was there, in a glow of lamplight. He wore the college cap of which Isaiah had spoken, and a broad white collar over his jacket, and looked remarkably trim and healthy. He had opened the window, and had laid a hand on each of the outer shutters, when Madame called out to him: 'John, my dear!'

'Who's there?' he asked, peering into the darkness. The lamp of the brake gleamed redly through the winter mist, but he could see nothing beyond.

'You know me,' said Madame in an eager whisper. 'Come for a moment. Give me one kiss, and I will go.'

John climbed out at the casement, drew down the window, closed the shutters from without, and ran on tiptoe into the road. A minute later, he had climbed into the brake, and they were hugging each other to their hearts' content.

'Where are you going, Isaiah?' John asked in a hushed and cautious voice.

'I'm driving her home,' said Isaiah, with a jerk of his elbow to intimate Madame. 'It's rather better than five mile.'

'You'll drive back again, won't you?' said John. 'It won't take much more than an hour to do it with those horses. Uncle isn't at home, and he wouldn't mind much if he were. Let me go with you.'

Madame hugged him anew for the suggestion, and immediately began to pack her rugs about him. Isaiah, well pleased, whipped up the horses; and away they all three rolled together, Madame, prodigal of affection, with a fat and comfortable arm round her protégé's neck.

All this time, Mr Orme, sitting neglected and alone in the back kitchen, awaited Snelling's return. Once or twice the housekeeper passed through and treated him to an indignant sniff, at which the meek Tobias curled one foot round the other, and set his thumbs twirling in a feeble appeal against her judgment. She obeyed her master's orders, and set a copious jug of table beer and a joint of cold meat before the visitor. The plentiful good cheer and the fire atoned for ennui for an hour or two; but after a time, Tobias began to weary. The hours of waiting dragged more and more as the day went on, and he began to think himself altogether forgotten. Somewhere about three or four o'clock in the afternoon he fell asleep and allowed the fire to go out. When he awoke the room was dark as pitch, and he was chilled to the marrow. For the first minute or two he failed to remember where he was, and went groping about in some terror before he identified his surroundings. Even when he had done so, he had insane fears lest he had somehow been decoyed into confinement and left to perish.

In the course of his gropings he came upon the handle of the door, and found, to his relief, that there was at least no obstacle of escape. The house was silent as the grave; but the stillness hummed in his ears with a dreadful and disturbing noise. The door he had opened led upon a corridor which ran the whole length of the rear of the house. At the far end of this corridor

shone two distinct rays of light, one beaming apparently through a keyhole, and the other through a crack between the matted flooring and the bottom of a door. Tobias, with stealthy footstep and hands outstretched on either side, approached these friendly signs and listened. There was not a sound of life within; but he saw that the door was off the latch.

'If you please,' he murmured, and tapped humbly with a single knuckle. There came no response in answer, and he tapped again. Then he thought he heard within the murmur of a voice whispering in a peculiarly level and monotonous tone. He tapped rather more loudly than before and coughed apologetically. Still there was no answer, and he ventured to push the door a little wider and again to signalise his presence by a cough. A little scared by the continued silence, he pushed the door a trifle wider yet, and slowly and with extreme caution, guiding that fiery nose of his across the lintel, he peeped into the room. Not a soul was there; but, to his surprise, the sound of the level and monotonous whisper still went on. After a moment's wonder, he traced this noise to the lamp, which kept up an unintermittent hissing as it burned. Tobias's nerves had never been of the best this thirty years, and he was shaken now by unusual privations, so that if his heart began to flutter and his blood to twitch and sting at the remote suggestion of a fiery serpent, there was nothing in the world for him to wonder at. A keen, swift travelling wind from some open door was wafted by him, and in a second the fiery serpent flashed into a fiery dragon. In fine, the lamp burst with a hideous shock of noise, and after a second's darkness, the whole room was ablaze with burning oil.

The most hopeful of men could not have expected Tobias to cover one half so quickly as he did the ground he passed in his retreat. How he found himself in the open air he never knew; but he was at some considerable distance from the house when his hazy wits returned to him. He looked in the direction in which he supposed it to lie, and could discern nothing in the darkness; but as he stood, he heard scream on scream, as if from within the house; and a second later, the same voice calling 'Fire!' in the open air. There were distant shouts in answer; and shortly afterwards a dull glow spread like a red blot upon the blackness of the night, and died away again. It spread itself abroad once more, and grew, second by second, more vivid. Sudden jets and lances of light began to dash through the red blot hither and thither; and in the intervals of the screaming voice he heard distinctly the crackle of burning wood. Then something which he judged to be the chamber window went with a loud crash and the night was alive with fire. The house was three hundred years old, oak wainscoted, and as dry as tinder.

Tobias turned and ran for dear life, not knowing in what direction he was going.

John and Isaiah had seen Madame safe home, and were returning. They were within a mile of the house, when they came easily to the top of a gentle rise, from which a large extent of country was visible in the daytime.

'I'll get down here, Isaiah,' said John; 'I can

get home in ten minutes, and you can go the nearer way. I don't want uncle to know that we have been together.'

'Hillo!' cried Isaiah suddenly, 'what's that?—That'll be a rick afire.—No; it ain't! There's a window. Look! That's the flash of a window. There it is again! Send I may live, if it ain't Bob Snelling's house!' He dragged John back into the vehicle, and flogged his horses to a furious pace. 'I can tell him as I give you a lift,' he shouted to John, ' afore I saw the fire. He can find no harm in that at such a moment.'

Three or four minutes found them in front of the burning house. The housekeeper was in hysterics in the lane, and one or two women from the neighbouring cottages had taken charge of her. Some half-a-dozen loungers in smock-frocks stood about smoking and staring at the fire.

'Where's the gaffer?' roared Isaiah.

'Sam Duke's rode off to fetch him,' one of the loungers answered. 'He's been at the new shaft all day long.'

'Well,' cried Isaiah angrily, 'can't none of you do anything? Isn't there one of you as has got the brains to know as fire don't like water?' He dismounted as he spoke, and marching his team to a field-gate at a little distance, tethered the horses there by the reins and came bustling back again. 'Lend a hand here, lads! There's summat to be done, summat to be saved.'

'What's the use on it, Mr Winter?' one elderly labourer asked him. 'The well's fifty foot deep. It teks two minutes to get a single bucket up.'

Isaiah stared at him for an instant and then nodded. 'It's a pity,' he said sadly, 'to see the old place burn; but that's all there is for it, I reckon.—My blessid!' he cried suddenly, 'there's the books!' Before a man could divine his intention or a hand could be stretched out to arrest him, he was half-way up the path towards the door of the burning house, shielding his face from the fierce heat with both arms as he ran. The door was volleying a red smoke, and he disappeared in the midst of it. John dashed after him with a cry, and stood powerless with fear at the gateway. There was an awful pause, and in the middle of it Snelling rode up with the messenger behind him. He saw young John standing at the gate, and he noticed that no man had an eye for him. Everybody was staring with fixed and breathless interest towards the door; and as he followed the general gaze, a figure came plunging through the volleying smoke and staggered down the pathway.

The handful of onlookers raised a husky cheer; and Isaiah, clinging to the gate, gave himself over to an heroic fit of coughing and sneezing.

'What's this?' demanded Snelling in a tone of wonder. 'What brought him there?'

'That's thee, is it, old un?' said Isaiah, recognising the voice and looking up with streaming eyes. 'I just happened to be passing. They told me you wasn't within call, and I happened to bethink myself of the books, so I just went in and fetched 'em. Here's the deed-box and cash-box into the bargain.'

Snelling dismounted slowly. 'I was a bit of a fool, I reckon,' he said, 'when I quarrelled with a man like thee.'

'Sayest?' said Isaiah, holding out his hand.

He had risked his life to serve the man, and that meant death to malice.

Snelling took the proffered hand and wrung it hard.

'It was a lamp burst in your neveu's bedroom, so they sayin', Mr Snelling,' said one of the bystanders.

'Ay, ay!' he answered; 'so I'm told.'

The boy was there still, and he himself was houseless by his own vile handiwork.

ROSE LEGENDS.

THAT the rose is queen among the flowers there can be no shadow of doubt, if we consider the amount of attention it has received in the past, and especially of late years. From the traditional period when, quite thornless,

High in Paradise,

By the four rivers, the first roses blew,

to the last exhibition of the National Rose Society, it has been in favour, and it now reigns supreme as crowned Empress of the fairest State in all the world. Whether it be the wild-brier of the simplest sort, as it luxuriates in the hedgerow; whether it be a more favoured variety revelling on some southern wall, and doing so with careless ease; or whether it be of the foreign kind, that after years of care doth 'down the alleys shine afar': in either case, all less endowed or less attended blooms serve as accessories to lend the beauty of completeness to the scene.

Now the rose has some 'virtue to boast,' as Dr Watts put it, 'above all the flowers of the field,' or it could not have found so large a space in early legends as it has done. Saints Ambrose and Basil inform us that it had no drawback from its virtues in Eden; and Milton, following in their wake, describes the garden as being stored with

Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.

Harpocrates, the secret-keeper, was bribed to silence with a rose; and Robert Browning had in his mind the legend when, in *Isobel's Child*, he used the phrase, 'Red as a rose of Harpocrate.' If, however, Sir John Mandeville were an authority on this matter of colour, the redness had a much later origin than the time of Harpocrates, for the author of the *Voiage and Travail* tells us that a Jewish maid of Bethlehem was beloved by a man named Hamuel, a brutish sot. She rejected his suit; and he, in revenge, accused the maiden of offences for which she was condemned to be burned alive. She was brought to the stake; but, by a miracle, the flames burned her accuser to a cinder, and did her no harm. The fagots by which she was surrounded became a garden of roses, the burning brands becoming red ones, and those that were not kindled becoming white ones.

Quite a different origin is given for the colour of the yellow variety. Mussulman tradition accounts for it in a very simple way. It says that when Mohammed was journeying from earth to Paradise, the drops of sweat which fell on the earth from the forehead of the Prophet became white roses; but that the drops of sweat which fell from Al Borak, the animal

on which he rode, became yellow roses. We must not lay much stress upon the tradition, for yellow roses did not come even from the land of the Prophet of Islam, but from Germany. Historic doubts, however, apart, it is pleasant to be told that this flower was sacred to Eros and Aphrodite, to Cupid and Venus, and was an emblem not only of joy and love, but a symbol also of prudence.

The doubtfulness of legend in this matter is of small moment when we come to consider that the rose has a history which goes a long way farther back than some of the traditions themselves. It was well known to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Herodotus, for instance, writes of roses in the garden of Midas, the son of Gordius, in Phrygia, that had sixty leaves, which grew of themselves, and had a more agreeable fragrance than all the rest. The Centifolia is said to have been existent with the Greeks, and a great favourite, not only for its beauty of form but also for its perfume. At feasts, the roses were lavishly used by both the Greeks and the Romans. Fabulous sums were spent to have them at all seasons. In the time of the Republic, the people had their cups of Falernian wine swimming with blooms; and the Spartan soldiers after the battle of Cirrha refused to drink any wine that was not perfumed with roses; while at the Regatta of Baia, the whole surface of the Lucrine lake was strewn with the flowers. Nero at his banquetings showered rose-water upon his guests from a hole in the ceiling; and when he honoured the house of a noble with his presence, the host was compelled to have his fountains playing rose-water. Indeed, on such occasions the ground was covered with rose-leaves, garlands of the flowers decorated the brows and necks of the guests, and a rose-pudding found a place in the repast itself. The Sybarites slept on beds stuffed with rose-leaves; the tyrant Dionysius had his couch filled with them; Verus would travel with a garland on his head and round his neck, and over his litter he had a thin net with rose-leaves intertwined. Antiochus luxuriated upon a bed of blooms even in winter days and nights; and when Cleopatra entertained Antony, she had roses covering the floor to the depth, it is said, of an ell. We are told that Heliogabalus supplied so many at one of his banquets that several of his guests were suffocated in the endeavour to extricate themselves from the abundance; he drank rose-wine to help digestion; he bathed in the same sort of liquid; and he had the public swimming-baths filled with the wine of the rose. No wonder the ancients became unwell after breathing and eating and drinking and wearing and reclining on and walking over the fragrant flowers. But the worst of it was that when they became ill, they were given a rose-draught; and no matter what the ailment was, the same thing was prescribed in some form or other. Oftener than not, the poor patient would succumb under the delicious treatment, and he would cease from living in consequence of a ruined digestion arising from a surfeit of sweets,

Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain.

Doubtless, the immoderate use of roses by the ancients led in after-days to their being relegated

to their proper sphere in the garden; for although we have had the Wars of the Roses in our modern times, the flowers were only plucked as a symbol. Now, in the garden the rose is about as much at home as it is in poetry. In the garden, there is nothing more charming than the rose in bloom; and in poetry there is no poet worthy of the name who has not consecrated it and enshrined it in his verse. How charmingly this has been done! Let the author of the *Lady of the Lake* speak for them all when he says:

The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!

But the rose is really useful as well as beautiful, despite its misemployment by the ancients, and notwithstanding the artificial character of the course of its development. John Brown of Haddington, a century and a quarter ago, said: 'Roses in general are delightful to view, agreeable in their smell, and useful in medicine;' and he states that, according to Tournefort, there were fifty-three kinds in his day. The medicinal qualities of the fruit of the rose are well known, for it has time out of mind been considered as an astringent; and Wiseman in his *Surgery* recommends 'fountain-water with rose-water and sugar of roses' as a cooling draught. Rose-vinegar is used for toilet and other purposes, and the conserve of the flowers is held in high esteem as a confection. The chief employment of the bloom, however, is in the manufacture of rose-water and otto of roses.

Rose-water is extensively made in India. At Ghazipore, in Bengal, there are hundreds of acres laid out for the purpose. The harvest is in March and April; and the result of the distillation is to supply about one quart of rose-water from each thousand of the blooms; but adulteration is very much resorted to, oil of sandal-wood being the medium; and the people of India do not seem to mind much whether they get the odour of the rose or the sandal for their money. It is comparatively cheap where it is made, costing two or three shillings a quart, even when unadulterated.

Otto or attar of roses is much more important and expensive. The origin of this condensed perfume is told in one of the romantic stories of the East. It is said that Noorjehan Begum, the favourite wife of Jehan-Geer, was walking in her garden, through which ran a stream of rose-water, when she noticed some oily particles floating on the surface. She had them skimmed off; and their aroma was found to be so delicious, that means were devised to produce the precious essence in a more regular way. The method is an extension of that which is used to produce rose-water, but it takes a thousand trees to supply about two ounces of attar, and its value is seldom less than twenty pounds sterling. At that price, and unadulterated, it is sold mainly to Europeans, while in a less pure form it is vended in the native bazaars. It is bought by the Westerns, however, for manufacturing purposes, and not to be used in its pure condition. Thus, Pereira, in his *Elements of Materia Medica and Therapeutics*, declares that 'attar of roses is employed

for scenting only. In the shops, various fumes are sold which owe their odour to the attar. Thus, oil for the hair, sold as *huile antique rouge à la rose*, is merely olive oil coloured by alkanet and scented with the attar. Milk of roses also contains the attar. Several compound scents owe a portion of their fragrance to this oil, as lavender water.' So that Tom Moore, though not literally, was largely correct when he affirmed in his 'Twopenny Post-bag' that

Otto of roses,
Refreshing all noses,
Shall sweetly exhale from our whiskers and wigs.

Extensive rose-farms exist in Turkey, at Adrianople, Brusa, Ushak, and the low countries of the Balkan generally. In the last-mentioned district, seventy thousand ounces of attar are said to be produced in each season, and there it takes two thousand flowers to the drachm! Indeed, the queen of flowers is found in all the temperate parts of the earth, and even in the far north, and it will grow almost anywhere with a little needful care; but those of Cashmere surpass all others for beauty and fragrance. Our roses are bright, and there are roses of other lands which are claimed to be brighter, as, for instance, those of France and Damascus; yet

Who has not heard of the vale of Cashmere,
With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave?

UNDER AN AFRIC SUN.

CHAPTER III.

'YES, my dear sirs, I cannot conceive a more delightful climate. Winter is unknown, and you can suit your taste by selecting the heat you prefer. Africa down by the sea-shore; Italy where you stand; a few hundred feet higher in the mountains, France; then England; and Norway and its snows at the top of the volcano. A man ought to be happy here.'

'And you are not?' said Fraser dryly.

'No, and yes. Of course, I'm happy in my garden with my child, but— There, hang it all, my dear boys!' he cried, in a good-humoured angry tone, 'how can a man be happy with a load of debt?'

Digby listened, but his eyes were directed to the garden.

'Yes,' continued Redgrave; 'I've been so confoundedly unlucky. Too speculative, perhaps; but I came out here twenty years ago as a speculation, and I'm a stubborn Sussex man, sir: I will not be beaten. But I've got hold of the right thing at last.'

'And what's that?'

'Sulphur, sir. I'm working up that at the top of the mountain. You shall see the place, if you'll come.—Ah, here's Nelly. We never ventured to import a piano, gentlemen; but we have a guitar, and I'll be bound to say if we petition rightly, we shall get a song.'

'Do you wish me to sing, father?' said the girl, colouring slightly as she met Digby's earnest gaze.

'Yes, my dear, if you are not too tired.'

'Oh no,' she said hastily; and she crossed the room to reach down a guitar hanging by its ribbon from a nail in the wall.

The two Englishmen had been a fortnight in Isola, and, attractive as the place had proved with its wondrous vegetation, gorge, hill, and crater, Redgrave's pretty half-English villa seemed to be the spot which drew them to it again and again. The days would be passed in penetrating the most out-of-the-way parts of the island and adding to Fraser's collection; then they would return, tired out, to the little *venta*, where their dark-eyed moustached landlady had prepared a substantial meal; after which there would be chocolate and a cigar, followed by: 'I say, Horace, what do you say to a walk up to Redgrave's? He will not see much English society when we are gone.'

Fraser always looked uneasy, hesitated, and seemed on the point of refusing; but he invariably ended by rising to go, till it became almost a matter of course for them to find father and daughter standing by the rough gate between the prickly-pears, Redgrave smoking one of his home-made cigars, and Helen watching with a sadness of expression in her eyes which seemed to grow night by night.

Then there would be more chocolate out there, in the delicious evening, with the scent of orange blossom floating around, and the boom of the great Atlantic billows, softened by the distance, coming up like a bass murmur from far below.

Delicious dreamy evenings, with sea, sky, and shadows of the coming night, and the slowly developing stars, all tending to give an indefinable something to the place, which seemed to hold the visitors as in a thrall.

It had been so night after night, with the only drawback to the pleasure in the presence of Señor Ramon, who seemed to be quite at home at the villa, and polite and friendly, to a degree; but whose warmth never seemed to thaw the two Englishmen.

This night, Ramon was absent at his home, a quarter of a league on the other side of the little port; and as soon as the guitar strings had been tuned, Helen sang first one and then another of the old ballads of home, the room growing darker, and the faces of those present more indistinct, till suddenly Redgrave started up as his child's sweet sympathetic voice ceased, the last note of the guitar vibrating in the fragrant air.

'Room's too hot,' said Redgrave huskily.—'Come and have a walk round, Fraser.'

'Poor papa!' said Helen, rising as he left the room, followed by Fraser with unwilling step.

'Is anything wrong?' said Digby, laying his hand upon the guitar, as if in protest.

'It was my mother's favourite song,' said Helen sadly. 'She used to sing it. I remembered the air, and found the words one day in her desk. I sang it to him one evening as a surprise, and his emotion frightened me; but ever since he makes me sing it whenever I take down the guitar. He says it brings him back the past; but it always makes him sad.'

There was a few moments' silence, embarrassing to both. Digby had words rising to his lips which he longed to speak; but he checked them, as he felt that he had no right.

'Let us join them now,' said Helen, trying to draw away the guitar.

'No, no; not yet,' cried Digby. 'One more song—will you?—may I ask you? the little Spanish song I heard you singing that day you were gathering flowers.'

Helen drew her breath so sharply that there was a sound in the darkening room as of a painful sob. Then there was silence as Digby sank back in his chair with a feeling of misery crushing down upon him such as he had never felt before.

'I'm an idiot!' he said to himself. 'What business had I ever to harbour such thoughts? But if it had been another, I should not have cared.'

He knew he was thinking a lie as he seemed to start back into consciousness, for the chords of the guitar rang out in a wild half-minor refrain, and before him he could dimly see Helen on the other side of the room, seated opposite the window, while the sweet pure notes thrilled him through and through.

But the song seemed different now. In place of the vivid greenery of the wood, and the face of the singer looking bright, happy, and surprised in the encounter, everything was dark and oppressive; even the song seemed sad, while it was as if a blow had been struck as the last note rang out and a voice from the window cried 'Brava! brava!' with the addition of hearty plaudits.

Digby sprang to his feet with the hot blood in his cheeks.

'Ah, my dear Señor Digby, I did not know you were there.—Is not Helen's voice delicious?'

Digby tried to speak, but bit his lip with rage, for the words would not come; and Ramon continued: 'Come, señor, confess she sings our Spanish songs in a way which throws yours in the shade?'

'Miss Redgrave's singing is a pleasure to hear,' said Digby coldly.—'Shall we join your father in the garden?'

'Thank you, Mr Digby; not this evening,' said Helen, her voice sounding as if it had caught the inflection of his.

'But you will come, my dear señor,' said Ramon. 'I have brought you a few of my latest-made cigars.'

In the meantime, Redgrave had led the way up a path through his grounds, followed unwillingly by Fraser, to a seat cut in the steep stone, from which they could gaze right away to sea and over the sleeping town.

'Peak looks well to-night,' said Redgrave, pointing to what seemed like a faint cloud where the last rays of the departed day still lingered. 'It's a beautiful world this—a bad world.'

'Paradoxical,' said Fraser dryly.

'Yes, sir. We spoil it, and make it bad.'

There was a long silence, during which they sat and smoked; and from time to time, faintly heard, came the tinkle of Helen's guitar.

'You have been so friendly to us, Mr Redgrave,' said Fraser at last, 'and you seem so isolated'—

'Yes; this is Isola,' said the other with a half-laugh.

'A stranger among strangers, that I take the liberty of speaking,' continued Fraser, without heeding the interruption. 'You are in trouble?'

'To the very eyes, sir.'

'Can I, as a fellow-countryman, help you?'

'No,' said Redgrave shortly.

'I beg your pardon. I meant well.'

'Of course you did, my dear sir, and I thank you; but you can't help me.—I have two great troubles—debt, and my daughter.'

'A curse—and a blessing,' said Fraser dryly.

'Call it so if you like, sir,' cried Redgrave almost fiercely; 'but I owe that Spanish dog more than I can ever pay him. He has led me on in my foolish desire to speculate, tempting me to borrow of him, as if he were my best friend, and I could not see it. I have no means of proving it; but I feel morally certain that he has used his great influence as the richest man in the island to undermine me in my sales. And now he demands payment in full.'

'Well, sir; pay him.'

'I cannot.'

'You have not the means?'

'Yes, I have; but I cannot pay him.'

'May I ask why?'

'Because he will not take money.'

'What do you mean?'

'What did old Shylock insist upon having?'

'His pound of flesh?'

'Yes. I might borrow and pay him; but he insists upon my daughter's hand.'

'Ha!' ejaculated Fraser, as they sat there in the dark.

'And she hates him'—

There was a pause.

'As much as you, sir.'

'Ha!' ejaculated Fraser again.

'There; come back, and join the young folks, Fraser. I feel better, now some one knows my trouble.—Humph! there he is again.' For Ramon's voice was heard speaking loud enough, and directly after the four men encountered.

That night, Ramon and Redgrave walked part of the way back with the two visitors; and after they had parted, Ramon stopped short.

'Good-night,' said Redgrave.

'No, señor; it is not good-night,' said the Spaniard haughtily. 'How long do those English stay here?'

'I don't know; they are their own masters.'

'Yes, Señor Redgrave; and I am yours.—Their presence here displeases me. Let them go.'

He strode away; and as Redgrave walked slowly back, he struck the palm of his left hand a tremendous blow with his fist and said something English—only one word, but it was very English indeed.

CHAPTER IV.

Another fortnight had passed. Excursions had been made along the shore to where the huge billows thundered in. Digby had mastered his antipathy so far as to allow himself to be let down by a rope in company with Fraser to inspect the mummy caves, where, in the most inaccessible spots, the ancient inhabitants of the island buried their dead; and here Fraser had descanted upon facial angles, prognathic jaws, width of cheek-bones, height of forehead, and the like, as he stood before Digby, Hamlet-like, holding an antique skull. Botanical specimens had been procured; geological examples collected, and packed in boxes for transit home; insects had been captured, and duly stuck; and the troglodytes of the island

visited in their cavern villages, where they dwelt dirtily and securely in caves, which were similar to those used in the past by the Guanches as catacombs, being really huge ruptured bubbles formed by volcanic gases in the molten stone, when the great mountain of the interior poured forth in eruption the rock-formed fluid of the interior of the earth. While ever, night after night, as if drawn by a magnet, the two visitors found their way to Redgrave's house, where the master was gravely friendly, as he noted how his child's sad countenance lit up as the familiar footsteps were heard upon the silvery pumice-path.

Ramon raged and stormed. Redgrave forgot his Canary-Spanish education, and grew more English, displaying a bulldog obstinacy.

Then Ramon threatened as he showed his white teeth. 'Mischief may come, my dear Redgrave,' he whispered.

In an instant Redgrave's strong hand gripped him by the shoulder, and his gray eyes flashed fire into the Spaniard's dark orbs. 'Don't try it,' he said fiercely. 'You have an Englishman and a Scot to deal with, sir, and those two together can beat the world, let alone Spain. Read your history, sir, if you don't believe. You Spaniards fight with knives; we Englishmen with our fists. Knives break, fists break too, but they break people's heads. That's metaphorical, Señor Ramon, but there's a good deal of truth in it, all the same. Don't threaten, sir. You've got me down, but I might be dangerous if you tempted me to kick.'

'My dear Redgrave, this is absurd,' said Ramon. 'You misunderstand me. We are the best of friends. I will say no more. We two cannot afford to quarrel. I look upon you as my father, yet to be.'

From that moment Ramon was smiles and good-humour combined. Placid as one of the volcanoes of the island, sleeping and covered by time with grass and flowers, with nothing to tell that they were not pleasant mounds, till a stick was thrust in deeply, and then a faint vapour arose, invisible to the eye, but diffusing an odour of sulphur that was strangely suggestive of heat far down below.

Redgrave was always friendly to the two men, but he made no proposals for trips in the island; he never invited them to come.

'I'll do nothing,' he used to mutter to himself. 'My attempts always fail. I'll leave everything to fate.'

'When are we to have this long-talked-of trip to your works?' said Fraser one evening, when he had been watching angrily the looks which Digby directed at Helen.

'Eh? Ah, when you like,' said Redgrave.

'To-morrow be it then,' said Fraser.

'A trip—a walk?' said Ramon, turning sharply.

'Yes; only to the works.'

'Ah, yes; very interesting.—You will take them to-morrow, Redgrave?'

The latter nodded.

'I wish you a pleasant day.—You will start early, as it is far?'

'Yes. Soon after sunrise.—I shall have everything ready, gentlemen, so be here in good time.'

Ramon smiled to himself as he went away in the best of humour that night, but he smiled too soon.

Redgrave saw it, and he was very thoughtful as he bade his other visitors good-night.

'Nelly, my darling,' he said as they re-entered the house, 'it is very cold up the mountain, and the way there is scorching and dusty; but if I had the side-saddle clapped on one of the mules, you could go with us.'

The sad aspect fled from Helen's face on the instant. 'Ah yes,' she cried.

'That's right,' said her father. 'Then be ready. Thick boots and cloak ready for the cold.'

Helen flung her arms about his neck, and hid her face for a moment in his breast before kissing him and saying 'Good-night.'

'I've seen him smile before,' said Redgrave to himself; 'and it means mischief. As soon as we were out of the way, he would be here pestering my poor girl. Checkmate there.'

'Treacherous enemy at least,' said Ramon, as he returned home.

'Tom,' said Fraser suddenly, as they two walked together down the steep slope.

'Eh? Yes?' said Digby with a start.

'What do you say to getting back to Santa Cruz and trying to catch one of the Castle boats home?'

'No.'

'Eh?'

'I said No. I'm very bad, out of sorts, Horace; and this place is doing me worlds of good. Emphatically, No. Besides, you have not half-done the island yet. You said so the other day.'

'True: I did.'

'Then do it properly while you are here; and don't bother. Why, you are always wanting to go home.'

Fraser's countenance grew more sad as he gazed sidewise at his companion's happy face, and he sighed gently. 'Young—handsome—volatile,' he said to himself; 'and he loves her dearly; while she'— He seemed to have come upon a confused mental tanglement, and it was some minutes after blindly blundering on through a maze of thought, that he said softly: 'Matters are getting in a knot.'

CHAPTER V.

'Going with us—you!' cried Digby as he entered the pretty room at Redgrave's the next morning, to find a delicious breakfast spread, and Helen standing ready to receive him in a riding-habit specially adapted to the place.

'You will not think me in the way?' she said playfully.

Fraser's countenance looked more sombre as he took the hand extended to him, and smiled sadly as he followed Digby's example and expressed his delight.

To both men that day was a dream of a wondrous journey upward along a flower-strown track towards a dense cloud, which soon after enveloped them, and through which they laboriously climbed to find themselves in a new region, where the air was cooler, and fragrant with the odour of the resinous pines through which they passed; and as Digby led Helen's mule, they talked little, but listened to the music of the birds and the gurgle of water, and caught from time to time among the tree-tops glimpses of the dazzling blue sky. They spoke but seldom, but

went on with their eyes fixed upon Fraser and Redgrave, who led the way some fifty yards ahead, but stopped from time to time, for the laggards to overtake them, and admire some fresh view.

And all through that temperate summer zone the birds sung around them; and to Digby they sang only of love, and to Helen of what might be.

But the sadness in her breast suffused her eyes with tears. There was a black shadow always before her; and when, after riding her mule through some rougher part, Digby turned to seek her gaze, she averted it with a sigh, but to own to herself that all this was very sweet, and she knew that she had never before enjoyed a day like this.

The fir-tree zone came to an end; the cool darkness and soft silence of the shady glade gave place to a rugged pumice-strown desert, where fine dust rose at every step, and the sun poured down with blinding power. A weary, weary tramp to some; but to those two who hung behind, a dreamy time of bliss, through which they journeyed on hour after hour, till a wooden hut was reached, where the mule was tethered; and Fraser now, at Redgrave's suggestion, offered his arm to help Helen up a cindery slope to the edge of the mountain crater, the party then descending a hundred feet or so into a hollow, where Fraser forgot everything but the delight he found in gathering specimens of sulphur crystals—pale straw colour, rich yellow, and brilliant scarlet.

'Yes, this is my last venture,' said Redgrave suddenly. 'My men come up here to dig the sulphur, of which there is no end, store it for me in the tent below, and we ship it off home. But you had better not stay long; the sulphur gas comes up strong to-day.'

'What would happen if there was to be an eruption now, Mr Redgrave?' said Digby.

'This party would never know,' was the serious reply.

'Then I wish to goodness Señor Ramon were here, and this party safe at home, if it did blow up,' said Digby in a half-whisper as he glanced at Helen, who shook her head at him sadly; and he saw her eyes fill with tears.

Fraser was a dozen yards away, stooping to pick up yet another crystal, while Redgrave was walking towards him.

'Forgive me,' whispered Digby. 'They were the words of a thoughtless boy.'

Her look said so much that he caught her hand and raised it to his lips, but only got it to be drawn timidly away.

'Well, Fraser, when you're ready,' said Redgrave. 'It's a long way back; the wind's high; the gases bad, and the dust blows. It's very cold too.—Shall we go back?'

Fraser assented; and Digby gave way to him as he came forward to help Helen to climb up the side of the crater to the edge, whence, after a brief gaze round at the glorious view, they all descended to the hut, and partook of the luncheon they had brought. Helen remounted the mule, and Digby took the bridle once more as her father and Fraser went on.

The first part of the descent took place in silence, both Digby and Helen wondering how it

was that they had not noticed that it was bitterly cold, the wind boisterous, and the dust that rose painful and wearying to a degree. They were conscious of nothing save that they were together in an idyllic dream, with a world of beauty spread out below.

Eight thousand feet, they had been told, was the height of the quiescent volcano; but the words had fallen upon deaf ears, for there was a question asking itself at the portals of their hearts: 'How is this to end?'

The sun was getting low in the west as the pine zone upon the mountain was reached; and once more in the dim obscurity they penetrated, everything seemed more dreamy and sweet than ever.

Fraser and Redgrave were well on ahead; the track wound here and there; but dim as the woodland became, the mule was familiar with the way, and paced slowly on with its bridle upon its neck, and Digby walking now with his hand upon the saddle-bow.

Darker and darker it grew, save where the ruddy light of the westerling sun pierced the garden pine-boughs, and cast strangely lurid rays through the dense forest. And still darker and darker, till a gurgling stream was reached; the mule stopped of its own accord to bend down and drink, and Digby's hand took that which was near his on the pommel of the saddle.

'Helen!' he said, and his voice was a whisper among the pines.

She did not speak; but her hand was timidly resigned to his grasp, and the next moment his arms were about her. 'My darling!' were his words; 'I love you with all a man's first true love!'

There was no reply, a timid shrinking, and with a sob Helen let her head rest upon his shoulder, as if that were the place where she might find safety from the fate that seemed to her worse than death.

There was a strange grating noise, such as might have been made by a frightened bird, but it was caused by ivory gritting and grinding upon ivory.

Digby started round to see dimly, half-a-dozen yards away, Ramon standing by the bole of one of the thickest pines, while a cheery voice ahead shouted back: 'Come, you people; don't lose your way.'

WILD EXMOOR.

It is sweet at times, when the heart is fretted and weary of the conventionalisms of town-life, to seek solace for even a few fleeting days with Nature in her wild beauty. To quote a great writer: 'Welcome, thou great Nature, savage but not false, not unkind, unmotherly—speak thou to me, O mother, and sing my sick heart thy mystic everlasting lullaby song, and let all the rest be far!'

Moved by the burning desire to quit for a brief while the whirl and glare of the city, I went down last spring to wander on Exmoor. It was April, and the woods and hedges were growing tenderly verdant. The cuckoo's note was not yet heard; while the nightingale, for some mysterious reason, never goes so far west. But thrushes

and blackbirds were singing as they never seem to sing later on ; and a host of small birds swelled the chorus, amongst them the willow-wren, whose plaintive note every dweller in the country must know : he, like the cuckoo, is one of spring's chief harbingers.

The drive from South Molton to Simonsbath is very beautiful. For the first two or three miles, the road winds through a hilly and thickly-wooded country—a typical Devonshire road, in fact. A sweet little stream brawls noisily along, generally close to the road, while some rich undulating water-meadows delight the eye. Presently we pass by a disused copper mine, and through a quiet hamlet nestling on the confines of the moor itself. The meadows and birch-woods gradually melt away ; and, climbing a steep long hill, we breathe a different air, that makes the pulse beat stronger, and the blood circle more freely in the veins. The Moor proper, in its wild desolation and its absolute silence, now opens out before us. Glancing back, we get a magnificent view of South Molton and its neighbourhood, even to hamlets and villages far remote. But the mists of night draw on apace, and we have yet to drive some half-dozen stiff miles before reaching that snug inn at Simonsbath, the *William Rufus*. The snow still lies thick here and there along the roadside, in huge discoloured patches, grimly suggestive of the severity of the past winter. By-and-by a sudden turn of the road brings us in view of the 'Silver Barle.' At this turn, by the way, there is a horrible precipice, with neither wall nor protection of any kind. To be hurled down that gully would seem certain death ; and yet our driver, the honest innkeeper, tells how on a dark night, some years ago, a carriage and pair did actually go over, and with no graver casualty to the occupants than a broken collar-bone. The trap, however, was dashed to pieces, and it was a difficult business to extract the terrified horses.

The sound and sight of devious Barle sends a thrill of joy through us, for we have come to fish in this stream, which abounds in trout, more, perhaps, than any of the other moorland streams ; though they run very small—six or eight to the pound. Here and there, a monster of half a pound, or even three-quarters, may be taken with worm or fly.

Simonsbath is a little settlement in the midst of the wilds of Exmoor forest. I am referring to Exmoor proper, and not to the district commonly known by this name, which is of wide extent. This place, with its green plantations and few slight buildings, is a little oasis in a wild but beautiful tract ; nor do its simple and scanty signs of civilisation harmonise ill with the desolation around. A church, with a few labourers' cottages, an inn, and picturesque old mansion-house ; add to these the fir plantations, that afford a shelter from the winter storms, and you have the civilisation of Exmoor complete. More than one attempt has been made to reclaim the forest. Many years ago, a mansion-house on a far more pretentious scale was commenced, but never completed ; there it stands to this day, grim and untenanted, save by the starlings, which build there in the spring. Other attempted improvements have failed in the same way : the peat and heather in hill and dale seem to defy the hand

of man, and his little efforts to rob them of their natural grandeur and obdurate ruggedness are quite futile.

Early in the cold bright morning we were up to fish the Barle as far down as Landacre Bridge, or perhaps to wooded Withypool. These upper reaches of the stream between Landacre and Simonsbath are undeniably a little monotonous ; one continuous brawl over rocks and stones, with none of those deep mysterious pools so delightful to the angler's heart ; nor are there any swift smooth 'runs.' At Withypool, indeed, the Barle alters considerably in aspect, presenting a wide variety of river scenery ; deep pools, 'stickles,' and quiet runs. Yet, even at and above Simonsbath, the Barle to my mind is a lovely stream.

It is shining and snowing by fits, and consequently sport is very moderate ; but here and there, during the short snow-storms, we pick up a few beautiful troutlets, that rise fearlessly to the fly, a 'March Brown' or 'Blue Upright.' My companions stride on far ahead, leaving me a mile or so of river to fish. But the rise is very slight ; for there is no sign as yet of the natural fly on the water, nor is the wind in the right quarter. Nevertheless, left to myself, I find plenty of solace. Passing an old disused copper mine—there are many hereabouts—the place straightway becomes a mine of memories. A solitary shepherd's cottage stands on the hillside within a stone's throw, and here, years back, I recollect as if it were but yesterday asking for a glass of milk. It was a blazing day in August, and I had been fishing the Barle with a college friend from its source to Landacre. The time in those Oxford days was very sunny, for the mists of disappointment and sorrow were as yet afar. Often enough in the intervening years I have longed to revisit Exmoor, and at length, my wish fulfilled, find that the place has lost none of its former fascination. The loneliness of its hills and valleys does not depress me ; on the contrary, my spirits are elevated, for the moors seem to contain an elixir of life.

The heather is always beautiful, even before summer, with her lavish hand, has made the hill-sides purple with it, and the stream is ever a companion. At this time of year there is, of course, a scarcity of animal life. A few stone-chats and wheatears, just arrived, chatter and flirt their tails amidst the rocks ; and the dipper or water-ousel forces attention by persistently courtesying to you from a boulder in mid-stream. He is a delightful fellow, this dipper, full of quaint sly ways ; and by sitting quite still and watching, you may soon learn the ins and outs of his life. He comes and goes briskly from rock to rock, courtesying from every one, and uttering now and then a clear shrill whistle. I have often thought on the contrast between the modes in which man and the lower animals feed. The former has for the most part his stated hours for feeding, and partakes of his food with more or less punctuality. Take, on the other hand, the dipper—he has scarcely a spare moment while there is light, but is continuously seeking for food, earning his bread by the constant sweat of his brow.

Snipe, curlews, and partridges are fairly common on the moors ; and that local bird the blackcock is plentiful in the neighbourhood of the Doone

Valley. This year, I saw on Exmoor a species whose presence I had never suspected till then, the ring-ousel, which is also a very local species. Rabbits are plentiful, and, as a consequence, stoats and weasels. Herds of Exmoor ponies run wild; and in the Bagworthy Valley and neighbourhood you may sometimes see that grand animal, the wild red-deer.

There are three streams all rising hard by Simonsbath—the Barle, the Exe, and Bagworthy Water: the last-named, which flows through the Bagworthy Valley, is perhaps the most beautiful; but then, after passing Doone Valley and the idyllic 'waterslide'—rendered classic ground by Blackmore in his *Lorna Doone*—the scenery changes entirely: the wild and treeless moors disappear, and the stream uniting with the Lyn, flows on to the Severn sea through scenes, it is true, of surpassing loveliness, but lacking the stern grandeur of the moorland: past Brendon village, and past Watersmeet, the scene in Whyte Melville's *Katerfelto* of the fierce struggle between Parson Gale and John Garnet: on to Woodside cottage and Lynmouth village, where, as Southey said, the river and the sea 'make but one sound!' Very tender memories these places have for me; but it is to Exmoor I would go when weary for a while of the sounds and sights of city life. A gracious and soothing silence broods over hill and valley, broken only here and there by the brawling of silvery trout stream, and sometimes in the summer by the thunder echoing from hill to hill.

IRONICAL ITEMS.

A CRITIC called irony the wit of a thinker, and humour the irony of a poet. He further likened irony to the sting of a thorn, and humour to the plaster which heals the wound. Irony, like sarcasm and ridicule, is often more effective than argument; in description, is sometimes very telling; and may convey suggestions and ideas in a terse and pithy manner, as when one says: 'You can't always judge by appearances: the man who wears a diamond pin may be really wealthy.' A witty Frenchman writes in a Paris newspaper that a French major is a man who has three decorations: the third was given him because he had two, the second because he had one, and the first because he had none. A well-known cardinal says a gentleman is one who never inflicts pain. On which a wit remarks: 'This is hard on the dentists.'

Not a bad story is told of an aged clergyman who met a man loudly declaiming against foreign missions. 'Why,' asked the objector, 'doesn't the Church look after the heathen at home?'—'We do,' said the clergyman quietly, and gave the man a tract.

'What's going on inside?' inquired a gentleman of the ticket-seller at the entrance to a public hall.—'An amateur performance,' replied the latter.—'The audience seem to be having a good time; I heard their shouts of laughter four blocks away. What's the play?'—'*Hamlet*,' was the unexpected reply.

The slowness or unpunctuality of trains is a fertile topic for wits to exercise their powers thereon. A man was waiting once for the train

at a roadside station where passengers at times have to test greatly their stock of patience. He saw a graveyard not far from the station very full of graves, and he inquired the reason. A bystander calmly informed him that it was used to bury passengers who died while waiting for the train. Stations and trains bring to mind the Mugby Junction style of sandwiches, which have roused the wrathful irony and sarcasm of so many travellers. It is stated that a ham sandwich has been dug out of the ruins of Pompeii in a perfect state of preservation. When tasted, it was pronounced to be very similar to those to be got at the railway refreshment rooms.

'That was a mysterious robbery the other day,' said Smith to Jones.—'Why, I don't see what mystery there was about it,' remarked Jones; 'the detectives caught the thieves the same day.'—'Yes,' returned the first speaker; 'that's what I said.'

'So far as you saw,' said a counsel to a witness, 'she was doing her ordinary household duty?'—'I should say so—she was talking,' was the ironical reply. A woman's weakness for talking, and her helplessness in the little matters of directing missiles and pointing lead pencils, form never-failing subjects of ridicule for the rougher sex.

'He never had but one genuine case in his life,' said a lawyer of a rival, 'and that was when he prosecuted his studies.'—Some lawyers have had curious experiences of ironical wills. There is the not unfamiliar case of the French merchant who left a handsome legacy to a lady who had refused to marry him twenty years before, in gratitude for her kindness in not taking him at his word.

There is a good deal of pointed satire in such ironical facetiæ as the following. We are reminded that the mania for adulteration is so great, that you can't buy a quart of sand and be sure that it is not half sugar.—A resident in a suburban villa was recently asked how his house had fared during a snowstorm. 'Oh, badly,' was the reply; 'my cistern is the only dry place in it.'—Some good wholesome advice may thus be conveyed to careless householders. They will please note that the most effectual method of discovering a gas-escape on their premises is to hunt for it by the light of a naked candle until they find it.—'What would civilisation be without a piano?' asked a philosopher. 'Among other things, it would be able to sleep at nights, besides being a thought less unhappy by day,' replied a writer.—'Wot'll I do with this burglar alarm, Bill; take it along?' asks burglar number one. Second burglar: 'Yes; slip it in the bag; we can get something for it.'—'I have called on the recommendation of a friend,' said a gentleman, 'to have my portrait painted. But I should like to know if you can take me in my fur coat?' 'Oh, certainly,' replied the artist. 'Fact is, you know, I am an animal painter.'

Irony has a good share in women's spiteful little speeches about one another. These remarks were exchanged between two friends: 'Do you know that little Mrs B—— pretends to be a collector of antiquities? You don't believe she really has any, do you?'—'Oh yes; her certificate of birth, to begin with,' was the ironical remark.

Ungallant comments upon the fair sex furnish many ironical items. As the majority of humor-

ous press-writers are, as A. Ward would say, of the male persuasion, it gives them daily opportunities of making sly hits of this description without much chance of retaliation. A writer has noticed that nothing makes a woman laugh so much as a new set of teeth. Six women can talk all at once and get along first-rate, and no two men can do that. A woman can throw a stone with a curve that would be a fortune to a bowl-player. Woman's greatest glory is her hair, and she should be very economical of it, says a cynic, when she is cooking. But the women do not always come off second best. A lady stood hanging on to the strap of a tramcar, when a workman in the far corner arose and politely offered her his seat. 'I thank you,' she said in a very sweet tone; 'but I dislike to deprive the only gentleman in the car of his seat.'

The troubles of matrimony are a never-failing subject for the fellow of infinite jest who exercises his wit in the following fashion. 'Joy never kills,' remarked Dobbin's mother-in-law to him the other morning. 'Possibly not,' he replied quietly; 'but please don't experiment on me by going elsewhere to live.'—When you see a couple in the street, if the man carries the bundles, they are engaged; if the woman carries the bundles, they are married.

THE CIVILISED BURMAN.

THE native inhabitants of the larger Burmese towns include amongst their number a considerable proportion of what, in contradistinction to the more ignorant jungle-folk, may be called 'civilised' Burmans, whose intercourse with Europeans naturally does much towards shaping the destinies of the rising generation. An English education is the stepping-stone to advancement in that country, as it is in all our dependencies. No one is more alive to this than the ambitious young Burman, who therefore regards his entry at an English school and introduction to 'A B C' as the first rung of the ladder by which he is to climb to success. Success to him does not imply wealth, for he seems not to appreciate the value of money, as do other eastern races. If a trader makes a big *coup* over a transaction in timber or paddy, no matter how much elaborate care and thought have been bestowed on the business to bring it to an issue, he spends the profits as soon as they come into his hands, without an idea of laying them up for the proverbial rainy-day. He builds a monastery or pagoda, or adds another to the innumerable rest-houses to be found upon every roadside in Burma. Such application of his means ensures him the respect of his friends in this world, and an easy conscience wherewith to start upon his journey to the next.

Vanity is the keynote to the Burmese character, and a fond parent despatches his son to the care of a school in Rangoon, or even to a college in Calcutta, reminding him of the 'government situation' which is the bright horizon to his career at school. To the youthful Burmese mind government employ conveys a vague meaning of authority and power; and without any idea of the special department of state in which he would prefer to exercise his talents, he embarks on the voyage of life, having before him a silver but

misty cloud whose shades veil appointments not extravagantly paid, but which guarantee to the holder the deference and obsequious civility of all around him.

Prior to his admission to the English school, he has received at the Phoongyee's hands the customary teaching in his mother-tongue. Once settled down, the boy leads much the same existence as a lad at one of our own large middle-class schools. He learns his lessons, or leaves them unlearned to make acquaintance with the cane; gets into scrapes in class and out of class; helps himself to the neighbours' mangoes, and learns to play football. How he does the latter with his bare feet would astonish a Rugbeian. Sometimes he does wear boots, but they clog his movements, and unless he is playing with English or Eurasian boys, he soon discards them, and punishes the leather unflinchingly with his upturned toes. I have never been able to discover what 'rules' they play in Burma. They resemble those of Eton more than any others, with the marked difference, that it appears quite allowable to pick up the ball by the lace and give any opponent within reach a whack over the head with it.

The student remains at school for five or six years, and emerges from its gates with a good sound knowledge of English, reading, writing, and arithmetic. If he does not intend to try the examinations which would decide his fitness for government service, his tutor supplies him with recommendations to assist him in finding the employment his accomplishments qualify him to seek in business or trade.

Perhaps his friends have 'interest,' and are able to get him some subordinate post in the public service which fulfils the object of his ambition without entailing the toils of competitive test for a higher appointment. But whether he becomes a government official through influence or his own merits does not affect the great reality, that he is thenceforth a social centre in his own small world. He can assume those airs of superiority the conceited Burman so loves to wear, accepting with gracious condescension the respectful flattery of his neighbours. He is expected to pose as a magnate, and it is not his nature to disappoint his friends in this. What a grand thing it is, to be sure! To sit in an English chair under a punkah—it looks well to have a punkah irrespective of the state of the thermometer—and listen with dignified attention to the reports of subordinates, who kneel round in ostentatious humility with carefully hidden feet. To receive in their presence big official-looking envelopes from the *chuprassies*, whose coloured belts and brasses like oval door-plates proclaim the source of their important errands. To walk home through the streets in English shoes and socks, in which he is painfully cramped and awkward, whilst the children make way for him, and their parents stand hoping for the distinction his smile of recognition will confer. No wonder the Burman's earthly paradise is officialdom. He is intimate with the English Assistant-commissioner; when the Deputy-commissioner of the district makes his periodical visit, the native official is by virtue of his position the mouthpiece and responsible spokesman of his neighbours. For him, too, there is the chance of presentation

to the Lord Chief-commissioner on some great occasion at Rangoon Government House, when, dressed in the whitest of cotton jackets and the stiffest of gaudy silk *putsoes*, he will be commended by the chief of the province as that trustworthy and deserving officer, the Myooke of Kyouchoungyee, or some other jungle-place with a name as musical as it is unknown. This presentation, taking place as it does before all the English ladies and gentlemen, as well as his fellow-officials, is an event to be remembered and talked about; and the simple village folk are awed by the flight to which their distinguished friend has flown.

There is, moreover, another possibility before the diligent native officer—far away, indeed, and so beautiful that he can hardly think of it save as a dream—a Decoration! He knows at least one Burmese official who received the great English title, 'Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire.' True, he is not very clear what it means; but is there not a wonderful star and ribbon to explain it? It is a daring hope for him to entertain, but still there is no knowing what may happen in these stirring times, and perhaps some day, when he is an old man himself, he may come in for a title too. Only last Queen's birthday the Decoration Angel winged its lustrous way over the province, where expectant men held their breath and watched its course with uplifted eyes. Grand and sonorous were some of the names bestowed upon the elect in Mandalay. There are glad beings in the Golden City who can write themselves 'Bearers of golden swords' and 'Bearers of silver swords.' Is not this something to have lived for? Has not the man who crowns his labours with such a halo triumphed indeed?

The vast majority of the crowds of youths who pass through the English schools are fain to content themselves with clerkships in the Secretariat, Departmental offices, or the courts. Failing these, they obtain situations in merchants' offices, which, though well paid, do not hold out the dazzling promises the more coveted career owes its chief attraction to.

The lad who leaves school at the age of nineteen or twenty, having neither 'interest' nor inclination for further study, makes up his mind to be a clerk, and 'goes into business.' He begins as a volunteer, and serves for a time without salary, proving himself worthy of engagement as a regular clerk. A trustworthy useful man may earn as much as two hundred or two hundred and fifty rupees a month, so the beginner does not grudge the time he is called upon to give without remuneration at first. During his probation he learns business habits, punctuality, and practises his handwriting. He takes out the pay he does not get, in ink and stationery, of which he consumes vast quantities in experimental calligraphy. From his own point of view, so far as we have been able to judge, his duties chiefly are: to look busy whether he is occupied or not; to learn the art of keeping his cheroot alight without detection when a superior visits his desk; to watch the older *kiranies* (clerks), and be prompt in leaving the office at five o'clock. He varies these rudimentary labours by copying the letters and papers his fellow-clerks obligingly place at his disposal when

inclined for a little rest or quiet recreation themselves.

After five or six months, you will find one morning on your table a laboriously constructed envelope of imposing size, addressed to you as 'Manager' or 'Superintendent' of the firm you serve. This contains a petition from the volunteer couched in the orthodox style. It represents with what diligence he has toiled in your honour's office without pay; dwells on the difficulty he finds in maintaining his wife and little children upon nothing at all; points out the advantages the retention of his services must confer upon you, not him; and concludes with a confused dual prayer for your honour's eternal good health and a salary of, say, fifty rupees per month.

The writer, you may be sure, is waiting outside, engaged in eager telegraphic communication with the punkah-puller, who, from his coign of vantage in front of you, is able to notify when the missive receives attention. The head-clerk is summoned, and gives evidence regarding the progress and talents of the petitioner: his opinion on the whole is favourable, so you call him in and offer him an 'agreement' for two years on a salary of twenty rupees a month, qualified by power to dismiss him if necessary. The boy clasps his hands and turns beseechingly to the head-clerk; but he has been through it all too often, and judiciously looks the other way. Twenty rupees a month! He hastily presses on your memory that he has 'a wife and little children.' 'If you please, sir,' he begins; but language fails him; and you take the opportunity of reminding him kindly but firmly that you can only pay him what his services are worth, irrespective of the size of a family, which at his age he has no business to possess at all. The argument is lost upon him, and he retires, thoughtfully repeating to himself the terms he has been offered, to report the result of his petition and interview to his friends outside. A long and earnest debate is usually terminated by his decision to accept the offer; and he returns to announce the fact to you, which he does with a suspicion of forgiving reproach. Thereafter, he returns to his desk, and having procured a new pen, devotes the remainder of the day to transcribing his 'agreement' from a stereotyped form, of the meaning of which he has but the vaguest conception.

An intelligent Burman makes an excellent clerk if he is carefully managed. He is fairly accurate, very neat, and sometimes methodical. If left to himself, he goes on his way in plodding contentment, and so long as he has plenty to do and his task is not above his capacity, he wants little attention from those over him. The older men look after the juniors, and generally set an example of steadiness and good behaviour. He is very conservative, and will remain with his employers until age and decrepitude compel him to retire, if his salary, regarding which he is not extremely exacting, is enough to keep him in comfort. He cannot, however, endure harshness or scoldings; and if the youthful *kiranies* doings bring them frequently upon him, he will one day be missing from his place, whilst a fellow-clerk brings the simple explanation that 'he does not wish to come any more.' Such a resignation, we

may observe, is generally sent in on the day following that upon which his month's wages have been paid.

The Burman marries very early in life; he regards matrimony as a positive duty, to be entered upon as soon as he has settled employment, if, indeed, he has not taken a wife before then. The pair reside with the parents of the bride for a year or two after marriage, whether the husband is earning a livelihood or not. The wife continues to keep her fruit or sweet-stuff stall in the bazaar, but more for occupation than profit; though she is a remarkably good hand at driving a bargain with a stingy customer. The Burmese woman possesses a firm will and an excellent temper, and when the time comes for a young couple to set up an establishment of its own, she makes a model housekeeper. Not until then does she abandon the wicker stool and big brass tray which formed the stall and held the stock-in-trade she used to carry to the bazaar every morning. Now, she is above that sort of thing; but her instincts are still commercial, so she opens a shop and fills it with the wonderful collection of miscellanies in which the small Burmese trader generally deals. Here she sits all day, smoking, chatting with the neighbours, petting the children, and rolling cheroots for sale.

The variety of races which form the population of the seaport towns is a curious tribute to the thrift of the country. Europeans of every nation, Americans, Chinese, Armenians, Negroes, and representatives of almost every Indian people between the Himalayas and Ceylon, find a home there; and the children of the soil dwell amongst them on the best of good terms with all. The Chinaman, who prospers there even better than he seems to do everywhere else, is glad to get a Burmese wife. Her ways appeal to his business-like nature; and though he will work twenty hours out of the twenty-four, seven days in the week, 'for his own hand,' it is convenient to have a partner whom he can trust to do as well as he could himself, when he wants a rest. The boys of such a pair are educated and dressed as Chinamen, and the girls as Burmese!

The European who settles in the country often takes a daughter of the land as the wife of his bosom; so does the Armenian. So would the native of India, if he found favour in the ladies' sight. The wealthier Suratis do find such favour sometimes; but the native has ever in his mind's eye the home of his youth, to which he will retire to pass the evening of his life, and the Burmese girl will not leave her country.

Education does little to lead the Burman astray in matters connected with dress, and the utmost alteration he indulges in is the substitution of shoes and stockings for sandals. A recent edict permits wearers of the former to retain them in court, &c., and some of the younger officials take advantage of the rule.

By nature enterprising in gastronomical matters, education and opportunity encourage the Burman to explore the contents of those inviting 'tins' which are within the reach of every one who lives in town. The man who can master the 'Directions for Use' might be fairly expected to exercise some little discretion in applying them. But the Burman passes them by, and devours preserved oysters, jam, and Swiss milk in astonishing quantities

with a placid disregard of possible results which is entirely his own. Ice is another product of civilisation which he appreciates highly, and he is a staunch supporter of the factories which supply this necessary. Ask one of your clerks if his distorted visage argues a broken lower jaw, and he will dive head first under his desk, reappearing with the smiling explanation, 'Only ice, sir,' to disabuse your mind of the impression that you have caught him chewing the objectionable betel-nut in the office.

Although the inhabitant of the town loses much of his simplicity, he retains all his childishness. He affects to despise the country-people—'sons of the jungle,' to translate his own term literally; but nevertheless he cannot lay claim to the more manly qualities which gain the district villagers the better opinion of Europeans.

The unconquerable indolence of the Burman disqualifies him for competition with the foreigners, who monopolise all but the interior trade of the country. He has reaped less advantage from civilisation than he ought to have done, and seems quite content to be elbowed aside by strangers so long as his personal comfort is not interfered with. Like one of his own sacred images, he sits with idle hands whilst the dogs and crows scramble for the offerings a bountiful nature has placed before him. Happy in the present, for which he wants little, and careless of the future, which may be trusted to provide for itself, the Burman finds more enjoyment in life than those who pass their existence in a breathless race for the wealth he does not care to contend for; but as his acme of happiness is to be perfectly idle, it is obvious that in a country where famine is unknown and charity is inculcated as the noblest of virtues, it is not difficult to satisfy him.

'TOO LATE.'

'THERE was nothing in the story!'

Thus the people said;

But they load her name with glory,

Now that she is dead!

'Were the verses worth the reading?'

Hush! she wrote for bread.

Every line seems full of pleading,

Now that she is dead!

Weary fingers, temples throbbing,

Heart that weighed as lead,

Eyelids used to slumber-robbing,

Ah! and now she's dead!

O ye people, how your scorning

Filled her soul with dread!

'Let me sleep,' she moaned; and morning

Came, and found her dead!

Kindly judge, then, those who, living,

In her footsteps tread.

Praises, too late in the giving,

Come but to the dead!

FLORENCE SIMSON.

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THE TREATMENT OF SERVANTS.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

THE servants of a good, liberal, well-conducted, middle-class house, where the mistress is her own housekeeper, fare well and have no cause of complaint. They have good wages and substantial allowances, are not overworked, and are humanely considered. Their flesh and blood is not held to be of a different 'paste' from the flesh and blood of their employers, and the arrangements of life are the same, differing only in the proportion of their parts. These servants have their times of freedom and their holidays, and are allowed both 'followers' and friends. A cup of tea to an acquaintance on her afternoon or Sunday out is as much part of the régime in the kitchen as it is at five o'clock in the drawing-room; and no one grudges what no one misses. The young man, if respectable and with honourable intentions, is countenanced even to the length of a Sunday supper; and a mistress of this sweet womanly kind interests herself in the engagement. Two or three times a year theatre tickets find their way to the trim-waisted world below stairs, and the maids are sent off in a cab which the authorities hire and pay for. To all the great exhibitions, too, they are suffered to go with peace and a free mind; and if, held by their duties which they must not and do not wish to neglect, they are not on the crest of the wave of pleasure and amusement, like the fine ladies who have nothing to do but enjoy themselves—they are not left stranded in a stagnant little back-water of dullness, where they consume valuable time in fruitless longing and the mental disturbance resulting. In a word, they are treated as part of the family, all the same as the young ladies and the young gentlemen home for their holidays, and they are not held as fit only for cinder-siftings and black beetles. Hence they are happy, and for the most part, almost invariably indeed, well conducted. They know that they have the 'best pitch in

the market-place,' and are anxious not to lose their privileges by their own faults or follies. It is just that happy mixture of freedom and discipline, work and play, kindness and authority, which makes the best happiness of a home; and such a house as this is the blue ribbon of service and never wants for candidates of the first class.

Contrast such a life as this with the restrictions and leaden dullness of a house where the servants are treated as distinctly 'inferiors'—creatures without rights, and denied privileges—animated machines for doing the work all the same as if they were humanised brooms and brushes, intelligent pots and pans. Everything which lifts them out of that level is a matter for ridicule, animadversion or rebuke. The love of finery, which is integral to the female sex from the lady with her beads to the queen with her crown, is a fault when exhibited by a maid in such a house as this. The love of children, the desire to possess a home of her own, a 'treacherous inclination' for a good-looking lad likely to make a pleasant husband, all of which go with the sex, are so many proofs of supreme folly or of latent iniquity. She is a servant born to scrub and brush, attend on her betters, to accept such portion as is meted out to her at life's great feast with patience and gratitude, and all endeavours after independence are to be sternly regarded and severely repressed. Then the mistress breaks forth into loud self-pity and indiscriminate condemnation of the whole class, when human nature asserts itself, as it often does in these houses; when quarrels and flighty tempers interrupt the smooth working of the machine; when the natural instincts so cruelly compressed, which would have been satisfied with a little wholesome play, flow over into vice, perhaps crime; when things are done in the dark which would never have been done in the light; and when cataclysms and catastrophes convulse the family from A to Z—all for the want of understanding that human nature is a pretty constant quantity, and that it is not to be changed by a print frock or velvet gown.

Less worthily treated than even these domestic prisoners are the under-servants in large mansions where the mistress has—perhaps by necessity—delegated her authority, and the upper servant of each denomination is the master or the mistress of his or her respective subordinates. In these underground worlds goes on an enormous amount of tyranny which never sees the light, save such as is shed in hospitals, the gin-shop, or the receiving-houses by the river-side. These under-servants of rich men's houses fail by the hundred. They people the hospitals and the streets, and are the great sources of illegitimate children. That same human nature which here again is disregarded, has the trick of avenging itself in one way or the other, and those who know the domestic 'underneath of the cards' know this fact by heart. During the season, when balls and dinners are on hand, the under-servants are continually kept up to four and five in the morning—'redding-up' after the turmoil of festivity is over. As they are generally young girls and boys who have not come to their full strength but are still growing, and for whom, therefore, nature demands long hours of sleep, we can easily imagine the infinite mischief done to them by the harsh conditions of their lives. They are the veritable helots of our homes—the unhelped and unobserved slaves of our civilisation. When they go down those area steps they go into the very jaws of death; and lost souls as well as ruined bodies are the tax we pay for our domestic grandeur. Very few know anything at all of this side of service, and there is no external organisation to regulate its terms. Compared with the numbers employed, there is very little trades-unionism among servants, and the half-secret societies of which we once heard so many exaggerations seem to have vanished into space—if, indeed, they ever existed. Anyway, domestic servants, especially these young underlings, are the least protected section of the community; and if they cannot help themselves, there is no one else who can.

In hotels, again, and the large Mansions now so popular, the women-servants are hardly dealt by. Men can make better terms for themselves. The women, however, are generally badly fed, overworked, and under-paid, and for the most part scurvily lodged. But they pick up extra vails, and have less personal overlooking and a longer tether than in private houses. Hence, in spite of the scanty food, which they have to supplement out of their own purses, in spite, too, of the chance of a sudden and unjust dismissal because the manager is savage or the housekeeper cross, they are always to be had—and the sea is never emptied of its fish. The ease with which they can be replaced adds to the carelessness with which they are held; and the overstocked state of the labour market hardens the hearts of the purchasers of labour.

Lower even than these—lower than the helots of fine mansions—in fact lowest of all in the scale, is the lodging-house slavey, that poor begrimed and desolate beast of burden who has of humanity but the features and the name. An apprentice on board a merchantman under a brutal captain may be worse treated than this miserable derelict of society. But save this possible parallel, the lodging-house slavey stands supreme for wretchedness of condition. Worked beyond her strength and fed below her needs, this poor young girl has

not one ray of sunshine in her gloomy life, one pleasure that she can call her own, one right, one privilege, one breath of independence. Her parents are too poor and too far off to help; but probably she has none at all. The round of wrong began with her mother, to whom board and lodging for her unfathered child was too valuable a help to be let slip. Hence, her mistress can do as she likes with her outside the broad legal line of positive bodily injury. She can keep her out of bed to all hours of the night, and make her get up at unearthly hours in the morning. She can deny her all pleasure, all relaxation, all personal pride in dress, and even the cleanliness demanded by civilisation. She can feed her on improper food, and give her insufficient rations even of that. She can make her life a burden to her; and she often does; so that her poor little friendless slave, too young or too timid to go to the bad, ends her life and her woes together by a draught of vermin-killer or a plunge into the swift rolling river.

The lodgers may, if they will, follow the landlady's suit. The decayed gentlewoman in the parlour, who expects to be treated with the attention she was accustomed to receive when her papa the Major was alive and she broke the hearts of subalterns by the dozen; the irascible old bachelor in the drawing-room, with a temper always on fire between rheumatism and suppressed gout—these two alone would try the nerves of a rhinoceros and the strength of a horse. But these two are only alternative blisters to the permanent smart of the mistress. To be sure there may come moments of fearful joy, bound to a sorrowful ending, with the young gentlemen in the single rooms above. But these moments are made difficult, partly by the missis's unsleeping vigilance and partly by her own smutty face and unappetising flesh. The life of the lodging-house slavey is one of unmitigated torture; and there was many a dusky field-hand, singing while hoeing in the cotton plantation, for whose freedom so much blood was shed and so much treasure spent, whose lines had fallen in golden places compared with those of the uncertificated slave among ourselves.

Less brutally treated, but oppressed with what a terrible monotony of negative misery!—the one young servant of the starched old maid or widow of limited income appeals to the sympathies of all who know her. Not so cruelly overdriven, not so sharply goaded and lashed as the lodging-house slavey, this little maid-of-all-work to a prim elderly lady to whom sixpences are coins of value, is even more tightly held than her more degraded sister. Never suffered to go out save at the heels of her mistress, she has no chance of making acquaintances dangerous or consoling. Watched over the parlour-blind, she cannot exchange a word and scarce a look with the baker's boy or the grocer's young man. All the instincts of love and pleasure, natural to her age, are suppressed with a hand of iron; and fifty measures out to seventeen its apportionment of gladness on the lines proper to itself. In one thing, however, the little maid-of-all-work is better than the slavey—she is taught to be clean. Her mistress in season and out of season insists on the spotless purity of flesh and garments, and a smudged face or a rent apron ranks as a moral crime. Some-

times the little maid plucks up enough courage to give notice and find another situation. Sometimes she stays on and on, the weight on her head growing with time, and the heaviness of her soul becoming chronic. Her desire for movement, change, love, pleasure, fades into the dull acceptance of her fate; and while still a mere girl, she becomes as old as her mistress. The life she does not know she has learned to fear; and when her prim employer dies, she leaves behind her a premature fossil, a spiritual descendant inheriting all her own grim characteristics. Then is she a terror to evil-doers on her own account; and evil-doers are as many as there are of the thoughtless, merry, light-hearted young. But for the most part she herself dies early, like buds damped off before they open. Her life has been without Hope to help her on; and life without Hope is the world without the sun.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXX.

SNELLING had plenty of time for thinking as he stood bridle in hand and watched the house burning. He made no doubt whatever, when he saw young John standing there unharmed, that the burning of the house was a chastisement and warning direct from Providence. That was at first and whilst the shock was new. But Isaiah gave another current to his thoughts by a mere phrase. 'You'll be glad you was insured now,' he said. 'You fought agen me pretty hard when I wanted you to do it.'

Why should Providence deal in chastisements which fell upon the wrong shoulders? It would be the insurance office which suffered, and not he. The only things which the insurance could not and would not have covered had been rescued by Isaiah. Providence was on his side rather than against him.

'Who give you the right to use that lamp, Mr John?' he asked.

'Nobody, sir,' the boy answered; 'I found it in the lumber-room.'

'Well,' said Snelling, pointing with his riding-whip towards the fire, 'that's what comes of a lad acting without his elder's knowledge. Thee'st burned thee and myself out of house and home, my lad.'

'I can put you up for the night, Mr Snelling,' said Isaiah; 'and I shall be glad to do it.'

'Very well, Isaiah,' he answered. 'After this night's work, there should be nothing but goodwill on my side. I'll say "Yes" to your offer, and be thankful for it.'

'My horses'll be catching cold,' said Isaiah. '—Tumble up into the brake, Master John.—There's nothing there to stop and look at, gaffer. Come along.'

Snelling put his foot into the stirrup and looked across his horse at the still burning house, whilst Isaiah put the rescued books and the cash and deed boxes into the brake. He had fallen into a brown-study when a new call aroused him, and he swung himself slowly into the saddle. Two or three of the yokels offered him a sympathetic 'Good-night, sir,' as he rode away.

'Good-night, my lads—good-night, and thank you kindly,' he answered as he rode away. He knew that he was acting solidly and as became a man.

Mrs Winter stared at the arrivals, and was by no means disposed to receive Snelling graciously. Even when she heard the news, she was chill and prim with him, remembering the quarrel between him and her lord and master.

'If you'll take a seat here, gaffer,' said Isaiah, 'me and the missis'll see about house-room.—Come along, missis, and bustle up a bit.'

'I'm a Christian woman, Isaiah,' said Mrs Winter, pausing at the foot of the stairs outside, 'and if he was poverty-struck and couldn't afford to pay for a lodgin', I could find it in my heart to give him shelter. But it's no business o' yours to be fetching your enemy into your own house.'

'I've noticed this twenty year back,' returned Isaiah, 'that when you're going to say anything nasty you start with bein' a Christian woman. Now, never you mind what sort of a woman you be, but just remember that the man's in trouble. This ain't the first facer he's had to-day. He's come on live sand in the shaft he's sinkin', and that'll be a heavy loss to him, let alone the disappointment.—Just you put a bright face on it, missis.'

'You're too good for this world, Isaiah!' his wife made answer; 'you'd let anybody put on you.'

'Not much, I wouldn't,' Isaiah returned; 'and when you see me being put on, it'll be time enough to tell me.'

With the assistance of the serving-maid they got ready the guest-chamber, which had never yet been slept in and was of a ghastly newness. There was a great funeral emblem of a bed, with French-polished pillars and French-polished foot-board, and heavy sombre curtains which closed it in all round. The rest of the furniture was in keeping with this gloomy catafalque, and the whole chamber was as provocative of cheerful fancies as a family vault. But when a great fire had been lit upon the hearth and candles set upon the chimney-piece, it wore an aspect something less gloomy, and Snelling being inducted into it when all was ready, nodded approval of it.

'By the time you've had a wash,' said Isaiah, 'supper will be ready. You'll find your way down again.'

At table, Mrs Winter stood to wait upon him as of old, but he refused this flatly. 'I'll take neither bite nor sup in the house till you sit down, Mrs Winter.'

She took her seat, not without pride at meeting her old master on equal terms, and was glad that Madame Vigne's visit had given her an opportunity of airing the new black silk. Mr Snelling might, if he liked, think that she wore it regularly; and for the matter of that, Isaiah could have borne it if she had chosen to be extravagant.

Little was said during the meal; and when, after it, Snelling had smoked his nightly pipe and drunk his glass of whisky-and-water, he asked for the rescued books and carried them up-stairs. Then he sat down beside the guest-room fire, and drawing the two candles together,

began to study his accounts. 'That's lucky,' he said. 'Three hundred and twenty against Dixon. I shouldn't have thought it was more than a couple of hundred.—Why, there's Beasley again. Six hundred. I should never have had the face to tell him it was more than three, unless I'd had the book to back me. My patience! here's Ready. I should ha' been forty or fifty out on that.' He went over page after page, tracing the lines with a heavy forefinger as he read. By-and-by he took out a pencil and began to figure on the back of an old envelope. 'If Isaiah hadn't saved the books, I should ha' been two or three thousand pounds out of pocket,' he mused. 'He's a high-couraged chap is Isaiah. I doubt if I should ha' had the heart to face that fire myself. There's a servant for a man to have thrown over! The little chap's worth his weight in gold. If it hadn't been for the lad, I should never have lost him.'

The day's long waiting, with the crushing loss and disappointment at the end of it, the episode of the fire, his guilty hope, and its failure of fulfilment, all weighed heavily upon him, and bore his spirit down into a sort of dull meekness. His hatred and his egotism alike seemed dead.

He burned the scrap of paper on which he had made his calculations, and stowed away the books beneath his pillow. Then, more than half mechanically, he thrust the window curtains aside and drew up the blind to look upon the outer night. He had not known in what direction he was turned until the glowing mass of the ruined house half a mile away met his gaze. It looked less distant than it really was, seen through the dense darkness; and a bare winter tree or two, silhouetted against its brightness, gave it an aspect infinitely mournful and dreary to his fancy. Now and again a flame played up from the red smouldering pile, and brought hidden things fantastically to light.

He had never been aware of any affection for the place; but it came to his mind now that his mother had been born within its walls and had spent her girlhood there. That touch of memory brought a strange heaviness to his heart. Things were not going well with him. He doubted if he were doing well with himself, and he thought simply that his mother would have been sorry to have known him as he was, with his foiled purposes, and all these disasters about him, and the sense of estrangement and loneliness which oppressed him.

He drew down the blind again, closed the curtains, and undressed for the night. Sleep had always been averse to him in a strange room, and the events of the day had been unusually disturbing. He tossed and tumbled in the close gloom of the enfolding hangings, until at last he could bear their confinement no longer. He got out of bed and drew the curtains close to the poles, to admit the light of the fire, and having done this, went striding up and down the room. Isaiah had left a nightshirt for him, which reached no lower on his big frame than the kilt of a Highlander, and every time he passed the great mahogany wardrobe, he caught a grotesque reflection of himself in the mirror which fronted it, striding bare-legged in the semi-darkness. He took vigorous exercise in this way for half an hour, striving to banish thought,

and finally plunged into bed again. There was still no hope of sleep for him; and his glance wandered about the room until it lighted on a cornice, the harmless bravura plaster scrolls of which somehow, in their own murky corner, assumed the semblance of a death's-head with eyes in it. The thing had a strange likeness to his nephew John, and he lay and stared at it like a man fascinated. We are all cowards in the dim midnight of our thoughts, and there is something perpetually at the elbow of the bravest man alive which may at any moment overwhelm him with an unspeakable fear. Had the fire been placed this way or that by the distance of a yard, the harmless plaster scrolls could have worn no such aspect as they owned. The man knew that; but the live, staring, horrible, accusing eyes—John's eyes—dwelt on him with an insupportable appeal. They seemed to search him to the marrow, and there was a something denouncing in them, a promise to speak his secret to the world. His soul lay bare to the mystic eyes which light and shadow had created in that corner, and he sweated and trembled in a waking nightmare. Providence for him? Providence on his side? In what had he prospered since that demoniac thought had taken hold of him? He was so much poorer in this last two years that another eight or ten spent in the like manner would ruin him and leave him a pauper. He was isolated from the world; and if he had known the lines, they would have seemed apt to him: 'There is no creature loves me, and when I die no soul will pity me.'

He lay shaking in a tragic pity of himself. He would break with this lust of wealth, this fiend of avarice which had tempted him. He would leave the lad alone, and covet that which was his no longer. The watch under his pillow ticked a furious warning, the gloomier shadows hid denouncing faces, the hum of the quiet night was thick with threatening whispers. A veil, which had never fallen before, seemed drawn aside, and the supernatural unknown was everywhere. He dreaded lest it should grow tangible to touch and visible to sight, and it was the more horrible that it did neither.

He slept at last, and even in the act of falling to sleep, when he could not resist for weariness, he had a horror of his dreams. No dreams came; but in the cold gray light of the winter morning he felt that he dared not pass another night in that chamber.

By the morning light at the breakfast table, Isaiah appeared a little smoke-begrimed and singed. 'I knowed nothing about it at the time,' said Isaiah; 'but I've lost half a whisker, and my cheek's that raw I haven't got the pluck to rub the grime off of it. I reckon the hair'll grow again, and if it don't, I must trim the other to suit it.'

'You've ruined your new black broadcloth overcoat,' said his wife; 'you'll niver be able to put it on your back again; and if Mr Snelling's the man I've always took him for, he'll do no less than pay for it.'

'My blessid!' said Isaiah. 'Better is a dinner of herbs than to dwell with a contentious woman on the house-tops. Why, missis, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.'

If Snelling had been a sensitive man with

regard to other people's feelings, this small passage-of-arms might have made him reluctant to announce his intention of leaving the house. As it was it helped him. 'Me and Isaiah will have a settling-up, Mrs Winter,' he said quietly. 'Never you fear about that. At the same time, mum, it was my business to find that out and not yours to tell me. You might have trusted me to do it. There's been a good many things said agen me of late; but nobody till now has ventur'd to tell me as I didn't pay my way.'

The pair of steppers legitimately exhausted Isaiah's accommodation; but he had contrived somehow or other to stable Snelling's horse; and when his old employer expressed a wish that it should be brought round to the door, he himself saw that that service was performed. Before mounting, Snelling shook hands with him.

'Your missis,' he said, 'was always a bit of a tartar in a quiet way, and as long as her lives her'll never forgive me for offering you the bag. After last night, you and me, I tek it, are likely to be friends. I must ride away and get a thing or two to keep myself decent; and in the meantime I shall put up at the *Barfield Arms*.'

'As you like, gaffer,' returned Isaiah, and went within doors to deliver his mind to Mrs Winter.

Snelling's way to the *Barfield Arms* led him naturally past the ruins of his house. There was quite a crowd about the gateway, and Farmer Shorthouse was conspicuous there in a tall dog-cart, with Cecilia by his side. The rejected lover had never spoken a word to the girl since the night when he had overheard her conference with her father. She held out her hand to him now with a sympathetic look; and when he leaned over in his saddle to take it in his own, she gave him a warm and friendly pressure.

'Oh, Mr Snelling,' she said, 'I am so sorry for you! The house your mother was born in! Father has been telling me. Such a beautiful old place too. I know that you must feel it deeply.' She had never been so kind to him in her life, and her voice and face and the pressure of her hand awoke a new hope in him. She might not be indifferent to him, after all. Perhaps it had been no more than the foolish tyranny of his own manner when he had been excited by finding her with Jousserau which had frightened her away from him. If his proposal had seemed wholly impossible in her sight, she would never have taken a fortnight to consider her answer. On the very day on which her refusal came, her father had been confident of her consent. And since with him to ask and not to have was the surest way to longing, he was hotly in love with her by this time.

'It's been a bit of a blow,' he answered; 'I don't deny it.' He was bent on showing himself in a favourable light, and her reminder of his mother helped him to remember his last night's thoughts. 'The money loss is covered; but there's things gone there'—pointing to the ruins—'that no money can buy back again. As you say, Miss Shorthouse, my mother was born and lived up in them old walls. I thought of that last night, and it give me a sore heart, I promise you.—Just you think, Shorthouse,' he added, addressing the farmer, 'how one man may be mistook in regard of another. There was Isaiah Winter, whom I gave the sack to, believing him to be my enemy,

and it's him that fetches my books and deeds and cash-box out of the fire at the risk of his own life. He saved me two or three thousand pound by that—maybe more. He might ha' let 'em burn, and never have been ill thought on. I slept in his house last night, and yet it's only like yesterday that we parted ill friends.'

'Well,' cried the farmer, 'I'm glad you've come to be of the old mind again. Isaiah's a good sort, always was, and ever will be.—But Bob, old lad, thou'lt hardly have a place to eat thy Christmas dinner in. Come and tek it along with me. You've never put foot across the threshold sence?'

Cecilia's warning hand restrained him from completing the sentence. Snelling looked at her, wondering if she would confirm the invitation.

'Pray, come, Mr Snelling,' the girl said innocently; 'we shall be very glad to see you.'

'Well,' he answered, 'I will, and thank you.—There's my hand upon it.'

She gave him the same friendly pressure as before, not guessing what fancies her manner aroused in him. To her own thinking, the past was dead and buried, and she did not so much as dream of a revival of it. But Snelling rode on more than half triumphant. If his misfortunes had wakened kindness in her heart, they were easily to be borne, and even welcome. He had never expected to feel as he did about Cecilia. So long as he had felt certain about her, he had been indifferent; but when the certainty had been shifted to the other side and stood against him, it grew to be another matter. Thousands of men have discovered that middle age is the true time for the growth of a royal passion; Snelling made the discovery in his turn, and wondered at himself.

'I was never the man to be beaten,' he said as he rode on, invigorated by this new thrill of feeling, and enlivened throughout the whole of his burly and muscular frame by the keen winter air. 'I won't be beaten now. If she'll think better of it—and she looks as if she might—there's little I wouldn't do to get her. There's coal below that land of mine, I know, and if man can get at it, I'll do it. As for money, I'll find her enough for a titled lady; and as for men, if that's in question'—He squared his great shoulders exultingly and looked down at his massive limbs. 'That's an arm could take care of a woman,' he said to himself, stretching his right hand abroad. 'I'm none o' them whipper-snapper chaps as thin as a turkey's leg, as looks as if you could crack 'em like a stick o' sealing-wax. There's pith and substance in me; and if I cared to know my value, I daresay there's a many young woman as might ha' looked kindly on me.'

So, all things considered, he rode on in high feather; and once alighted at the *Barfield Arms*, ordered rooms there for a month to come, and beat the landlord's prices down in quite his old victorious manner. When his arrangements for his stay were completed, he sent a messenger in search of Mr Proctor; and that gentleman appearing in answer to his call in the course of the afternoon, he hailed him with a cheerful countenance. 'Look here,' he broke out; 'can't we circumvent that sand?'

'We can try,' said the cautious Scot. 'Ye don't want another sand-mine. There are surface

indications more or less; and if you wish it, I'll make a careful survey.'

'Yes,' said Snelling, 'I do wish it. I'm bad to beat; and I'm not agoing to see my neighbours get all the plums out of the pudding and me get nothing, if I can help it. You can get a plot of my land and my nephew's from Roland, the surveyor, and I'm game to make another try whenever you decide.'

'Well, Mr Snelling,' said the engineer, 'you're acting with courage, but I think ye're acting wisely. From what I've seen of the opening up of the district, I'm not inclined to think that the sandbed is a large one. I think on the north-west we're safe from it. We'll be farther away from facilities for cartage; but that will really matter very little. I'll have a good look at things, and let you know my opinion as soon as maybe.'

Snelling's heart was full of happy augury. In spite of failure and disaster, he had never felt so hopeful. A kind look, a kind word, a friendly pressure of the hand had done it all. If he won her, he would abandon his schemes against his nephew. With Cecilia's fortune in his hands, and the mineral wealth of his own land laid open, he would have enough. He would live at peace with mankind. He would be content with his own.

AN AMERICAN COMPANY PROMOTER.

COLONELS in America are 'about as plentiful as blackberries, and a little plentifuler.' Most of them, according to their own account, have fought, bled, and died for the Constitution. But Colonel Snyder followed a safer and a more remunerative profession than that of fighting his way to glory. He was a philanthropist—in other words, he was a Company Promoter, who travelled through America, England, France, and Belgium supplying a public want long felt—namely, successful undertakings for the investing public, by means of which the said investing public should be able to support themselves and their families with, or without, twenty-four hours of easy work per week, enjoy town residences and country places, drive through landscape and rural loveliness, and make excursions in yachts all their own. Colonel Snyder's profession was safe because he had been a lawyer, and 'rale smart at that:' it was remunerative because there are people who expect to buy a gold watch for fourpence-halfpenny and a Koh-noor for a shilling, and who snap up greedily shares in any Company where unscrupulous directors promise a return of twenty per cent. I am very fond of the people; but if Carlyle had written that English shareholders in American Companies were mostly fools, I should have agreed with him.

William J. Snyder was six feet high, and abnormally broad-shouldered, without being bulky or fleshy. He had no neck: his head, like that of Napoleon, seemed to have been set upon his shoulders. His carriage was military, and his manner easy, natural, and wholly unpretentious; it was the nonchalant air of a travelled man. Nature appeared to have designed him to take the lead wherever he might be, and he took it as gracefully as if it were his birthright, without

any appearance of self-assertion on his part, and as if unconsciously. Probably he had never felt that he was at any time in the presence of any one superior to himself. He had a thorough knowledge of human nature; and his success in Company promoting had made him 'richer'n heaven,' and given him a hearty contempt for almost every one except William J. Snyder.

'The Great Jumbo,' as I once heard Snyder called, was a promoter of Mining Companies (gold and silver), Water Companies, Hotel Companies, and Timber Companies. It was his boast that he could float a Company anywhere and to do anything. He was an artistic dissembler; he could put a smile upon his face were things going never so much against him, and would dismiss any troublesome shareholder with the idea that though the Company in which he was concerned was somewhat tardy in paying a dividend, yet the time would come when those who were largely interested in it would be millionaires. Everything comes to him who waits long enough. But no ordinary shareholder had ever been known to wait a sufficient length of time to receive a dividend which had been paid out of the earnings of one of Snyder's Companies. Yet Snyder was a favourite with those who knew him; and for the opinions of those with whom he did not come in contact of course he did not care. Strange that one man who makes a bargain and fulfils his part and makes others fulfil their part should be looked upon as 'hateful to gods and men;' whilst another who promises much and does nothing should be looked upon as one of the best fellows in the world! I am not one of those who think they are specially qualified to take care of the public; but it is to point out where the head of one of the great serpents that have entwined their folds about the business of the country is hidden that I purpose to give an account of the Great Jumbo and one of his schemes.

The Memorandum of Association of the Littellaria Waterworks, Milling, and Mining Company, Limited, set out (1) That the name of the Company should be the L. W. M. & M. Co. (2) The offices of the Company should be situate in England. (3) The objects for which the Company was established were: (a) To carry water from the Purple Mountains to Littellaria; (b) To mill ore from the mining claims which had been and might hereafter be acquired by the Company; (c) To develop and work the mining claims belonging to the said Company. (4) That the capital of the Company should be £250,000, divided into 250,000 shares of £1 each, and that any of the said shares, and new shares from time to time to be created, might from time to time be issued, &c. &c., subject to any conditions and provisions and generally on such terms as the Company might from time to time determine.

Last August I paid a visit to Littellaria, and saw the whole district over which the L. W. M. & M. Co.'s operations extend. Let me describe it. Littellaria is a mining camp in the interior of the State of —. There is nothing in the physical aspect of the country roundabout to hinder it from becoming a great city: it may grow in every direction. It will have nothing to fear from competition, for there is no important place within a hundred miles of it. It is bounded on the north by a huge scoria-covered mountain,

on the other side of which is a salt marsh. On every other side for a few hundred miles grows the sagebush, a little shrub knee-high, which is absolutely worthless except as a refuge for the rattlesnake and the chipmunk; no other kind of vegetation can thrive in the alkali dust of which the deserts of America are so largely composed. There is no doubt, therefore, that if Littellaria were peopled and cultivated it never could become an agricultural centre. To talk of draining would be superfluous, for every drop of water which comes into the place is carried thither through five-and-twenty miles of the L. W. M. & M. Co.'s piping. There being no trees to attract the rain, the rain never comes; at least, there was but a little shower in the month of August, and one of the miners told me they had not had so much as that for three months past, and 'that was a fact, right down sure, and no two ways about it.' Twelve years ago the neighbourhood was 'prospected;' silver was discovered at Egg-town, a few miles distant; a mining camp sprang up, and nearly two thousand miners swooped down upon the place. They knocked up huts, exhausted the mine, and decamped. A dilapidated wall and a pair of cowhide boots which will defy anything but the last great conflagration, are now the only relics of that once flourishing mining camp. Then silver was discovered at Littellaria, and Littellaria would assuredly ere now have shared the fate of Eggtown had it not been for the Great Jumbo.

Every one knows that ten years ago silver was at a very much higher price than it is now; and although in the palmy days of Littellaria, a purely American Company had extracted three million dollars' worth of silver from the huge hill which rears its great black head against the sky, the cost of living, labour, milling, and carriage was so prodigious that the undertaking was never remarkably remunerative. And when the price of silver fell, it became necessary to shut down most of the mines, especially as all the rich ore and that which was easy of extraction had been milled and forwarded to San Francisco. Such was the state of affairs when William J. Snyder appeared upon the scene. He acquired, probably for less than a hundred dollars each, a few mining claims. He marched with a surveyor from Littellaria to the Purple Mountains, stuck up a couple of sticks, sent a map with about twenty dollars to the government at Washington, and thereby secured the sole right of conveying water from the Purple Mountains to Littellaria. The inhabitants—miners, Indians, and Chinese—thought William J. Snyder had a bee in his bonnet. But Snyder went to England. For a few hundred pounds per annum, a few very respectable gentlemen consented to become directors. A prospectus was issued, and the public subscribed. Snyder was appointed general manager with a salary of six hundred pounds a year; and one of Snyder's friends was, of course, appointed chairman of the directors. It has been remarked that there are two kinds of people—cat-kind of people and mouse-kind of people—and that one kind was made to chew up the other kind. If this is so, there can be no doubt about the classification of Snyder and the British public.

With plenty of money at his command, Snyder returned to Littellaria. He imported labourers;

he set up a mill; and he successfully laid five-and-twenty miles of piping. Two hundred thousand gallons of water were poured into the place daily, a sufficient quantity to work the mill and to supply the three or four hundred inhabitants. Straightway, Littellaria was all alive; every one was confident that it must become a wonderful place; the people in England said so, Snyder said so, everybody told everybody else so, so there could be no doubt about it. English money built a house for the superintendent; English money paid for the labour. The Chinaman who used to sing,

Me no likee American man,
American man no likee me,

relented, and up went the sign of 'Bang Ho, washerman.' This was followed by that of 'Dock Kosin, artist in boots;' and Mike Rebowitz built an hotel. Mike was a good fellow, but his hotel was a curious structure. It was built of wood; the apartments were divided only by a papered-over canvas; and one night distinctly overhearing the conversation of two young ladies who occupied the next apartment to mine, I felt constrained to tap the wall, so that they might know that their privacy was not complete. The Indians, though fallen, still retained much of their dignity. They lived alone, coming only to the market for supplies. In a bird's-eye view which I took of the town, the well-beaten tracks from their huts show like threads. Dress, perhaps, more than fire-water had been their ruin. Summer and winter they wore the same heavy gay-coloured blankets. These occasionally became saturated with rain; they had no change; the consequence was that they were eaten up with rheumatics and all the ills which flesh is heir to.

But a sketch of Littellaria would be incomplete without a reference to its cemetery. There are four hundred inhabitants in the place; there are more than half as many in its graveyard. There are but few upwards of thirty years of age, and most of them died with their boots on, shot with the revolver. Such, I was told, is the history of all mining camps. It must be remembered that miners as a class are largely composed of men who have fled from justice, that they are often addicted to gambling, and that they are invariably suspicious of one another. Extravagant and open-hearted they may be, and are; but thinking little of their own lives, they think still less of the lives of others; and the 'boy' who walks into a saloon, takes a chair, puts his feet on the stove, and salutes the company with, 'Strangers, how are you? Tek a drink,' often ends by shooting or being shot. The revolver is a nuisance here; it is a curse in America.

Three months ago, the shareholders of the L. W. M. & M. Co. refused to supply any more money for carrying on the work at Littellaria. In spite of their general manager's assurance that there had been many worse investments than this offered to the public and snapped up greedily, it at length dawned upon their mind that it was hardly worth while to keep on spending a thousand pounds for every five hundred pounds worth of silver ore extracted, and that it was impolitic to pay high salaries to gentlemen for directing such a business. The mill was consequently shut down. The Great Jumbo talked largely of an

American Company wishing to buy out the English Company. The English Company gave him full permission to sell it, thinking that half a loaf was better than no bread. He has not yet done so, and in all human probability never will. It is much more likely that a few years hence some solitary prospector passing over the spot where Littellaria once had been will discover a Chinese wash-bowl, a rum bottle, and a hole in the ground, and mentally putting these things together, will soliloquise upon the rapidity with which all sublunary things come to an end, especially mining camps.

The inference to be drawn from this sketch is not that all investments in American Companies are bad, but that for a man who has no special knowledge of mining and who has never been to America, it will be wise to imitate the example of Charles Lamb and condemn them at a hazard. The best answer ever given to a Great Jumbo was that of the Scotchman who said: 'If the thing is sae fine, I canna see why ye dinna keep it at hame to enrich yersel.'

UNDER AN AFRIC SUN.

CHAPTER VI.

TOM DIGBY's right hand clenched, and as Helen clung to his left, she felt his nerves and muscles quiver with rage. A curious sensation of faintness came over her, and she struggled to be firm, as she told herself that she might prevent some terrible encounter.

But there was nothing of the kind, for Ramon came forward eagerly. 'Ah, there you are!' he exclaimed. 'Had a pleasant day?—Why, where are the others?'

'Did you not hear them?' said Digby roughly.

'I? No.—Oh yes; I heard Señor Redgrave call. I missed them as I came through the trees.—What a delightful evening! I passed three years in London, Mr Digby; but I never saw such an evening as this.' He chattered away, as he stepped to the other side of the mule, keeping on without waiting for the other's reply. 'You have had a splendid day, but very hot down by the town. You have felt it cold up the mountain, Mr Digby?'

'Yes, very,' said Digby shortly; and he felt Helen press his hand gently, as if she were imploring him not to be angry.

'But you could not have had a clearer day for the view.—Did you feel the cold much, Miss Helen?'

'No—no,' she said quietly. 'I don't think it was very cold.'

'Generally is.—I beg pardon, Mr Digby! Have a cigar?'

'If I refuse it, he'll take it for a declaration of war, and I don't want to fight.—Why should I?—poor wretch!'

'There you are,' said Ramon, coming round by the back of the mule with his case open. 'The smaller are the best.'

'Thanks,' said Digby, taking one.

'Let me give you a light.'

A match was struck, and by its light Digby

caught a glimpse of the Spaniard's face, which was as calm and unruffled as could be.

Then they went on, and retook their places on either side of the mule.

'I've been very busy too,' continued Ramon. 'Tired; but was curious to hear how you had got on; and yet half afraid that the crater had given way and swallowed you all up.'

Digby felt tongue-tied; but Ramon chattered away.

'I wonder whether Señor Redgrave will let me throw myself upon his hospitality this evening? I called on my way up, and found that you had not returned. I left some fruit; and there was a fragrance from the kitchen window that was maddening to a hungry man.—Ah! here we are.' For they had come up to Redgrave and Fraser, who were standing beside the track.

'You, Ramon?' said Redgrave rather sternly.

'Yes, my dear sir. I thought I would go and meet them; but I missed you.—My dear Redgrave, I want you to give me a bit of dinner to-night.'

'Certainly,' replied Redgrave—and he told a polite lie: 'I shall be very happy.'

For the rest of the way Ramon did nearly all the talking; and during the evening his conversation was fluent and highly interesting as he engaged Fraser in conversation about the antiquities of the place; smoking cigars and sipping his chocolate in the most unruffled way.

'You are making quite a collection of our minerals, I hear,' he said in the course of the conversation.

'Yes; I have a good many.'

'Of course you examined the head of the *barranco* on the west side of the mountain?'

'No; we have not been there yet.'

'Not been! Why, my dear sir, that is the most interesting place of the whole. You should go there.—By the way, Redgrave, I suppose the nearest way would be right across my plantation?'

'Decidedly,' said Redgrave, who seemed puzzled by his visitor's urbanity.

'Yes,' said Ramon thoughtfully; 'that is certainly the best way. There is an interesting mummy cave there, too, about half-way along; but you will certainly be delighted with the head of the *barranco*.—There; I must say good-night. Going now, gentlemen?'

'Yes,' said Fraser, rising. 'It is time we were back.'

Digby rose reluctantly; but it was time they left; so the customary *addios* were said, Ramon making a point of going first, so that Digby had an opportunity to raise Helen's trembling hand to his lips. 'Good-night—my darling,' he whispered. 'I shall tell Mr Redgrave all.'

'Heaven protect him!' muttered the girl devoutly; and she stood there at the door listening till her father returned; and then they lingered, each slightly uneasy, but ashamed to give their fears words, and being content to listen to the voices of the guests, as they came clearly up through the still night-air.

Redgrave felt disposed to speak to his child before retiring for the night, but he remained silent.

'Marriages are made in heaven,' he said to himself. 'I feel helpless; and perhaps Nelly herself

may find the way out of the difficulty, and, somehow, I begin to like young Digby.'

The three guests of the villa went slowly down the track toward the little town, with Ramon chatting pleasantly about the island.

'I daresay you Englishmen are disappointed at the absence of sport,' he said. 'Very different from Norfolk, where I went on a visit when I was in England. Here we have partridges and rabbits—that is all.'

'We find plenty to amuse us,' said Fraser quietly.

'Oh yes; I have seen that. Why, you will have a boat-load of specimens.—But don't forget the head of the *barranco* beyond my place. It will repay a visit; and if I can assist you with guides or men, pray command me.—Good-night.'

'Well, Tom,' said Fraser, in a sad voice as soon as they were alone, 'what next?'

'I don't know, old fellow, and don't want to know,' replied Digby in a tone of voice which contrasted strangely with the mournful speech of his friend.

'You do not know?'

'I only know that I am surprisingly happy.'

'Happy?'

'Yes. You must have seen. Horace, old fellow, I can speak to you as I would to a brother. I love Helen Redgrave with all my heart.'

They walked on in silence for some time, and then Fraser said sadly: 'A boyish fancy.—Come, be a man. This must go no further, Tom. Let us pack up and go away.'

Digby shook his head.

'I am sure it would be better for all.'

Digby drew a long breath, full of exultation, for the pressure of Helen's little fingers seemed to cling to his hand.

'Do you not see,' continued Fraser, 'that you are intervening between two people whom Fate has evidently marked out for husband and wife?'

'Fate be hanged! What has Fate got to do with it?'

'Do you not see that you are making a powerful enemy of Ramon, who has the father at his mercy?'

'I'll pitch Ramon down one of the *barrancos*, if he doesn't mind what he is about,' cried Digby warmly.

'Mind he does not pitch you down, Tom. But—about Helen Redgrave?'

'Well, what about her? I know what my dear old moralist is about to say: Marriage is a serious thing—I have my friends to study—I ought not to be rash—I ought to wait—I ought to write home.'

'Yes; I should have said something of the kind, and also warned you to flee from danger—and temptation.'

'Then here we are at the roost, and I am going to get on my perch at once, my dear old model of wisdom; but before I do so, here are my answers to your warnings: I am well off; I am my own master; and I have neither father nor mother to consult. Greatest and most cogent answer of all—Helen.'

Half an hour after, setting at defiance the insect plagues of the island, Tom Digby was sleeping peacefully and dreaming of his sweet young mistress; while Fraser was seated in his own

room, with his arms folded, gazing out through the open window, with the darkness visible and mental ahead.

'He loves her, and—— Yes,' he added, after a painful sigh, 'what wonder, poor boy—she loves him in return. Oh! I must have been mad—I must be mad.—And that man Ramon? Yes; he smiled and showed his white teeth. I would not trust him for a moment. The calm was too false and treacherous. If I could only get the poor boy away!'

CHAPTER VII.

A week of unalloyed happiness passed, during which time every evening was spent at the villa. Digby grew more joyous; the saddened look was rapidly passing away from Helen's face, and that of her father grew puzzled, while Fraser's seemed more sombre and sad.

Ramon had fetched them to his place again and again, and had also begged leave to accompany them in two of their expeditions, finding horses and mules, and proving himself a polished and agreeable guide, taking them to various points, whose marvels made Fraser forget his own trouble in the excitement of discoveries dear to a naturalist's heart; while, after these journeys, Ramon always insisted upon the travellers accepting his hospitality.

They had just finished dinner, and Ramon had left them for a time, one of his servants having called him away, a summons which, after many apologies, he had obeyed, leaving the friends together, when, pushing the jug of excellent French claret towards his companion, Digby, who was slightly flushed, exclaimed: 'Taste that, my boy, and confess that our host is a charming fellow and a polished gentleman.'

'Yes, I confess to those,' said Fraser gravely; and just then Ramon reappeared at the door, bearing a fresh box of cigars, which he handed to his guests and resumed his seat.

'One of the evils of possessing plantations,' he said. 'Your men are always coming with the news of some disaster.'

'Nothing serious, I hope?' said Digby.

'No, no—a mere nothing—kind of blight appearing.—But, by the way, you two have never visited the head of that *barranco* yet. Don't forget it. When will you go?'

'When Fraser's ready.—What do you say to to-morrow?'

This was agreed to, and Digby rose as if to leave.

'There,' said Ramon; 'I will not keep you fidgeting to go; only leave friend Fraser to smoke another cigar.'

'Really, I don't think'—began Digby, rather petulantly.

'Do not be angry, dear friend,' said Ramon kindly. 'I meant no harm. Apologise for me to my dear friend Redgrave.—You will stay, will you not, Fraser?'

'No; I will go with him,' said the latter hastily. Then, in a hurried confused manner, as if he were mastering himself, 'No,' he added, 'I will stay, and have a quiet smoke and chat with you about the head of the *barranco* and what we are likely to find.'

'Poor boy!' said Ramon, with a gentle smile,

when Digby had gone. 'Well, he has won a charming girl. You and I, Mr Fraser, are getting old enough to put these things behind.'

'Yes,' said Fraser gravely; and he sat talking to his host till quite late.

CHAPTER VIII.

According to what had grown into a custom, Digby found Helen and her father by the gate which commanded the steep track, and another delightful evening, all too short, was spent. Music, talk of England, the life there, all had their turn, and then came the time to go, Helen walking beneath the great mellow stars down with her visitor to the gate, for the last good-night—that farewell which takes so many times to say, and was here prolonged till Redgrave's voice was heard.

'Coming, papa,' cried the girl, as she clung to Digby's hand. 'Then you go,' she whispered, 'to the *barranco* to-morrow?'

'Yes; in good time.'

'I shall see you at night?'

'Of course.'

'And you will take care. I have heard that some of these places are very dangerous.'

'Take care? Yes; for your sake,' he whispered. 'Once more, good-night.'

He ran off, to master the longing to stay; and with an uneasy feeling at her heart, Helen returned slowly to the house, wishing that he had not come alone, so as to have a companion back along the dark path, where it would be so easy for an enemy to do him harm.

She cast away the foolish dread directly, and with good cause, for Digby reached the *venta* about the same time as Fraser returned from his late stay with Ramon; and after a short chat over their morrow's plans, they both went to bed.

The sun was streaming into Digby's room when he awoke the next morning with the sensation upon him that it was very late; and on springing out of bed it was to find a piece of note-paper lying on his dressing-table, on which was written: 'You were sleeping so soundly I would not disturb you. I have gone on. Eat your breakfast, and follow at your leisure.'

Digby dressed under a feeling of annoyance at his friend's desertion. He did not particularly want to join in the trip, for he had seen enough of the island, and would far rather have gone up to Redgrave's; but Fraser's start alone made him immediately feel an intense longing to be off; and consequently he quite upset his Spanish landlady by his hurried and scanty meal.

'Too bad of Horace,' he grumbled to himself as he set off up the mountain track to where it diverged, and the path led to Ramon's plantations, with the house away to the left in a beautiful nook which commanded a view of the distant islands.

For a moment he hesitated as to whether he should walk down to Ramon's for a chat before starting; and he hesitated again after going a few yards; but finally he stepped out boldly with the hot sun pouring down; and as he went on, a careworn face was slowly raised from out of a clump of semi-tropical foliage, and Fraser stood well concealed, watching him till he passed out of sight. Then, after a cautious look round, he sank back into his place of concealment, and the birds

that had flitted away returned, the stillness around being unbroken, save when the low deep murmur of the surf arose from far below.

'Too bad of old Horace,' said Digby, as he strode along, past Ramon's plantations, till the wild country began; and recognising various places he had passed before, the young explorer soon reached the spot where the track leading to the *barranco* commenced—a path growing fainter and fainter, and more obliterated by the abundant growth, till it gradually became a mere shelf on the mountain side. The dense tangle at first sloped down to his left, and up to his right, but grew more and more precipitous, till there was an almost perpendicular wall of volcanic rock, out of which the shrubby growth and ferns spread out, and formed a shadowy arch, which screened him from the sun; while a foot away on his left there was a profound drop, the rock again going perpendicularly down, and in places the shelf along which he passed quite overhung the verdant gorge.

And so it continued for quite a couple of hours, during which he went on and on along the shelf, whose abundant growth hid the danger of the way; for it was only at times that he obtained a glimpse of the depths below, where some avalanche of stones had crashed down from above and swept the trees away.

'He's right: it is a glorious walk,' cried Digby enthusiastically; 'only, it seems so stupid to be enjoying it all alone.'

For another hour he went on, still wondering that he had seen no traces left by his friend, but soon forgetting this in the fresh glories of the overshadowed path, and the lovely glints of sunshine in the zigzagging tunnel of ferns and creepers, which literally seemed to flow down in cascades of growing leafage from the wall on his right.

'Nature must have made this path,' he said to himself; 'and it can only be seldom trod. Leads to nowhere, of course, and—Hillo! here's the end.' For, at a sudden turn, after passing an angle of the rock, he found himself face to face with a huge mass of stone, which had evidently lately slipped from a few feet above the track, and completely blocked the way.

'That's awkward,' he said thoughtfully. 'Too steep to get over.—Ha! that's it.' He smiled as he saw that to the left of the large block the green growth had been trampled down, the shelf being wide enough for any one to pass round, though the gorge seemed there to be almost dark, so filled up was it with the tops of the trees which bristled from its side.

'The old boy has been round here for one, this morning. First time I've seen his marks.—My word, he has been chipping away here,' he added, as he looked at the broken fragments of stone in the newly made curve of the path.

Without a moment's hesitation he stepped down, then took another step, for the way descended apparently, to rise again beyond the block. Then another step on to some fagot-like brushwood laid across to form a level way; and as he did so, he uttered a wild cry, and snatched at the rocky side to save himself. Vain effort, for everything had given way beneath him, and he dropped headlong, to fall, after what seemed to be a terrible descent, heavily far below.

He was conscious of an agonising sensation of pain, then of a stifling dust, of a sickening stupefying dizziness, and then all was darkness.

How long he lay there stunned he could not tell; but he seemed to struggle into wakefulness out of a terrible feverish dream, to find that all was darkness and mental confusion. What it all meant was a mystery; for his head was thick and heavy, and memory refused to give him back the recollection of his walk and sudden fall.

But he realised at last that he was awake, and that he was lying upon what seemed to be fragments of sticks; and as he groped about, he touched something which set him wondering for the moment, before he could grasp what it was he held. Then he uttered a cry of horror and recoiled, for his finger and thumb had passed into two bony orbits, and he knew that the object he had grasped was a human skull!

CHAPTER IX.

As Digby cast down the grisly relic of mortality, he clapped his hands to his throbbing brow, and shrank farther and farther away, feeling as if his reason was tottering, and for a time the mastery of his mind had gone. But this terrible sensation passed away as quickly as it had come, and he stamped one of his feet with rage.

He shrank away, for his act had raised a cloud of pungent choking dust, which horrified him again. But this only served to make him recover his mental balance; and as he stood there in the utter darkness, he seemed to see once more the side of that other ravine they had skirted weeks back, when he had drawn Fraser's attention to the climbing figure which they had afterwards encountered as he crept up with his basket.

'I must have fallen, then, into one of the ancient mummy caves,' he said, trying to speak aloud and coolly, though his words came for the moment hurriedly and sounded excited and strange.

He paused again, and wiped the dank perspiration from his brow. 'There,' he said; 'I'm better now; so—What's this?—Yes, it must be: I'm bleeding.' He felt the back of his head, and winced, for it was cut badly, and a tiny warm stream was trickling down his neck.

'That's soon doctored,' he muttered, as he folded and bound a handkerchief about his brow. 'Now then: how far have I fallen, and how am I to get out?'

He began to move about cautiously, looking up the while in search of the opening through which he had come; but for some minutes he looked in vain. At last, though, he saw a dim light far above him, not the sky or the opening through which he had fallen, but a faintly reflected gleam, which feebly showed something black above his head; and at last he reached the conclusion that the opening down which he had dropped was not straight, but sloped to and fro in a rough zigzag.

'How horrible!' he muttered. 'Yet what a blessing!' he added. 'If the fall had been sheer, I must have been killed.'

By cautious progression he at last found the side, but not until he had gone in two other

directions, which seemed to lead him farther into the bowels of the mountain.

This discovery did not seem to help him, for, as he passed his hands over the rough vesicular lava, which was in places as sharp as when it had cooled down after some eruption hundreds of years before, he found that it seemed to curve over like a dome above his head; and though he followed it for some distance, he could find no place where there was the faintest possibility of his climbing up to the day.

'Ahoy! Fraser!' he shouted aloud, and then paused aghast, for his voice seemed to pass echoing hollowly away, giving him an idea of the vastness of the place in which he was confined.

And now for a few moments his former sensation of horror attacked him, as he felt that he might possibly never be able to extricate himself from the trap into which he had fallen, and that he might go on wandering amongst the horrors by which he was surrounded until he died of exhaustion—mad.

Again he mastered his wandering mind, and spoke aloud in a reassuring tone. 'I am not surrounded by horrors,' he said calmly. 'That which is here ought to alarm no man of well-balanced intellect. It is known that I have come this way, by the people at the inn—No: I did not tell them. But Fraser knew I was coming, and he will search for me. Ramon knew I was coming here, and I have nothing to do but sit and wait till I hear voices; and then a shout will do the rest. Horace cannot be long.'

'Good heavens!' he ejaculated after a pause, 'suppose the poor fellow should tread upon the broken place and fall!—No fear. It was covered when I came along. It is all open now.'

He leaned against the side of the cave, thinking of his misfortune, and listening for step or voice to break the terrible silence around him; but all was perfectly still; and think how he would, he could not keep back an occasional shudder at the idea of passing a night where he was.

'Couldn't be darker than day,' he said with a laugh to restore his courage; and then he began to think about Helen, a bright subject, which lasted him for long enough, till the increasing pain and stiffness of his injuries turned the current of his thoughts to his rival; and then, like a flash, a suspicion came to him: 'What did Horace say?—The man was treacherous and false! Great heaven, have I fallen into his trap?'

He tried to argue the thought away; but the idea was only strengthened. Ramon had been so anxious for him to come there—for both of them. The path had evidently been altered, by accident or design. Was it design, and the contriver's idea to rid himself of two men he detested at one stroke?—No; the thought was too horrible, and he would not harbour it.

Vain effort: it grew the stronger; and as the time sped on, and the hurt produced a feverish sensation of half-delirium, Digby found himself fully believing that Ramon had contrived this pitfall; that there was no escape; and that, freed from his presence, the treacherous Spaniard would renew his advances to Helen.

The agony increased, and with the mental suffering came a wild feverish horror, which grew upon him till his brain throbbed; a sense of

confusion, which he could not overcome, increased; and at last—long after he had fallen—he felt that he could bear no more, and all was blank.

THE IRISH GOLD-FIELDS.

GOLD appears to have been found in Ireland at a very remote period. It is recorded that Tiernmas, one of the apocryphal kings of Ireland, worked gold mines in the forests of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains, refining the metal there, and manufacturing it into cups, brooches, and various other articles. Even the name of the ancient artist, Ochadan, is preserved, and his residence, Fercualann, now Powerscourt, Enniskerry, county Wicklow.

The great number of gold ornaments found in various parts of Ireland, their exquisite workmanship and inimitable elegance of design, testify to the high degree of artistic excellence attained by those early artificers. It appears to have been the practice in those times for the goldsmith to reside close to the mine, digging up and preparing on the spot small quantities of the precious metal, which he then fashioned and finished at his own home into those interesting articles which to-day adorn the various museums.

At a place called Cullen, on the borders of the counties Limerick and Tipperary, is an extensive bog, in which great numbers of valuable gold ornaments have been found, accompanied by crucibles, caldrons, ladles, and other smelting implements; clearly indicating that the district was at some remote period inhabited by a race of professional goldsmiths, whose existence must date from a time antecedent to the formation of the bog. In many other parts of Ireland besides, similar evidences of ancient gold-mining have been discovered, the mine in most cases having been exhausted.

The wealth of Ireland in the precious metals seems at a later period to have constituted one of the chief attractions to the Danes in invading the country, and the tribute they exacted from the inhabitants of the conquered districts was largely paid in gold and silver. The Danish kings and chieftains adopted the native fashion of wearing massive ornaments of Irish gold. The ancient goldsmiths held high social rank in early Irish civilisation, and were even regarded with superstitious veneration by their ignorant neighbours, who believed them to be endowed with magic powers as exorcists and charmers.

The tradition of the gold mines in Wicklow never was completely lost; but the secret remained for hundreds of years at a time closely kept among a few families in that remote neighbourhood.

About 1780 a schoolmaster in the neighbourhood of Arklow discovered the existence of alluvial gold in the Ballinvalley stream, now the Goldmine river, rising in the Croghan Kinshella, and flowing into the Aughrim river at the beautiful and celebrated vale of Avoca. He kept the secret well, and gradually enriched himself, much to the amazement of his neighbours, who firmly believed that he had sold himself to the Power of

Darkness; but in 1796, when a man crossing the stream found a nugget twenty-two ounces in weight and disposed of it for eighty guineas, inquiries were set on foot, and the secret leaked out. The report spread like wildfire, and operated so powerfully upon the minds of the untutored peasantry that they forsook every other employment and flocked in thousands to the newly discovered Eldorado. All hoped to realise the fortunes of Ali Baba or Aladdin. Steady, sensible men who had never wielded a pick or handled a spade laid down their pens on their desks and thronged to the slopes of Croghan Kinshella. From the 24th August, when the news became publicly known, till the 15th October, when the government took possession of the diggings, over two thousand five hundred ounces of gold were found by these inexperienced miners, and sold by them for about ten thousand pounds. The process of mining was extremely simple. They dug up the sand from the river-bed, washed it, and then picked out the granules of gold, which they preserved in quills to bring to the goldsmiths.

After some time, the locality becoming the scene of great disorder, the authorities took possession of the mines and ordered two companies of the Kildare militia to the spot. A sum of money was then issued by the Government for employing skilled labour and conducting the mines under scientific principles, a separate account being kept of the net profits for payment to whoever should prove their title thereto. It was too late, however. The most of the gold had been removed by the peasantry, and the produce of the mines after this barely paid the cost of working them. In 1798, during the rebellion, the Government found it necessary to withdraw the militia from the spot, and the operations were consequently discontinued till 1801, when they were resumed, and miles of new trenches opened in the Croghan Kinshella. Numerous veins of quartz were discovered in these works, but no gold, upon which the Government finally abandoned the undertaking, having spent nearly all the surplus in fruitless attempts to trace the gold to its source.

Since that time, mining has been carried on with varying success by public companies and private individuals, and the peasantry have at rare intervals found occasional morsels of the precious metal; but the *sacra auri fames* has long since worn off, and searching for gold has of late years been confined to skilled workmen employed by public companies.

About 1840 a company took lease of the district, and carried on the operations for some years under the superintendence of an experienced miner, employing about fifty persons at the work. The process was rough, but the results proved fairly remunerative. In 1869 the mines were again opened, and were worked till 1881, during which period the gold was continuously found, though in small quantities.

In almost every case where gold has been found in the beds of tributaries it has been found beneath the deep alluvium of the rivers into which they flow. As it has been obtained in so many of the tributary streams of the Aughrim and Avoca, it seems reasonable to suppose that it would be also found deep beneath the beds of these rivers. This, however, has not yet been

tried, so that considerable quantities may yet remain in the alluvium of these rivers, near the several points of confluence with their auriferous tributaries.

A FASHIONABLE PHYSICIAN.

THE STORY OF A CONSULTATION.

I AM a family doctor, with a sufficiently arduous if not over-lucrative practice, chiefly among the lower middle class whose homes abound in a south-eastern suburb of modern Babylon. Some years ago, when I was more of a struggler than I happily now am, I had by good fortune obtained a foothold as medical adviser in the household of a wealthy City stockbroker, who dwelt in a spacious and luxuriant mansion some three miles farther out on the Surrey hills than the then extreme limit of my regular round of visits; and the fees I received for occasional calls to Mount Aureo when Mr Midas Contango had a touch of his chronic tormentor the gout, or his somewhat sentimental spouse—quite a grand dame, however, in her own esteem—was suffering the penalties of systematic outrage on the digestive fit-up of her portly person, were so liberal in their extent as to form in the aggregate no inconsiderable proportion of my modest income.

After my connection at Mount Aureo had continued, to the seeming satisfaction of all concerned, for some two years, I began to receive more frequent summonses thitherward. The only daughter of the Contangos, Miss Muriel, a fine, tall, gracefully moulded damsel of seventeen, who might have stood as a sculptor's model, so perfect was her physique, had returned home for the Christmas vacation from her fashionable Brighton boarding-school troubled with a slight cough. In all respects save this trifling laryngeal affection, she enjoyed the excellent health of which both her parents had had possession in their earlier days, before the indulgences which follow in wealth's wake had made them profitable acquaintances of my own. It was clear enough, too, to me that Miss Muriel Contango's throat trouble was purely local; nevertheless, it was causing serious alarm to the master and mistress of Mount Aureo, who idolised their charming child. The dream of the Contango existence was to mate Miss Muriel to some scion of the aristocracy, their reputation for riches having obtained them the *entrée* to society to which by birth and breeding they were not entitled.

Mr and Mrs Midas Contango had both begun to dread that Miss Muriel's indisposition would culminate in bronchitis or a decline. The slightest cough, the least *ronchus*, raised the grim and terrible spectre of phthisis, and the beautiful young lady was held to be in imminent danger of an early grave. I had examined her chest with the most anxious and minute care, but could discover nothing to justify any fear or even doubt of the correctness of my diagnosis; yet, despite balsamics and sedatives, exposure, however little, in treacherous weather would cause hoarseness and a transitory cough. Indeed, these disagreeable symptoms often manifested themselves without any apparent cause, except, as I judged, the inordinate precautions taken to avert them. The rooms at Mount Aureo were always too hot; Miss

Muriel was overclothed, could not stir out for a constitutional in the garden without a respirator, or take a drive unless hidden in an envelopment of costly furs. When I ventured to hint at this, the invariable reply of the Contangos was: 'Ah! doctor, if we did not take this care of Muriel, how long would she be with us?—the dear child is *so* delicate.' And nothing I could say would alter their opinion.

One day late in the April succeeding, when Miss Muriel had been coddled up at home for four months instead of being sent back to Brighton to continue her studies, Mrs Contango was more than usually concerned about her daughter's condition. The stockbroker and his good lady had overnight held an anxious discussion. I had made my now usual though quite unnecessary daily visit to Mount Aureo, and Mrs Midas Contango was, in her patronising and yet solicitous manner, bowing me out. I had almost reached the door, hat in hand, when Mrs Contango said with some effort: 'Doctor, you know we have the utmost confidence in you; we carry out your instructions to the letter; but our dear child'—

'Yes, madam; only you will persist in treating her, if I may be pardoned the simile, too much after the manner of a tropical orchid, instead of regarding her as a beautiful plant of English growth.'

'Well, perhaps you may be right, doctor; but we are so very anxious, Mr Contango and myself—you see Muriel is our only child, our sole hope. Now would you mind our asking the opinion of a famous specialist as to the case?'

'Nothing would be better, or more proper. Pray, whom would you like, and when may we arrange, contingent on his being able to come, to have him here?'

Mrs Midas Contango mentioned the name of a very fashionable and expensive London physician with a consultative practice confined almost entirely to the houses of those who had been presented at court. He was certainly not the man I should have chosen, for the faculty rather smiled at his pretensions to pre-eminent skill; and his reputation was far more that of the drawing-room than professional. However, I, a humble if conscientious practitioner, could not afford, had I so desired, to decline to meet him; and I consented to facilitate arrangements for an interview at the great man's convenience.

The fashionable physician drew up in his imposing equipage at the door of Mount Aureo half an hour behind the time appointed, was introduced to his patient, making the while profuse apologies for having been unavoidably detained by a critical case—that of the Duke of Deerwood—to whose house in Mayfair he had been summoned by the Duchess's request to give his opinion as to the treatment adopted by the attendant medical gentleman.

'What!' said the society exquisite, for such the celebrity certainly was—'what!' exclaimed he in grandiloquent tones, striking a theatrical attitude, 'is it that fine young lady we are to consult about? That superb girl, in such perfect condition! Come, confess, madam, that you are only making fun of us.'

'Well,' replied Mrs Contango, impressed, as she was meant to be, by the importance of the pompous personage who was addressing her, 'I admit

appearances are in my daughter's favour, and I hope that you may be able to assure us that her condition is not serious; but she is always losing her voice—always coughing—and if we were not to take care'—A flood of tears drowned the rest of the sentence.

'But,' airily remarked the famous doctor, 'my dear madam, why distress yourself? All may be well. Let me hear from this gentleman, your family attendant, the symptoms as he has interpreted them.'

I gave the history of the case in a few words.

'Well, well; there *seems* to be nothing serious; but we must examine the chest with the utmost exactness to decide that.'

'Pardon me,' interrupts mamma, 'but will you allow me to remain in the room?'

'Of course, madam,' responded the favourite of fortune. 'You have a sacred right to stop here. Pray, sit down.' And then he directed me to commence the examination. I percussed with minute carefulness every part of the thorax, and, as before, could really find nothing abnormal.

'There; you perceive that I have tested with exactness, and the resonance is everywhere perfect.' I made the remark as a mere matter of form, for I had not failed to note that the very superior West End practitioner had not condescended to pay the slightest attention to my proceedings, but was talking in low tones to Mrs Midas Contango all the time.

'Ah, well, now it is my turn,' said he, and with the most delicately impressive care, placed Miss Muriel again in position; not, as I had done, with the arms crossed on the chest, but stiffly extended. In place of telling her to count 'thirteen to sixteen,' he gave her a book and directed her to read a dozen lines, and then to sing the gamut, an octave and a half. The mother was watching all this in admiration and devouring every detail.

'Ah! humph!' said the oracle; 'it seems there is something—but extremely difficult to differentiate.—Let us hear what percussion yields.' And his style was truly enchanting. Every tap with the fingers was given with a flourish and a graceful sweep worthy of the most expert professor of sleight-of-hand that ever entertained a countess's guests. There was a moment of studied indecision, and then, with a covert smile, turning to me, he said: 'There it is. Listen, my dear young friend,' as he beat his digital drum, now on this side, then on that. 'Tick-tack, tick-tack.—Hark! do you hear it? There is a very appreciable difference in resonance; when I say "appreciable difference," I do not say an enormous difference—no—but there it is!'

'For my own part, sir,' I returned, 'I cannot, with all deference, detect the slightest difference.'

'Oh! very likely; but there, nevertheless, it is.—Now come, however; though—having ascertained the truth about the case—my time is short, let me convince you. I will turn my back to the patient, and you shall again percuss. I will tell which side you are tapping upon by the variation in the sound.' He turned round, and I percussed as equally as possible the two sides of the thorax. 'You are on the left side.' He was quite right! In a moment, however, my surprise was changed to admiration of the fashionable physician's smart

audacity. His professional—nay, I yet hope I may more truthfully write it unprofessional—trick was obvious enough, but performed with such perfect aplomb that I was duped even whilst taking part in it. He had turned his back to the patient, to Mrs Midas Contango and myself, but he was looking into a large mirror above the console which faced him!

What could I do? I was mute. The tables had indeed been so completely turned upon me that I had nothing to say.

'Madam, I must not alarm you,' observed the triumphant specialist to Mrs Contango, who was in blissful ignorance of the deception; 'these delicate gradations in tone can only be at once detected after immense practice, only by those who examine a stream of patients; but there is something on the left side of your daughter's chest—nothing serious—so little, indeed, that my young friend here has been unable to find it; but there it is.—And now, the examination being complete, permit us to consult as to the treatment, and then I must go, or I shall incur the displeasure of a noble but somewhat impatient patient of mine.'

When we were alone, I again expressed my incredulity, delicately hinting at my observation of his ruse.

'Tut, tut! my dear young friend,' said he, testily, 'you have not yet grasped the situation.—Now, here you have a girl who coughs and has been hoarse for a long time—then how the deuce can you get over the fact by telling the parents that there is no cause for it! Very likely there is nothing the matter with her; but why does she cough?'

'That was exactly what her mother said to me.'

'There you are; and mamma was quite right; there must be some cause for it. We may not be able to lay our finger upon it, for we must examine and understand our patients thoroughly very often before we can make out their ailments, and then one finds the mischief, because you see, we are expected to discover it.'

'But suppose there really is nothing.'

'Nonsense! There always is. But even if there were not, we are equally bound to find it; for if you tell these anxious people, "I can discover nothing wrong," they will naturally put it down to your ignorance, and send for somebody else who has knowledge enough of human nature or sufficient *savoir faire* not to be embarrassed with so small a difficulty.—Now, do you see my meaning?'

'Theoretically there is nothing, practically there is.'

'You may put it so, if so it please you. But I assured you that there is—and there is—your vigilance and punctilious exactitude notwithstanding, a little convenient difference in resonance. The mamma heard the remark, as I intended her to do; she has not the remotest idea what it means—why should she have?—but she is perfectly happy now that the cause of her darling's cough has been discovered, because she thinks, the cause being known, the cure will follow. The more unintelligible the explanation, the more convinced is she of its correctness. One may remedy, you know, a difference in resonance; but how can you pretend to cure a person whom you persistently declare to have nothing the matter with her?'

I began to understand.

'Now,' continued this consummate reader of Society's intelligence, 'I admit this is not science'—

'Nor what the schools and our academical training teach us,' hazarded I.

'Quite so, my dear fellow; but accept for once the tuition of a man who has not altogether failed in his profession. What I have taken the trouble to demonstrate to you gratis is a good working rule—smelling a little, perhaps, so to speak, of the shop or of legal tape—but if our patrons are satisfied, our patients made happy, our reputations advanced, can we wisely permit so trivial a matter as departure from slavish adherence to what is mis-called principle to stand between us and success?'

'Well,' admitted I, a little sadly, 'perhaps you are right.'

'Of course, I am, my dear young friend. I am a cynic, but I succeed. I have been, for instance, beseeched to meet you here to-day.—And now for treatment.'

A little delicate counter-irritation was suggested and agreed on; then the fashionable physician stepped into his elegant turn-out before the door of Mount Aureo, amid the profuse thanks of Mrs Midas Contango, a hundred guineas richer for his half-hour's visit. As he shook hands with me, on throwing himself back among the cushions of his brougham, the famous expert smilingly whispered: 'You are too modest, my ingenuous young friend: you have already the science of medicine at your finger-ends; why not acquire the art also?—Adieu!'

One rarely takes part in a consultation without learning something; but I never obtained such valuable practical knowledge from any meeting with a brother professional as I did in that inglorious scene in the drawing-room of Mount Aureo, in which I was so sadly let down, for a time at least, in the estimation of Mrs Midas and Miss Muriel Contango.

Miss Muriel subsequently recovered her temporarily defective resonance sufficiently to gladden the hearts of her parents by making a marriage—at their cost—into a noble house. I still have the pleasure of ranking her among my patients, but for no organic or other serious ailment; and I have it on excellent authority that her husband, Viscount Barrenlands, would be extremely glad at times, when he has been inordinately extravagant with his unearned increment, if Lady Muriel's vigour of voice and physique were both a little less robust.

BRIDE-ALES.

In olden times this institution was most popular in England; but since the introduction of wedding presents, it has gradually died away. The bride-ale was specially raised in order to give the young couple a start in life; but the custom only remains in the more scattered hamlets of this land. The words 'bride-ales,' with their companions 'bride-bushes' and 'bride-stakes,' obtained their names from brides selling ale on their wedding-day, and receiving goods or money from friends as payment; and from the bush at the end of a stake or pole being the ancient sign for

country alehouses. The court-rolls of a Shropshire borough in the fifteenth year of the reign of Elizabeth contain the following relating to bride-ales: 'Item, a payne is made that no persons that shall brewe any weddyng-ale to sell, shall not brewe above twelve strike of mault at the most, and the said persons so married shall not keep nor have above eight messe of persons at hys dinner, within the burrowe; and before hys bryde-ale daye he shall keep no unlawfull games in hys house, nor out of hys house, on pain of twenty shillings.' From this we should gather that bride-ales were conducted in those days with much that was objectionable.

When a wedding was arranged, friends willingly started a bride-ale, and thus the expenses of the ceremony were defrayed, and a goodly sum handed over to the couple for the better furnishing of their new home. Thus the primary object of this custom was a charitable one. Indeed, in former times, many a worthy couple could not have afforded the expenses of new furniture, &c., without this mutual aid of their acquaintances. Many instances are mentioned of royalty giving money for this purpose. The expenses of the privy purse of Henry VII. point out many such as the following: '1530, January. Item, the xiiij daye paid to Bowlande, one of the stable in rewarde, toward hys marriage, xls.'

Princess Mary's privy-purse expenses show contributions of three shillings and fourpence and seven shillings and sixpence to poor girls on their entering the marriage state. During the time of Elizabeth this custom was carried on even by the nobility. There is mention made of a great bride-ale at Kenilworth Castle in 1575 'with a large variety of shows and sports.' This was the order of ceremony among the better classes: The bride was placed by herself in a seat of honour, and when the time for the reception of the goods arrived, her husband sat by her side; then the father of the bridegroom (should he be the heir) entered with a beautifully carved box of wood, containing the deeds of the land, &c., and there he promised to make them his heirs for aye. The houses were decorated with rushes and flowers, roses being the favourite. Many devices were worked, as dishes, stools, chairs, baskets, hampers, &c., and then hung about the walls as tokens of good-will.

In the seventeenth century the presents were generally made in the church at the time of the marriage service, being cast into a large basin or dish, placed there for the purpose. About this time bride-ales came to be abused, for many turned the rejoicings into a time of feasting and drinking, and it became as bad as the time when wine and sops were partaken of in the church after the service was over. In an inventory of the parish church of Wilsdon, Middlesex, about 1547, mention is made of 'two masers' that were appointed to remain in church to drink from at bride-ales.

Morant says of Great Teldham, in Essex: 'A house near the church was anciently used and appropriated for dressing a dinner for poor folks when married, and had all utensils and furniture convenient for that purpose.' Many other writers mention places where rooms were set aside for this custom.

The 'penny bridal' of Scotland is one of the

many forms under which the bride-ale existed. At one time this custom was almost universal; but owing to abuse, many efforts were put forth to abolish it—to no purpose. The 'penny wedding' thus fell into disrepute with the respectable community, and thus thousands who would have benefited by this useful custom now receive no help. In Aberdeen, such a gathering was called a 'siller wedding,' and often as many as two hundred guests assembled, generally at an inn; and a goodly sum was collected for the couple.

In Cumberland, Westmorland, and other parts of the north of England, weddings were celebrated publicly, and called 'bride-wains,' or 'bidden weddings.' Every publicity was given to the 'coming event,' and advertising was even resorted to. Such an advertisement appeared as late as 1803. The people assembled at some convenient place, and each placed something in a plate or bowl put for the purpose. It was the custom to give a servant-girl who had retained her situation seven years a copper kettle. The word 'bride-wain' obtained its name from the poorer people before their wedding sending wains or wagons to receive corn for their first sowing, and other presents. Hutchinson, writing of Cumberland customs, says: 'Newly married peasants beg corn to sow their first crop with, and are called corn-laiters.' At some of these 'bride-wains' there was a 'dog-hanging,' or 'money-gathering.' After the repast, a pair of gloves were sold by auction, and he who bade highest had the privilege of kissing the bride. This also increased the collections at these bride-ales.

SHIRLEY POPPIES.

The writer had the pleasure of announcing to the readers of this *Journal* (May 1885) the possibility of growing the *Edelweiss* on rockwork without the trouble of visiting Switzerland to see it. May he now have the honour of introducing the flower-lovers of *Chambers's* to another lovely plant newly introduced, in fact newly evolved—the Shirley Poppy? We are all accustomed to the flaunting but beautiful if deciduous poppies of our fields and gardens, and we all remember the lines of Burns:

But pleasures are like poppies spread;
You seize the flower—its bloom is shed.

Many of our poppies, however, have charming double flowers of glorious colour, and are not so transient as the poet would infer. The Shirley Poppies rejoice in being different from all other poppies, poetic or otherwise. They are pronounced by competent judges to be the loveliest in cultivation, and have been produced by the loving care and discrimination of the Rev. W. Wilks, Vicar of Shirley, a celebrated florist, who with the ordinary wild poppy began a series of experiments, carefully selecting the fittest plants each year, taking the best seed the capsules provided, and thus by a process of natural selection analogous to Darwin's, and a process withal of natural evolution, he has almost succeeded in bringing something out of nothing, and creating a thing of beauty to be a joy for ever.

The plants thus produced, and so rigidly watched and tended and selected, seem to give colour to

the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. There they are, truly enough, a new blaze of colour, and unlike any others of their ancestors. The *Gardener's Magazine* says they appear to be 'capable of endless variation, and the characters are usually of a lively order, being chiefly richest rosy-red, violet-crimson, brilliant lake, and tender pink, mixed in the most delightful manner with white.' After this eulogium, who will not grow poppies with their centres white, and white glorifying their margins, and with a prospect of turning out new varieties and colours every succeeding year?

The excitement attending such a simple operation ought to kindle new fire in the hearts of all floral amateurs. These charming flowers have this capital recommendation also: they can be grown anywhere with the greatest ease and without trouble. The *Queen* newspaper says they have been as much talked of as if they had just arrived from New Guinea or any other remote region. It may be added that they are not yet generally distributed, so they will be quite a godsend in most gardens for a long time to come. The flowers are single; and the best plan is to sow the seed as thinly as possible in autumn for spring flowering; and again about the beginning of June for an effective display farther on in the season. In those neighbourhoods where snails abound, the young plants will require careful supervision, as these and slugs of all kinds feed upon them most voraciously. Clumps made with the poppies look exquisite, and we have now said as much as is desirable to put amateurs on the true scent. We have only to add that half a thimbleful of seed, costing sixpence, will add beauty, bloom, and richness to any ordinary garden, if well grown.

SONG—A MEMORY.

WHEN thy burdened spirit fails,
Worn with grief and weary days,
And the purple distance sails
In the fading saffron haze,

Droop thy fringed lids, nor sigh,
Should the gathering tears o'erflow;
Sing again the song that I
Sang to thee, long, long ago.

Let thy snowy fingers stray
In among the ivory keys,
While the twilight sinks to gray,
And upswells the sweet night-breeze—

They will find the dear old strain,
Woo'd from out the trembling strings;
They will find it, not in vain,
If thy spirit with them sings!

And though day be overcast,
Starlight glimmers on the sea,
While through darkness, dawn, at last,
Brighter days for you and me!

ALEXANDER GRANT.

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ON THE EXERCISE OF DISCRETION.

THE 'discretion' which is said to be 'the better part of valour' is not usually understood to be a quality of which the possessor has any particular reason to feel proud; it is looked upon, indeed, as an indication of something very like cowardice. Cowardice in a man, fortunately for this country, is looked upon by all classes, from the ragged vendor of evening newspapers to a prime minister, as the one social sin for which there is no forgiveness, hence the imputation becomes a serious one. As a matter of fact, however, it is pre-eminently true that 'discretion is the better part of valour.' Valour without discretion, so far from being a useful quality, is apt to be a very dangerous one. The valour of our private soldiers is beyond question; but the exercise of the discretion which controls it is fortunately not left to them; if it were, we should have splendid instances of bravery, no doubt, but our army as an effective weapon of war would soon cease to exist.

Discretion is the tie which binds together all the faculties of the mind; without it, they have no more cohesion than a loose bundle of sticks. He who enjoys the proper exercise of this faculty enjoys it, unfortunately, to the exclusion of countless numbers of his fellow-beings. It is a faculty which can be developed by practice, and it can be lost by disuse, following in this respect the Darwinian order of things. Soldiers taught to perform their different evolutions at the word of command, act mechanically at last, depending upon the volition of somebody else instead of their own. Relieved from the necessity of considering what course they would under particular circumstances adopt, they cease to consider about it altogether; and if at some supreme crisis they are deprived of those who have done the thinking for them, they are as incapable of intelligent and combined action as a flock of sheep.

The policeman, on the other hand, is placed in a position peculiarly favourable for the cultivation of discretion. His whole life is a constant exercise of that faculty, and undoubtedly the

intelligence which characterises the average policeman, especially the metropolitan policeman, is due in great measure to his being so obliged to exercise it. Stalwart in body, the policeman must also be active and robust in mind; for occasions are constantly occurring wherein he has to bring the best faculties of his mind into play. He has to remember his orders and instructions, decide at a moment's notice, without assistance and on his own responsibility, whether any one of them applies, and if so, how far to the case brought before his notice, and then unflinchingly carry it out. Bearing all this in mind, and that it applies to beginners in the force as well as to experienced hands, the marvel is not that the police make occasional mistakes, but that they make them so seldom. The exercise of this discretion is not so easy a thing as unreflecting people would imagine: there are people who are constitutionally unable to exercise it at all. Some years ago a large body of Sikhs were imported into one of our principal eastern colonies for the purpose of strengthening the police force. They proved to be and have ever since been treated as perfectly useless for the purpose, inasmuch as they were quite incapable of exercising any discretion, or, in other words, of thinking for themselves. Tell a Sikh to do this, and he will do it; not to do that, and he will not do it. But try to instruct him that under certain circumstances he must do this, and that, under certain other circumstances, he must do that, or do neither, as the case may be, and then place him on his beat, and you will find that you have transformed a splendid soldier into a bewildered and somewhat dangerous official. Employ him in a military or semi-military capacity, and he is all that can be desired.

To some extent, a similar disuse of the reasoning faculty entails a similar lack of discretion on the part of domestic servants. Accustomed to specific orders before doing anything outside their ordinary groove, they soon cease to do anything at all outside it without them. They seem to arrive speedily at the conclusion that 'Think-

ing is but an idle waste of thought,' and so in great measure manage to dispense with it. The old-fashioned habit of beginning fires on a certain day and leaving them off on a certain day had more reason in it than people who shiver over a fire in June if the temperature goes down a few degrees, are apt to imagine. Few housemaids could be safely entrusted with a discretionary order as to the lighting of fires in the morning. Some bitterly cold morning in September you give orders for a fire to be lighted in the breakfast-room; and as the wind remains in the north-east for the next few days, you see no reason to countermand the order. Suddenly the wind shifts to the south-west, and it becomes almost oppressively warm. You come down to breakfast, and the first thing that meets your eye is an unusually large fire blazing merrily on the hearth. You fling open the window, and when next you encounter the housemaid, tell her that you did not want a fire in the breakfast-room on a hot day like this. She regards you with an astonished and somewhat puzzled air as she replies: 'Please, ma'am, you told me on Tuesday to light a fire there in the morning.'—'Yes; but Tuesday was a bitterly cold day, and to-day is a very warm one. I don't want a fire there regularly as yet, but only when it is cold.' But Jane's mind, having become more or less like that of the Sikh, is incapable of retaining an idea which involves what lawyers call 'a contingency with a double aspect,' and she has now her orders, she considers, *not* to light the fire. Accordingly, when, three or four days later, there is a frost in the early morning, and you feel when you arise as if you had been suddenly landed in the arctic regions, you have a splendid opportunity for curbing your tendency to irascibility when, on entering the breakfast-room, you find not a vestige of a fire, and the window wide open.

Paradoxical as it may appear, the persons who suffer most by the want of discretion are those who possess it in the highest degree. Mental culture and refinement, whilst giving to their possessors a sense of delight and enjoyment in things unintelligible to vulgar minds, bring also a delicacy of taste and feeling which make all that runs counter to it inexpressibly painful. A man may be cultured and refined without being overfastidious; but undoubtedly things offend him which give no offence whatever to uncultivated minds. A vulgar remark, an observation which a moment's thought would have taught the maker of it must be disagreeable to some person present, jars upon his nerves in a manner positively painful; whilst the utterer of it, even if it were brought to his or her notice that the remark had wounded the feelings of some person present, would not feel the least disturbed, and probably make the matter worse by an ill-framed apology.

When we come to consider the use that is habitually made by many of the faculty of speech, we have indeed cause to lament the terrible want

of discretion which governs it. Surely there must be something wanting in our system of education which allows successive generations to be launched into social life without having been taught how to control that unruly member the tongue. Those who have had more fortunate experiences, or whose own powers of reflection have convinced them of the necessity of such control, have indeed cause to be thankful. They are saved from the commission of countless mistakes, and from being the cause of frequent injustice and much misery. The man who has learned or who has taught himself to think before he speaks has acquired the habit of ascertaining almost instantaneously whether what he is about to say will be suitable under all the circumstances of time, place, and company. What a blessing it would be if everybody else had acquired this habit and acted upon it! With many people there is no pause for reflection at all between the idea that comes into the brain and the expression of it that comes out of the mouth. So eager are they to talk, that they have no time to consider whether what they are about to say is worth the saying, or had better be left unsaid. So incapable are they of entertaining two ideas simultaneously in their heads, that the possession of one makes them uncomfortable till they have got rid of it. The name of some one known to the company is mentioned at table, and it immediately reminds one of these individuals of some story or rumour or scandal about this person which he or she has lately heard. At once, and without the slightest reflection as to whether the story may be true or not, whether there are friends of the person present to whom it may be offensive, enemies to whom it may be grateful, or servants attentive to pick up any gossip or scandal to retail with embellishments in the servants' hall, out it all comes; and the thoughtless babblers, instead of feeling remorse at having done a possibly cruel wrong to an innocent person, is smilingly complacent at having contributed to the general amusement.

Worse than this is the deplorable lack of discretion which prevents the presence of young persons, and even of children, from being any restraint upon this fatal rage for speaking. That reverence which even the heathen poet felt was due to youth, 'Maxima debetur pueris reverentia,' is totally wanting in many who would be highly indignant at the insinuation that their morality could be compared at all with that of a pagan. Incalculable is the evil which 'is wrought by want of thought' in this respect; and it can only be by want of thought, for nobody with any sense of decency left would wantonly incur the risk of corrupting the minds and defiling the imaginations of the young and innocent. The extraordinary part of it is that people who have lost all discretion in this respect seem so utterly unconscious that they are doing anything reprehensible. This want of thought must be to some extent an incapacity for thinking; phrases which they hear, or which, parrot-like, they recite, having no meaning for them. They will hear with unruffled composure the anathemas upon him 'that shall scandalise one of the little ones,' and wonder possibly how people can be found so wicked as to do it. Very

likely they will think of some of their friends to whom the words might apply; but the last persons whom they would think of condemning upon that head would undoubtedly be themselves.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXI.

M. JOUSSERAU had been to Paris, and was now expected back again. He had devoted the whole of the late autumn months to the execution of a picture of English country life, nothing less than a harvest-home supper; a rather difficult subject, it may be confessed, for a French artist to handle. He had made studies from a score of the yokels of the neighbourhood, and had found ample opportunities of studying his theme *en bloc* at the feasts given by Shorthouse, Gregg, and Day. He had had no mind to wait until spring for the exhibition of his work, and indeed at this time the school he represented and the authorities of the Salon were not very much in harmony. Courbet was rising to his glory; but the poetic school, with Corot at its head, still held its place, and, for a poetic school, had a good deal of fight in it. The salons of the great picture-dealers were the nursing-ground of realistic genius in those days, and M. Durand-Ruel gave Jousserau's picture a home and a welcome in the Rue Lafitte. French art was a little more home-loving thirty years ago than it is even to-day, and when painters ran abroad at all, they went to Constantinople, to Naples, to Madrid, or Cairo. None of them had dreamed of invading England, where the local colour was popularly supposed to consist of one dim universal gray; so that Jousserau's little bit of truth, cut out of the living panorama of English life, took Paris quite captive for a week or two. The little man was fêted and stormed at, praised and abused beyond his merits or demerits. He became quite a personage, and his picture was sold at a price which astonished nobody so much as the painter, before it had been on exhibition a fortnight.

He had written a painfully worded letter announcing his return, and Isaiah was at the railway station to meet him, pleasantly conscious of the increased importance of his own personal aspect, and prepared for Jousserau's astonishment at the pair of steppers. These he had left in charge of a street-boy whilst he warmed himself at the waiting-room fire. He had not been there long when he became aware that a shuffling step had paused upon the platform, and that a nose was flattened against one of the window-panes. Somebody outside was peering at him, and he was not long in discovering that the somebody was Mr Orme. Tobias was hatless, and his gray unvenerable wisps of hair were waving hither and thither in the frosty wind.

Isaiah, deserting his comfortable place by the fire, walked on to the platform to look at him. 'Hillo!' he said, with no great favour. 'What brings you here?'—Tobias stretched a pair of dirty blue hands abroad, and stood there trembling.—'What's the matter with you?'

'Mr Winter,' said Tobias, 'I am a wretched outcast. I have only had one meal for three days.'

'Eh?' returned Isaiah. 'What?'

'Don't think I mean to be impertinent, sir,' Mr Orme pleaded; 'but if it hadn't been for me, sir, you might have adorned a very different sphere. It was my discovery, Mr Winter, and you profited by it. If I had had only a little money, I might be rolling in thousands now.'

'You've got no claim on me, you know,' said Isaiah. 'You've got no right to come and ask me for a penny-piece.'

'I know I haven't, sir,' the wretched object answered, weeping; 'but I'm in great distress. I had to walk about the fields last night, Mr Winter. I'm nearly dead. I wish I were. I was brought up by respectable parents, Mr Winter, who never expected me to come to this.'

'Ah!' returned Isaiah, 'you've lived to be a credit to 'em.'—It was needful to be gruff with Tobias, because he meant to help him.—'There's a shilling for you.' He dropped a coin into the dirty outstretched hand and turned away; but Tobias came shuffling after him.

'I beg your pardon, sir; you have made a mistake; you have given me a sovereign.'

'Well,' returned Isaiah, with an open burst of anger, 'can't you hold your jaw? D'ye think I'm such a fool as that? Get out with you, and let me hope I've seen the last on ye.'

'Yes, sir,' returned Tobias, and so vanished, hugging the sovereign greedily. He was back two minutes later, held in ignominious custody by a porter.

'This chap, sir,' said the porter, touching his hat in respect to Isaiah's broadcloth, 'has been trying to change a quid at the booking-office. He says you give it to him, and I've been sent round to make inquiries.'

At this Isaiah was conscious of a violent shame, and to cover his confusion, shook his fist threateningly at Mr Orme. 'Look here,' he cried, 'I won't be bothered with you. Stupid old owl! Why couldn't you change the money somewhere else?'

'I was very hungry, sir,' Tobias answered.

'Get out o' my sight!' roared Isaiah.—'It's all right,' he added to the porter; 'let him go.'

This time Mr Orme vanished finally; and the train shortly afterwards arriving, Isaiah sought the platform, and saw Jousserau alight. The little man was in a state of beaming pleasure, and shook hands with his host a good half-dozen times.

'I have good fortune at Paris,' he said gaily. —'News? Oh yes—the best of news. My picture is paid for, thousands. Not pounds. Shillings. Fifteen thousand.'

Isaiah bent his brows in calculation. 'Why, that's seven hundred and fifty pound,' he said.

Jousserau nodded with a smile, not knowing that he was over-estimating his own gains. 'I shall paint two more,' he said, 'for the same man. He is Englishman in Paris. A lord. Very rich, and very kind.—Oho! I tell you I am made man, Mr Vintare.'

'So am I,' Isaiah answered. 'There's a pair on us.—Where's your luggage? Is all that yours? It's well I brought the brake with me.'

'I have many things,' said Jousserau. 'Some little things for everybody. For Madame Vintare,' he added in a delighted whisper, 'a bonnet. Oh, such a bonnet! The very last bonnet of Paris.' He made a vivid sweep with both hands, as if he

were describing the bonnet's outline, and it were the size of a church steeple. 'Nothing was like it, ever!' he said, laughing outright. 'Madame Vintare shall be proud.—There is something else for you. You, my friend, shall be astonish. You shall wait to see.' With this he hurried up a porter, bewildering the man with instructions; and saw all his property transferred to Isaiah's brake.

The two had no sooner reached home than the little man set to work to unpack; and Mrs Winter, who had received word of the bonnet from Isaiah, stood by in natural feminine expectancy. A wonderful structure came to sight. It was designed, as students of the fashions will remember, on the principle of the Norman arch. The top of the archway was filled up with the most exquisite artificial flowers. The whole edifice was rich with lace, and at the bottom was an enormous bow of the finest pink satin. Mrs Winter, beholding this work of art, clasped her hands together in a blending of wondering admiration and dismay.

'Is that the sort of thing the women gone about in wheer you've been?' she asked.

'Yes,' said Jousserau gravely. 'All the ladies wear it now—all the ladies of the great life.'

'Oh!' returned Mrs Winter with a long-drawn sigh; 'it might do for them; but a woman 'ud be hooted as wore it in a civilised country.'

Jousserau found this declaration so amusing that he threw himself helplessly upon the horse-hair sofa and laughed with peal on peal. Mrs Winter felt her dignity offended, but she was on the lookout for further wonders and could not afford to say anything. The little man's remembrance for Isaiah was packed in a long wooden case which had a sliding top. This being removed revealed a quantity of soft paper-wrapping; and this in turn being taken away, displayed a bronze figure, draped, poised on one foot and holding the right hand on high. In addition to this there was a tiny clock, with a polished steel rod projecting from it. Jousserau set the bronze figure on the mantel-shelf, and then by an artifice which some Parisian clockmaker had made known to him, attached the rod to a bit of straightened wire-spring the bronze lady held between finger and thumb, and lo! the clock itself became a pendulum, with no apparent source of motion. The good couple sat down before this marvel in a delighted wonder, and there was for a time no end to their admiration.

'You see, Madame Vintare,' said Jousserau, 'it is only in civilised countries people know to make these fine things.'

Whilst they were still at their height of wonder, Shorthouse dropped in, and announced that he was on his way to see Snelling.

'Do not go yet,' cried Jousserau. 'There is somethings for you from Paris, of which I will pray that you accept. Behold it.' He had bought for Shorthouse a noble meerschaum pipe, with a long cherry-wood stem and an amber mouthpiece. The bowl had a Russia-leather silk-lined case to protect it whilst it was being smoked or handled, and the pipe altogether was a very gorgeous affair indeed. 'Will you do me the pleasure to smoke sometimes this?' he asked.

'I should be almost afraid to handle it,' returned the farmer. 'Excuse me, Mr Jousserong, but do you mind a plain man asking a plain question?'

'Why, no,' said Jousserau, looking up at him with raised eyebrows.

'Our vicar,' said Shorthouse, 'is a judge of them things, and he tells me I might ha' paid ten or twelve times as much as I did for them pictures, and have got no better. Now, nothing for nothing is most folks's motto. You don't find these things'—holding up the pipe—'growing on the hedges in your country, any more than we do here. Now, I want to know, and there's no offence meant, Mr Jousserong, what you pick me out to do these favours for?'

'I do not pick you out for favours,' said the little artist. 'For the pictures, it was pleasure to paint them. You, my dear Mr Short-house, are English. You are so much English—excuse me—I cannot tell where else to find you. You are, as they say, John Bull. I want to paint John Bull. I find John Bull; I paint heem. Shall I charge money for what I want to do myself to please? For Mees Cecilia?'—he blushed a little here, but not one of his auditors noticed it—'she is charming young lady, very beautiful, and I had great pleasure when I made her portrait.'

'He's got an eye for things,' said Isaiah. 'I never noticed it particular till I see your picture; but I've thought it since, and said it to the missis, many a time, a John Bull-er lookin' sort o' man I never looked at than he's drawn you out to be. It's as like as one new sixpence is like another, and it's John Bull all over.—He's right, Short-house, he's right.'

'Well,' said the farmer, with a complacent waggle of his head, and a smile which would have way in spite of him, 'perhaps he may be.'

If Jousserau had searched for a year, he could have found nothing more flattering to tell him. It was the farmer's pride and boast to be thought English to the marrow, and it cheered him likewise to know that his qualities were evident even to a foreigner.—'You keep an open mind, Mr Jousserong, and you'd seem not to be afraid to speak it.'

'Why not?' the artist asked. 'There is no harm in an Englishman being English. I would not be anything but French of the south if I could help it.'

That was a proposition which in Shorthouse's mind would stand much chewing before it could be assimilated. An Englishman was naturally proud of being an Englishman, but that a foreigner should be proud of being a foreigner, and should not envy a freeborn Briton his characteristics and privileges, was hardly to be believed.

'Come,' said the farmer; 'the kindness can't be left o' one side. I shall be glad if you'll eat your bit o' Christmas dinner along with us.—Isaiah, I shall count on thee and the missis also. Now, that's a bargain, if you please.'

The invitation was accepted on all sides, and the farmer went away, bearing his new pipe in its cardboard box along with him. After the space of two or three minutes, he came back again, thrusting his head round the parlour door and calling 'Zaiah!' in a hoarse and hollow murmur. Isaiah turning at the voice, the farmer beckoned him by a backward motion of the head, and having thus drawn him from the parlour, signalled to him with a certain finger to close the door, and then nodded him sideways down the passage as if in search of a place for private conference. Isaiah

followed him to the front door of the house, and there he paused, with a wink of serious and subtle meaning.

'Zaiah,' he said, 'I've got a notion.' He laid a hand upon Isaiah's sleeve, and leaning forward, breathed a hoarse inquiry: 'Do you think as that young chap can be a sparking up to my Cecilia?'

'N-o-o!' said Isaiah, in a long-drawn growl of almost scornful wonder. 'What's put that maggot in your head?'

The farmer tilted his hat and rubbed his hair with a look of perplexity; then he nodded two or three times with a scowl of indecision and went away without another word. He cast the question he had asked Isaiah up and down in his mind as he drove, and succeeded in coming to no conclusion. He had business with Snelling at the *Barfield Arms*, and went straight thither. He was not quite certain as to whether he had done wisely in inviting Jousserau since Snelling had already promised to be his guest. He knew something of the distaste which existed on both sides, and began to think that he might have proposed to bring gunpowder and fire together.

'I don't think ayther of 'em 'ud quarrel before the women folks,' he said; 'but I'm afraid I've made a bit of a fool of myself all the same.' He decided finally that he would speak of the matter to Snelling, as if it were the most casual thing in the world, and wait for him to offer an objection in case he saw one.

'Bob, ode lad!' he broke out on arriving, 'I just looked in at 'Zaiah Winter's on my way here. That young French chap's back again, and I've asked 'Zaiah and his missis and him to come and tek a bite with us on Christmas day. You and 'Zaiah having made it up again, I thought it was a friend-like thing to do.'

'I shall be glad to meet Isaiah,' Snelling answered quietly; and since he made no allusion to Jousserau, Shorthouse made none either, and the question was allowed to slumber.

It took and kept a place in Snelling's thoughts, however, and the more he looked at it the less he liked it. 'Shorthouse means kindly,' he said; 'but he's a dunderhead. He's got no more thought of insulting me when he asks me to dine with an enemy than he'd have if he asked me to dine with a friend. The man's a fool, pure and simple.'

He grew so hot at times that he vowed over and over again not to go. He would not sit at the same table with a foreign scoundrel who believed and had spoken the truth about him. It was curious, perhaps, but Snelling could not help thinking it rather base on Jousserau's part to have believed the truth. He was quite certain that he himself would have been less ready to suspect evil, and with that amazing dexterity which the foolishlest casuist has at his command when he excuses his own wrongdoing, he made out that though the crime with which his enemies charged him was not anything particularly terrible, it was altogether horrible to accuse a man of it on less than the directest proof. In another man, the intended offence against young John would not only have been inexcusable, but as vilely and basely criminal to Snelling's mind as to that of any normal and right-thinking creature. But he was conscious of his own excuses. If another man had meditated the crime, he would have known how to think about it.

Shorthouse had offered him a chance of reinstating himself on something like the old footing with Cecilia. The girl seemed kinder than she had been, and perhaps repented herself of the refusal. It would be unwise to throw away the opportunity afforded him, and yet his pride could hardly stomach Jousserau's presence.

'Why doesn't he stick to his own folks?' he said savagely. 'If the man's a gentleman, and has a right to hobnob with Sir Ferdinand and my lord, why doesn't he stop among his own people? I reckon the lords and ladies in his own country wouldn't have anything to say to him, and that's why he comes over here, lying away honest men's characters, and poisoning girls' minds against their servants. I won't sit at the same table with the fellow.'

He stayed in this mind obstinately, with occasional feeble gusts which blew the other way, until Christmas eve. He said nothing of his intention to Shorthouse, but relied upon himself to find excuses.

(To be continued.)

BIRD SUPERSTITIONS.

THERE is a widely spread belief amongst school-boys in many parts of the country that it is unlucky to kill a robin, and it is generally supposed that a broken limb would be the probable punishment for so doing. Even the nest of this bird is comparatively safe, though why it should be thus favoured is not quite clear, unless, as has been suggested by some writers, it owes its popularity to the story of the 'Babes in the Wood,' which ballad, perhaps, may also have given rise to the popular notion that the robin will cover with leaves or moss any dead person whom it may chance to find. There certainly, however, seems to be no substantial reason why he should be more favoured than the other members of the feathered tribe, for, after all, he is a very pugnacious and impudent little fellow; but perhaps these are the qualities which have brought him into notice and made him popular.

We are informed in an old rhyme that

The Robin and the Wren
Are God's Cock and Hen;

nevertheless, the smaller bird does not enjoy the public protection which is afforded to the red-breast, and at one time it was considered the correct thing to hunt the wren on St Stephen's Day. When one was caught, several curious and interesting ceremonies were gone through. The bird was generally carried triumphantly round the town on a pole, and in some cases was afterwards buried in the churchyard. In the Isle of Man, a feather taken from a wren killed on one of these occasions was considered a most efficacious protection against shipwreck for a period of twelve months; and formerly Manx fishermen would seldom think of putting to sea without one. Except in a few localities, the practice of wren-hunting has now, no doubt, fallen into disuse; and at the present day it is kept up as a rule only by boys, who retain the custom for their own amusement.

It is recorded by Aubrey that during a rebellion

in Ireland a party of soldiers who had incautiously fallen asleep would doubtless have been surprised by their enemies had they not been awakened by some wrens pecking on the drums as the enemy approached. On this account the wren was said to have gained the mortal hatred of certain classes in Ireland, who killed the little bird whenever they got the chance. Another reason which has been assigned for hunting the wren is that its destruction was ordered by the early Christian missionaries because the bird was held in the highest veneration by the Druids.

In connection with the wren there is also a curious old Manx legend, according to which there once dwelt in the Isle of Man a very beautiful fairy, whose voice was so irresistibly fascinating that numbers of men were frequently enticed by her into the sea, where they were drowned. Had this state of things continued unchecked, it is highly probable that, sooner or later, the Manx ladies would have experienced considerable difficulty in procuring husbands, for the siren seemed bent upon exterminating all the adult males in the island; but fortunately there at length came forward a knight-errant on whom her charms had no effect. For the safety of his fellow-men, he determined to destroy her, and endeavoured to do so; but at a critical moment she effected her escape by assuming the form of a wren. A spell, however, was cast upon her, compelling her to reappear in the same form once a year; and thus on the fatal day the wrens are hunted in the hope that one of those killed may be the wicked fairy herself, for it is her doom to die ultimately by the hand of man.

Several birds are ominous of evil, and the superstitions connected with them date from very remote ages. Thus, crows are considered unlucky if seen on the left of the observer; and when one of them flies over a house, at the same time croaking thrice, it is held to prognosticate the death of one of the inmates. It is also commonly supposed that death is foreboded by the appearance of ravens or the screeching of owls. Even the pigeon sometimes becomes a bird of ill omen, for when a white one settles upon a chimney it is supposed that a death will shortly take place in the house beneath it.

Grose tells us that it is unlucky to see one magpie and afterwards several others; but, on the other hand, if two magpies are seen it is a sign of an approaching wedding; three, of a prosperous journey; and four, that some good news will be received. Another authority states that a wedding is presaged by three magpies, and a death by four; and according to an old Scotch rhyme quoted by Dr Brewer:

One's sorrow, two's mirth,
Three's a wedding, four's a birth,
Five's a christening, six a dearth, &c.

That it is unlucky to have peacocks' feathers in a house is firmly believed by many people, this piece of superstition most probably having its origin in the story of Argus, who was changed into a peacock, his hundred eyes—or in other words spies—becoming at the same time the eye-spots on the tail-feathers of that bird.

It is only natural that our domestic poultry, during their long association with man, should have given rise to many superstitious beliefs and customs. Thus, from the days of the ancients,

cockerels have been used as auguries, and much importance has also been attached to the behaviour of fowls generally. The crowing of a hen is considered unlucky, and in some localities is looked upon as a foreboding of death. Moreover, the hen that is able to sing like her spouse does not appear to gain a very enviable reputation by the accomplishment, for a well-known adage asserts that

A whistling maid and a crowing hen
Are good for neither God nor men.

The cock, however, can crow to his heart's content so long as he does it at reasonable times and the people living around do not object to the noise. In fact, it is as well, perhaps, that he should crow, for it is an acknowledged fact that by his voice all respectable ghosts are regulated, and that at the first sound of 'cock-a-doodle-doo' they must cease wandering amongst the living and hasten back to Hades.

It is said that in Persia the crowing of a cock is accounted lucky or otherwise according to the time at which it is heard, and should any misguided fowl so far forget himself as to crow at an unlucky hour, he is forthwith killed for his pains—a custom, it is to be hoped, which has its proper moral effect on the Persian poultry.

Fortunately for the present generation, the cocks of a modern farmyard are not in the habit of laying eggs. In olden times, however, they do not appear to have been so considerate, and the medieval poultry-keepers suffered much anxiety in consequence, for they held it to be a well-authenticated fact that a cock's egg hatched by a viper would produce a cockatrice, which was a monster, half reptile, half bird, so venomous that it could kill a man by merely looking at him. Let us hope, therefore, that the hens will continue as at present to monopolise the laying of eggs, even though some of the latter which find their way to our breakfast tables may perchance be slightly addled; for the cockatrice is by no means a desirable creature to have in our midst, and now that it appears to have become extinct few will regret its loss.

UNDER AN AFRICAN SUN.

CHAPTER X.

DIGBY'S awakening from his stupor was stranger and more wild than his recovery from the stunning fall. It was hours before he could grasp where he was, and then he found himself lying upon the soft dust, so stiff that he could hardly move an inch.

It was dark as ever; and he lay listening and hoping for the relief which did not come, trying to be cool and think out some means of escape, and still telling himself that he had exaggerated, and that Helen was safe: this was but an accident.

As he lay there, longing to rise, and dreading the pain that followed every movement, he became conscious that the air was cool and pleasant and refreshing to his burning brow. Then, by slow degrees it struck him that the wind came in a soft steady current on one cheek; and by-and-by, reason suggested to him that this cool

current of air must come from some opening far away in the great cavern.

He shivered at first at the idea of plunging farther into the darkness, for how did he know where his faltering steps might lead him, and what hideous chasms might be yawning in his path?

Still, there was the cool current of air; so, forcing himself to rise, he began to walk slowly and cautiously in the direction from which it came, with the result that, after about an hour's slow progression over what was really but a short distance, he suddenly caught sight of a pale greenish ray of light, and his heart seemed to give a bound.

The rest was easy. Ten minutes' cautious progress over the dust brought him to the opening, a rift in the rock overgrown with hanging creepers; and pushing these aside, he found himself gazing out of what was like a roughly broken natural window in the perpendicular rocky face of the *barranco*, which seemed to go down hundreds of feet below. How far up, he could not tell.

It was dull, and the wind blew in fitful puffs, which swept the leaves aside, as he stood there for a time, asking himself what he should do. He was in no trim for climbing up such a place as this; but would it be possible to get down?

It seemed a risk; but anything was better than staying in that loathsome place; so, seizing the stoutest creeper within his reach, he began to descend; and, to his great delight, found, after cautiously going down about a hundred feet from creeper to creeper, that the rocky side of the *barranco* grew less perpendicular, and less and less so, till there was no danger, only an awkward descent of a slope, which landed him at last by a trickling stream; while, on gazing up right and left, there were the rocky sides of the ravine, and above them, the dull gray sky, with one tiny orange speck far ahead.

Then he grasped the idea that it was early morning—before sunrise, and that he must have passed the night in a feverish slumber in that dreadful place.

The next step was easy. He knew that if he followed the little stream, sooner or later it would lead him to the seashore; and after slaking his thirst at one of the pools, he bathed his feverish temples and set off refreshed.

Somehow, he could not think about Helen. He felt as if he dared not. He could only dwell upon the fact that a pitfall had been prepared for him, and he wanted to call Ramon to account. Then, too, he wanted to know where Fraser was; why he had not come to his help, and why he had gone off before him.

Strange problems these for an injured man to solve, and the only result of his attempts was for his head to grow more confused.

It was a long and painful journey; and the sun had risen hours before Digby had crept out on to the black sands, where quite a gale was blowing, as the great Atlantic billows came rolling in. Then he made his way round to the little inn.

The landlady gazed at him in horror, and began talking to him volubly in Spanish, to which Digby could not reply.

'The señor—Señor Fraser?' he said; but the woman only shook her head; and he was on

the point of starting off, when Redgrave came hurriedly to the door to ask if Fraser and he had returned.

'Ah, you are here!' cried Redgrave excitedly. 'What does all this mean? Where is Fraser? Why are you hurt? Helen?'

'Yes—Helen?' gasped Digby excitedly. 'How is she?'

'Gone!' cried Redgrave, with a fierce vindictiveness in his tones which made the young man gaze at him wonderingly.

'Gone?' panted Digby, catching sharply at the table, for everything seemed to be whirling round.

'Yes. You do not know? How is it you are hurt like this?'

'Don't question me. A fall. But Helen? Ramon?'

'No,' said Redgrave sadly; 'he swears he knows nothing.'

'It is not true,' cried Digby fiercely. 'It is his work. He planned to murder me, and he has taken her away.'

Redgrave stood gazing at him wildly for a long space; and then gripped him by the arm. 'Come,' he said laconically; and almost ready to fall with bodily weakness, but with his agonising thoughts spurring him on, Digby thrust his arm through Redgrave's and walked with him step for step.

In a few minutes he saw whither he was being led; and ten minutes later, with his heart sinking lower, Redgrave was going down the path which led to Ramon's house.

'You will not find him,' groaned Digby; but Redgrave, whose face looked stony in its despair, made no reply, strode on to the door and knocked.

A quiet-looking Spanish servant answered the summons.

'Where is your master?' said Redgrave sternly.

'In bed, ill,' replied the man.

'What does he say?' asked Digby hoarsely.

'That Ramon is in bed ill.'

'It is a lie!' roared Digby. 'He is not here. Redgrave, get horses; we must follow and hunt him down.'

'What is this noise?' said a familiar voice; and Ramon, looking painfully sallow and ill, came into the open hall. 'Ah, Redgrave!—My dear Digby, what is this? Some one has attacked you?'

'No,' said the young man. 'Yes,' he added fiercely. 'An enemy—a cowardly, treacherous enemy struck at my life, but failed. Struck at my life, so as to separate me from the woman I love. Do you hear? you Spanish dog!—from the woman I love, and who loves me. Now, answer, if you value your life—where is Helen?'

'Helen? Why do you ask me?'

'Because I can see through your cursed plot. Now, sir, once more, if you value your life, speak the truth. Where is Helen?'

'Is the young señor mad, Redgrave?' said Ramon coldly.

'Let me answer, Redgrave.—Yes, sir, mad—mad against you. Once more, if you value your life, where is Helen?'

'Oh yes,' said Ramon mockingly, 'I value my life.'

'Then where is she?'

'The señor thinks I have taken her away?'

'Don't madden me, Ramon. I am a quiet, easy-going fellow, but dangerous when roused. Where is she?'

'I do not know.'

'You lie, hound!' cried Digby; and, weak as he was, he sprang at the Spaniard and caught him by the throat.

The moment before, Ramon was calm and smooth and soft of word; but, as he felt Digby's hands at his throat, he flashed out into a rage that was almost volcanic. He struggled, but vainly, weak as his aggressor was, for he too seemed to be suffering from some injury which turned him faint. But his words were fierce and strong, and his eyes glittered as he cried menacingly: 'Ah, then, the señor is jealous. He feels pangs, and fierce with rage, does he, because the pretty child is not here!'

'Will you cease this before I strangle you!' cried Digby savagely. 'Where is Helen?'

'Fool! idiot! dog!' hissed out the Spaniard, delivering each word as if it were a deadly blow. 'Don't ask me. Go and ask your cunning false friend. Ask Fraser, when you can find him. He has taken her away.'

'What? It is not true. It is another of your cowardly tricks to throw us off the scent.'

'Indeed? Then, where is Fraser?'

'Murdered, for aught I know, as you tried to murder me,' cried Digby fiercely, but with a horrible suspicion gaining upon him fast.

'You are a boy—a weak boy,' snarled Ramon. 'Your friend, where is he? Ah, it is always the friend who deceives.'

'Ramon, for Heaven's sake, the truth,' cried Redgrave. 'My child! my child!'

'Gone with this idiot's false friend.—There, go, both of you.—I tell you I am ill.—Pedro, your arm.'

He reeled, and would have fallen but for his servant's quick action; and as he was lowered fainting to the matting-covered floor, Digby saw that his head had evidently received some severe injury.

CHAPTER XL.—CONCLUSION.

'I cannot understand it,' said Redgrave wearily. 'I was out the greater part of yesterday; and when I returned, Helen had disappeared.'

'But you heard what he said, Mr Redgrave—Fraser—gone.—Oh, it seems impossible!'

Redgrave sank wearily upon a stone, and let the cool wind which came fiercely from the north blow upon his heated brow.

'You don't speak, sir,' cried Digby passionately.

'What can I say, sir? Tell me about yourself. What did you mean by charging Señor Ramon with an attempt to murder you?'

Digby impatiently explained.

'It is strange,' said Redgrave; 'but I cannot think he would go so far as that.'

'Never mind whether he could or would,' cried Digby. 'Helen—we must find Helen. Is that man deceiving us?'

Redgrave shook his head. 'You saw the condition he was in. There was no deceit in that.'

'Could he have taken her away? Is she hidden at some place he owns?'

'No; it is too improbable. These are not the

days of abductions, young man.—Could Helen have deceived me?' he muttered.

But Digby caught what he said. 'No,' he cried proudly; 'she is incapable of deceit.'

In an instant his hands were grasped tightly, and Redgrave was gazing almost affectionately in his eyes. 'God bless you for that, my boy!' he cried in a choking voice—'God bless you for that!'

Digby returned the warm frank pressure; and from that moment it seemed as if they worked together with renewed spirit and as one.

'I cannot think that Fraser would fight against me or play a deceptive part,' cried Digby warmly, after a long discussion which followed a vain search for news.

'It is hard to doubt one you believe to be a friend,' said Redgrave. 'But there is no doubt of one thing.'

'And that is?'

'Fraser loved my child.'

'Oh! Impossible!' Digby's ejaculation was full of wonderment and doubt.

'Was she not sufficiently beautiful and true and good?'

'Don't talk like that, as if she were no more.'

'I noticed it from the first,' continued Redgrave. 'I saw how he was struck by her; and in my trouble with Ramon's advances, I found myself thinking how much happier she would be with the quiet, grave, middle-aged student, and I hoped that she would return his affection.'

'And I, sir?' cried Digby resentfully.

'Ah, yes. I saw that you loved her too; but I looked upon you as the hot changeable lover of a day attracted by the first pretty face he saw. But Helen chose you.'

'And Fraser—did he ever?'

'Speak to me? No. I watched him carefully, as a man would who had his daughter's happiness at stake; but he seemed to think that his chances were hopeless, and to acquiesce in your position. I do not think Helen ever suspected his love.'

'She could not. I never dreamed of such a thing.'

'No,' said Redgrave sadly; 'when one is young, one is selfish and blind to all but self. You both were blind.'

'Then all this points to the fact that Fraser has been playing a double part against us all; and that, by some cunning jugglery, he has persuaded Helen to listen to him—to accompany him—No; I'll never believe that. My old friend has fallen a victim to the fate I escaped. No, Mr Redgrave, I can't believe that.'

Inquiries were made in every direction, especially down in the port; but no vessel had touched there; not even a fishing-boat had left the little place; and it was blowing so hard off-shore that no boat would have dared to approach or leave from that side of the island.

'Let's go back to Ramon's; I am sure we shall learn something there,' cried Digby at last. 'That scoundrel is at the bottom of it all, I'm sure.'

They went straight to the Spaniard's house, to meet the English doctor of the place, about to leave.

'Bad, sir—very bad. Quite insensible. Concussion of the brain from a fall or from some blow. The case is serious, I'm afraid.'

Redgrave and Digby exchanged looks.

'Do not have him disturbed. I shall be here again in a couple of hours,' said the doctor; and he walked briskly away.

'No deceit here,' said Redgrave.

'No; but question his man Pedro. Promise him any bribe so that we may get at the truth.'

'We are on the wrong scent,' said Redgrave dismally, as they walked away. 'Pedro knows nothing, I am sure.'

Digby did not feel convinced; but he could do no more, and he followed Redgrave to the desolate home, sick and wearied out, his injuries from his fall forcing him to keep his bed for the next three days, and submit to the doctor's ministering. At the end of those three days, during which time Redgrave had scoured the island in every direction, Digby was able to leave his bed, while the news of the doctor as he tended Ramon was of the darkest hue.

'He may recover; I can say no more,' was the only reply Digby could obtain.

It was on the fourth morning that, with the gentleness of one who bore for him a real affection, sallow and haggard-looking, Redgrave helped Digby to a seat in front of that once pleasant villa, where he could breathe the sweet pure sea-air, and at the same time be sheltered from the fierce rays of the sun, once more shining in all its glory. For the gale had blown over, and the sea softly rippled in the gentle breeze.

'No news—no news!' groaned Digby, as he lay back with his head resting upon the pillow his host had placed at the back of his chair. 'And I used to think this place a perfect heaven!'

That day had nearly passed, and after being within doors during the hottest time, Digby was again seated beneath the tree, gazing sadly out to sea, and asking himself how long it would be ere he recovered his strength.

'I must find them—I must find them,' he groaned. And then he started up, tottered, holding on by the back of the chair, dizzy with excitement, for unmistakably that was Fraser's voice he heard; and directly after the gate was opened, and Helen entered with him, leaning affectionately upon his arm.

The moment they were inside the gate, Helen darted into the house; and from where he sat, Digby could hear Redgrave's cry of joy, and realise as well as if he had seen it that the sobbing girl had thrown herself into her father's arms.

'My darling!' said Fraser softly as he took off his hat and stood gazing toward the house. Then, with a bitter sigh, he turned away, and caught sight of the pale drawn face of Digby standing motionless in the shadow beneath the tree.

'Ah, my dear old Tom!' he cried; and his whole manner changed, as he literally ran at him. 'What is it?—Hurt?'

'Keep back!' cried Digby, in a suffocating voice. 'You mean despicable traitor!'

'What!—Oh, I see,' said Fraser genially; and then a mocking look came into his face as he added slyly: 'Don't take on about it, Tom. We can't all win.'

Digby was too weak to reply; he merely darted a bitter look at his friend, and sank helpless, and with his brain swimming, in the chair. He was conscious of voices and of seeing figures come as

it were through a mist. Then, as he struggled back to himself, it was to find that Helen was leaning over him with her arms about his neck.

'You?' he panted. 'I don't—I don't understand.'

'Have you not told him, Fraser, my dear fellow?' cried Redgrave.

'I? No. Poor boy; he was too cross. No; too upset.—There, Tom, my dear lad,' he cried, going down on one knee and taking his friend's hand, 'don't let's play at cross-purposes.'

'I—I—don't understand,' said Digby hoarsely.

'Soon explained, my dear lad. I was very suspicious of Ramon, as you know, though you snubbed me; and after the last pressing way in which he proposed that we should visit the head of the *barranco*, I felt sure there was something on the way. "It is a plan to get rid of us for the time," I said. And after turning the matter over in my mind, I thought I would let him think we were going, and see us start, and then step back and watch.'

'Yes?' cried Digby eagerly.

'Well, I started early, and left a line for you to follow; and of course I let you go on while I dropped into the bushes and watched—you first, then our friend.'

'Quick! you torture me,' cried Digby.

'That ought not to be torture,' said Fraser quietly, as he glanced at where Helen clung to her injured lover. 'Well, there is little to tell. I saw you go; and an hour after, when I was beginning to grow suspicious of myself and my doubts, I saw Ramon come out, and I followed him right up to here.'

'Yes.'

'Here he came as with a message imploring help for you, old fellow. You had fallen from one of the rocks down by the seashore, and wanted brandy and bandages.'

'The scoundrel!'

'Yes; the scoundrel was very sorry our host here was out—so he said, but glad to escort poor little Helen down to her wounded lover. She followed blindly, thinking only of you; and when she reached the spot, you were not lying there, but a boat was ready, to sail somewhere or another, Ramon only knows.'

'And then, Tom,' cried Helen, who had been listening excitedly, 'Mr Fraser came up as he was trying to drag me into the boat.'

'Come,' cried Fraser, laughing; 'that isn't fair. Let me tell my own story. You'll knock all the gilding off. I don't have a chance every day to play knight-errant.'

'Go on, for pity's sake,' cried Digby.

'All right. He dragged her on board, pushed off; and I thought I was too late; but a wave checked him, and I rushed into the water and got hold of the side. Then he raised the boat-hook and struck me. Well, that naturally made me feel savage. My hand went to my belt; and somehow, I hardly know how, I gave him a topper with my geological hammer; and the next thing I saw clearly was Ramon crawling out of the sea, while I was trying to manage the boat, for a fierce puff of wind came down the *barranco* and nearly capsized us.—That's all.'

'No, no; that can't be all,' cried Digby excitedly.

'Well, not quite. The squall increased to a

gale. It was impossible to land ; we were blown right out to sea—ocean, I mean—and after being nearly swamped about a hundred thousand times, we managed to get under the lee of Palma, right across yonder ; Miss Helen here behaving like a heroine ; and there we stayed with some friends of Mr Redgrave till the weather lulled, and then we sailed back. There—that is all.’

‘No ; that is not all,’ cried Helen, flushing. ‘He has said nothing hardly about his gallantry in defending me from that man, nor about his brave true chivalry all through our perilous trip. You ought to be proud’— She paused, and took Digby’s hand between hers as she looked blushing in his eyes—‘*We* ought to be proud to have so true a friend.’

‘Horace, old man,’ whispered Digby as he held out his hand, ‘can you ?’

‘Can I ?’ cried the other, warmly grasping the extended hand.

An hour later, when they two were alone, and after all further explanations had been given, Fraser said softly, his face nearly hidden by the cloud from his cigar : ‘Yes, old fellow, why should I deny it ? Who could help loving so sweet and pure a woman ? I love her too well ever to let her think otherwise of me than as her true and chivalrous friend. The rest is our secret, Tom.’ And after a pause : ‘She loves you—her every thought is yours ; and as for me, I have but one wish—to see her happy.—There ; you see I can take your hand.’

There is little more to tell. Ramon did not die ; but he was still anything but the same man, when the Redgraves returned to England, with an escort—Redgrave *père* having found means to pay off his indebtedness to the Spaniard, not a very large amount—when he had successfully parted with his interests in an island of which he had long been weary. How he obtained the money, he did not say. Digby suspected that it came from Fraser ; but the latter would not confess.

The other matter was a year later, and there were no cards.

DOGCART REMINISCENCES.

LIFE in a remote country village many miles from a railway gives a good opportunity for studying the dogcart side of rural life. The number of people in the east of England who spend a large portion of their lives in driving is extraordinary ; and the effect of this on different characters is well worth observing. It is the ambition of every small tradesman, farmer, and dealer to possess not only a ‘hoss and trap,’ but also an animal that can pass most vehicles on the road. If it has four sound legs, all the better, provided that it has some counterbalancing vice that renders it not worth selling ; for the East Anglian is a thrifty man, and does not care to work an animal whose value might be impaired by the reckless pace at which he loves to travel. ‘He is too good for my business,’ said a man to me one day as I was admiring a fine young trotter he was driving ; ‘I want to sell him before I spoil him.’

It was in the long drives to and from our station and county town—the former nine, and

the latter thirteen miles off—that I was best able to study the various characters of drivers. They generally tried their best to beguile the long journey with conversation. One I remember held forth on the temperance question. Another gave me some interesting information on poaching. We were passing through a good partridge country, and the stubble-fields were thickly studded with thorn bushes, to prevent poachers from netting the birds.

‘Them bushes ain’t a mite of use,’ he said. ‘A good silk net would go over them like a sheet.’

‘Well,’ I asked, ‘what are the right kind ?’

‘Little ones,’ he answered, ‘loose on the ground. They catch the tail of the net, and roll up in it, so that it takes half the night to get them out. The only big ones that are any trouble are blackthorn or ragged boughs. I used to do a lot of it one winter, when I was out of work for fourteen weeks ; but I was never fond of it like some chaps, and dropped poaching altogether when I got regular work and left that part. No ; I never was caught, though I had a near squeak for it once. That was along of hares. Somehow, dogs were always fond of me, and there was not a greyhound in the parish but would go with me if I whistled to him. There was a chap in our village called Lubbigger—leastways his name was Freeman, but he was never called so. Well, he had a wonderful long dog that could catch most hares, and would carry one a mile if necessary. One day, Lubbigger told me to come along with him, for he had heard that Colonel T——’s keeper would be away at the dog-show, and there was only one watcher on the beat, a foreigner from the Shires. I was to get a greyhound ; so I stepped up the street and saw Mr Jackson’s Bob lying outside the butcher’s shop. No one was about, so Bob followed me across the meadows quick enough. There had been a lot of rain the night before, so that the hares could not travel well on the ploughed land. We soon had a brace, and then the dogs ran one that took them towards the Home Wood. They killed near a fence ; and just as I was picking up the hare I saw the watcher jump out of the wood. Away I went down the side of the hedge ; and Lubbigger, who had the two other hares in his pockets, close behind me. “Give me the hare,” he cried. I did so, though I thought he had better have dropped it. He could run much better than I, but he did not try to pass me. The keeper got nearer him, and had almost reached his collar, when he swung the hare round with all his might, caught the man on the side of his head and sent him over into the ditch. It was four feet deep, with two feet of water at the bottom, so that he was in no trim for running when he got out. “Now run, Jack,” Lubbigger said to me ; and away he went with the three hares faster than I could go with none.

‘We stopped at a house, hid the hares in a couple of fagots that we bought of the labourer’s wife there, and walked up the village to my house, where we put the fagots in a shed. The dogs had gone home as soon as they saw us run, so that no one guessed what we had been after.

‘Now, come to the public,’ said Lubbigger. ‘He is sure to look in there.’

‘We had not been smoking our pipes five minutes before our friend came in. “Have you

seen Dick White this afternoon?" he asked the landlord.

"He has not been here since ten o'clock," he answered, "when he came in with his greyhound."

"I knew he had gone to the dog-show! He had had the impudence to enter his dog, for he said it had killed more hares than any in the parish, and so ought to get a prize.

"A brindled dog, is it not?" said the keeper. "Then that is the man I saw to-day near the Home Wood, and a tall fellow with him with a long coat on. I should have caught them easily; but I twisted my ankle jumping the brook, and had to run through it when they crossed it again; that is why my legs are so wet."

"I saw he had changed his coat; and so had Lubbigger, which was lucky, for I saw the keeper look at him once or twice. But he did not spot us."

The idiosyncrasies of professional drivers are always strongly marked. The life is one that allows a man's natural bent to develop. Dickens has immortalised two very different characters in Mr Weller, senior, and Barkis, both of whom owe much of their peculiarity to their life on the box: the talkative, good-natured, liberal Weller to the pleasant and honoured seat behind four good horses, with plenty of tips and a welcome at every inn; the taciturn and miserly Barkis to the side of his tilted cart, and the long, dull, and frequently solitary drives through country lanes. The taciturn driver becomes morose, the cheerful more talkative; the sociable, I am sorry to say, generally drunken, and the thoughtful one epigrammatic. Not long ago I revisited the old place, and renewed my acquaintance with many of the carriers and drivers I had long known. In the five years that had elapsed since I had last seen them, each one's characteristics had become more sharply defined. The epigrammatic man was really almost unintelligible at times. "What kind of man is the new tenant at Stowe Farm?" I asked. "Wonderful fond of rum and porter, sir."—"How is Smith doing now?" "Nothing wasted in that house, sir."—"Glad of it," I replied. "What he can't drink, the missus does," replied John.

The talkative driver is almost invariably a bad one. He may be all there over a difficult bit of road, or determined enough with a restive horse; but in a long drive he is almost certain to become careless, and the result is frequently broken knees. Accidents seem generally to happen in unlikely spots. I have been in a good many, and never saw a horse fall on a steep hill; and only once a collision, and that a slight one, occur at a dangerous corner. A gentle slope down which a horse trots with almost a slack rein is generally the place where he falls. One bad collision I was in took place on a brilliant moonlight night. I was returning from a day's shooting, and had hired a trap from an innkeeper who was also a 'vet.' There was a slight frost, and the air seemed wonderfully clear. The horse was a good one and fresh, and we were going merrily at about ten miles an hour over a level piece of road with low hedges on each side. A little farther on, that on our right was remarkably high, at least ten feet, and threw a dense shadow completely across the road. Just as we were near this spot, a tall

dogcart emerged from the darkness. A shout of 'Where are you coming to?' a crash, and then I was shot on to the grass by the roadside, the vet. went head over heels over the splashboard, while my gun rattled on the road between us. The mare had broken both traces, and was galloping off like a mad thing. The vet. lay groaning pitifully, and I was much distressed on his account, for I thought the least one could expect from the noise was a broken leg; but after feeling himself all over, he said: 'No; I don't think I am hurt at all.'

"What! doctor, is that you?" said the man in the dogcart when he heard the voice.

"Why, Mr Tom," said my man, 'whatever were you doing?'

"Oh, I thought you could see me all right. I saw your trap quarter of a mile away, so I did not trouble to pull to one side much. I am very sorry; but if my trap is all right, I will drive your gentleman wherever he wants to go to."

We disentangled the two carts, and found that neither was much damaged. The young farmer insisted on staying to look for our horse, as I would not consent to his sister, who was driving with him, being left to walk home while he took me towards my destination. The girl seemed to think little of driving alone with only one trace and a broken kicking strap, and said Tom must certainly stay and do what he could to make up for his carelessness. Luckily our mare had her head away from home, and so did not go far. We mended the traces with string, and finished our journey without further mishap.

Horses are very clever at avoiding collisions on dark nights, and their sight is, I fancy, much keener than men's. More than once have I, when unexpectedly benighted, been indebted to my pony's quickness for my safe arrival. One day the train I had been to meet was very late; the evening was dull, and heavy clouds were gathering in the westward, and we were still two miles from home when twilight had disappeared completely. There was one very bad piece of road before us, a narrow place overhung by trees, with a steep bank on one side, and a narrow but rather deep stream on the other. The darkness was intense under the trees. Suddenly my cob, which was going very freely, swerved to one side, drew the cart close to the bank on the left and stood still. I then heard the rattle of a wagon, and shouted. A beery voice answered, and an empty wagon with two horses came past at full trot, so close that I thought we must have been smashed.

This habit carters have of driving their wagons back from market at a trot is a most dangerous one. A nobleman who lived near us had a narrow escape from a serious accident from this cause. He was driving a team in a brake, and on turning a corner near his park gates met two wagons racing abreast down a steep hill. There was not room to pass or time for the heavy cart-horses to pull up, so Lord T—— pulled his horses on to the roadside, and put the near wheels and horses into the ditch, which was fortunately not deep. The grooms got to the leaders' heads and quieted them, so that not much harm was done.

The distance traversed in the course of their journey by dealers, excisemen, and other people who have to live largely in their carts, is extra-

ordinary; and yet their horses rarely seem either sick or sluggish. I remember one man making a bet that he would drive his horse, a well-bred but vicious old screw, fifty miles a day for six consecutive days on the 'Great Road,' the coaching route between London and Norwich. A neighbouring magistrate heard of it, and interfered on the fourth day, so that the journey was not accomplished; but I do not think the horse would have been taxed beyond its powers. The cart was light, the road good, and the animal had much more than its usual allowance of oats. Except in country districts where roads are good and railways few and bad, long distances are not frequently driven now. How many gentlemen have ever had occasion to drive a single horse fifty miles in a day? yet in the last generation such a journey was of no uncommon occurrence. I heard of one old gentleman who, even when the Brighton line had become famous for its speed and comfort, always used to drive to town, and used to take one horse through in the day.

I think our forefathers understood the art of driving long distances better than we do, and probably their animals were specially bred for endurance. There are possibly more first-class horses in England at the present day than at any previous time; but I do not think the proportion of hardy useful animals is so great. There may be more extremely valuable, but few will deny that there are also more fast, weedy wretches that could not do six hard days' consecutive work to save even their own or their masters' lives. Those who have read the *Romany Rye* will remember the directions given there for riding a horse on a journey. The gentle walk at starting, the steady trot after a mile has been covered; then how, after ten miles or so, the rider is advised to stop for breakfast, and enter into conversation with the hostler on the markets, coaches, and so on, until the horse has got through most of his corn before going to look after his own food. Forty miles a day, says the author—no mean authority—can be covered, and that for many days together, if the horse is well up to your weight. Now and then the dealer finds that, in the raw colt he has purchased from a drove of Welsh ponies or shipload of foreign cobs, he has a regular flier. Then he is very mysterious about his new acquisition; talks vaguely of its powers, but is careful not to let them be seen in public until he can secure an advantageous match with some farmer who fancies he has the best trotter in the neighbourhood. I knew of one who sold for one hundred pounds a pony he had bought out of a drove a few months before, for twelve pounds. Lord B— had offered that sum for any pony in the neighbourhood that could beat one he intended to run in a match over a two-mile course. It was a proud moment for the pig-dealer when, in the last quarter of a mile, he shook up his little Welshman and came past his lordship.

One other point worth noticing is the etiquette of the road. If you have room in your cart without using the back seat, it is considered very bad manners to pass any respectable man who may be walking without asking whether he will like to 'ride.' If he be your superior, even though not personally known, the offer should certainly be made. So much is this a matter of

course, that a man will frequently start to walk to some place eight or ten miles off on a market day, knowing that he is soon sure to be overtaken and driven both ways. The East Anglians are not as a rule remarkable for their readiness to entertain strangers; they still seem to think that the 'foreigner' is generally to be regarded with suspicion; but certainly on the road their politeness exceeds that of the inhabitants of what they term 'The Sheeres.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ACCORDING to the *American Field*, the Black Forest wild-boars of Europe have found their way to America, and are breeding and thriving there. It seems that some few years ago Mr Otto Plock of New York imported into the country from Europe nine boars and sows, in order that they might destroy the snakes and other vermin on his estate near the Shawangunk Mountains, which border Orange and Sullivan counties. The animals soon made short work of the vermin, and then escaped to the recesses of the mountains, where they have multiplied considerably. It is said that the beasts are so ferocious that the boldest hunter thinks twice before coming to close quarters with them.

We noticed the other day in a crowded London thoroughfare that the passers-by were attracted by the novelty of a parish water-cart which was plentifully sprinkling a crimson rain over the thirsty stones. This fluid was of course water in which had been dissolved some permanganate of potash, one of our most useful disinfectants. The precaution of using such a mixture during the hot weather in crowded places is much to be commended, and might be imitated with advantage in other localities.

There were some curious observations made with regard to the fall of hailstones which occurred in this country in the beginning of June, and which affected a very wide area. The stones were of unusual size, weighing in some cases several ounces each. Some, again, appeared to be compound, as if two or more stones had become fused together; others, again, were made up of concentric layers like the coats of an onion. But the most curious observation was made by Mr I. C. Thompson, who records that he found in several a dark-coloured stony deposit. He also found small pieces of vegetable tissue which under the microscope had the appearance of cryptogamic spore cases.

A phenomenal bird was recently exhibited to the members of the Zoological Society of London. This was a female silver pheasant which displayed the plumage of the male bird, and which represents, we believe, quite a unique case.

In a Report presented to the American Society of Civil Engineers there is an account of some recent experiments by Mr J. B. Francis with reference to the percolation of water through

cement. One of these experiments showed that under a pressure of seventy-seven pounds per square inch, more than seventeen gallons of water per square foot of surface will pass through sixteen inches of cement in twenty-four hours. Other experiments showed that thick brickwork laid in cement permitted a copious percolation of water under pressure. The question is one of no little importance, especially in connection with drainage-works, where brickwork conduits are commonly used.

The Nebuliser is a spray apparatus which was designed by Dr Lighthill of Boston as a ready means for introducing any liquid remedy direct to the lungs and lower air-passages. This is accomplished by means of a containing vessel to which is attached an india-rubber bulb, upon squeezing which the liquid within the vessel is discharged from a tube. This tube is held in the mouth while the operation is going forward, and the finely divided liquid, in the form of spray, is drawn into the lungs. Any chosen remedy can be readily given in this manner, and the method has already been found effectual in many instances. The apparatus has recently been introduced commercially in this country.

A foreign medical journal has a note to the effect that Professor Renzi of Naples has treated successfully several cases of tetanus by insisting upon absolute rest for the patient. But this treatment does not mean the mere release from labour which is so valued by all hard workers. The patient must rest his several senses as well as his body. His ears are closed with wax, his room is dark, and its floor is heavily carpeted. Every fifteen minutes the nurse enters with a shaded lantern to attend to the patient's wants, and to administer food, such as eggs, beef-tea, and the like, which requires no mastication. Sedatives are given to relieve pain. It is not pretended that this novel mode of treatment shortens the period of this terrible disease, but it slowly acts in lessening the force of the paroxysms, which gradually cease altogether.

It has long been a source of vexation and disappointment to tourist photographers that their sensitive dry plates are liable to be examined at the Custom House, and that access of light to the plates during such examination renders them useless. It has happened before now that the pictures, as yet undeveloped, which have been taken by the tourist at great trouble and expense, have thus been utterly ruined during the journey home. But at last amateur photographers have become so numerous that they have the power to cause their grievances to be attended to. It was lucky for one of them lately that he had a friend in Lord Ribblesdale, who was able to bring this matter of exposure of plates by Custom House officials under the direct notice of the Government. It has now been authoritatively stated that such a vexatious episode is not likely to occur again. At most Custom Houses we shall now probably have dark rooms, where by red light, which does no harm to photographic plates or films, suspected packages can be examined by zealous officials.

A correspondent of the *Zoologist*, in the course of an interesting account of the wholesale destruc-

tion of small birds which takes place at various continental towns, gives some particulars of the manner in which wood-pigeons migrating south in the autumn through the passes of the Pyrenees are snared by the inhabitants of the various districts in which these mountain-gorges are situated. Across these narrow ways, nets are spread and attached to trees on either side; and on the top-most branches of one of these trees is stationed a boy with a stuffed hawk. As the pigeons approach, he pitches the hawk into the air, and the poor birds dive down out of the way of their supposed enemy, and are caught in the netting below. The same writer gives a long list of birds whose dead bodies he saw exposed for sale at a poulterer's shop at Rome. Among these victims were blackbirds, thrushes, linnets, goldfinches, robins, and many other little feathered songsters that we in Britain should be ashamed to look upon as edible.

We some time back called attention to the establishment of a Ladies' League, which had for its object the humane one of preventing the wholesale massacre of our feathered songsters in order that their bodies might adorn hats, bonnets, and other articles of female attire. It would seem that some such organisation were terribly needed among our French neighbours, for the destruction of small birds there is so enormous that the Zoological Society of that country has made a warning protest to the Government concerning the serious consequences which are likely to ensue. In one place on the coast, which is said to be the chief landing-place for swallows coming from Africa, wires have been extensively laid down. These wires are connected with electric generators, so that directly an unfortunate bird completes the circuit by touching them, it drops dead. We trust that this report is an exaggerated one. It is hardly likely that such a death-dealing arrangement would be extensively employed, for the reason that the expense of installation and maintenance of such a system even on a small scale would be considerable.

At the Society of Arts lately, Dr Salviati read a most interesting paper upon the Manufacture of Venetian Glass, in which he stated that that beautiful product is actually manufactured not in Venice proper, but at Murano, an island which lies half a mile north of that city. The paper was an exhaustive one, and spoke highly of the harmony which exists among the artists employed at the works, each striving to do his best to produce the most beautiful results. But there is one terrible circumstance in connection with this industry, and that is, that after many years of work, when these good people are between forty and fifty years of age, they begin to lose their sight, and after a short while are wholly blind. There seems to be no remedy for this unfortunate state of things, for many protective devices have been tried without success. The blindness is caused by the excessive heat and also by the glare of the never-ceasing flames from the glass furnaces. It is some comfort to know that these poor victims to art are content to live very simply, and as their wages are high, they are able to save large sums. Thus their declining years, although passed under such sad conditions, have not the additional misery which want entails.

It was stated some time ago that from experiments undertaken by two French savants they

had detected a certain principle in the exhalations from the human lung which exerted a powerful poisonous action; this poisonous property being quite apart from and in addition to the carbonic acid gas which is given off by all animals as a product of expiration. In some fresh experiments a number of rabbits were placed in a series of airtight cages, so that, as pure air was caused to enter at one end of the series, the rabbit confined in each cage was compelled to breathe the same air until it was discharged at the last cage. Thus the animal in the first cage only was permitted to breathe absolutely pure air. It was found that under these conditions the rabbits placed in the further cages rapidly died. At the same time the experimenters record that animals of various kinds can breathe without inconvenience air containing a high percentage of uncontaminated carbonic acid, and notably is this the case with men, who can breathe for two or three hours air which contains as much as twenty per cent. of that gas. A further experiment was tried of passing the air from the sixth cage through sulphuric acid, by which action the poisonous principle was removed, but the carbonic acid remained. Under these conditions the animals in the last cages lived without inconvenience, whilst that in the sixth cage died after a short time. It seems certain, therefore, that the injurious effect of expired air is due to this poison, and not to the gas named.

We import into this country a vast quantity of Indian wheat, not less, indeed, than one million tons annually. With it we import no fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand tons of dirt. The Secretary of State for India, with a view of finding some remedy for this state of things, convened a short time ago a Conference upon the subject; and it is to be hoped that the labours of this Conference will result in some better way of preparing Indian wheat for export to this country.

According to Sir Spencer Wells, the practice of cremation is on the increase. In Rome the number of human bodies cremated had increased from one hundred and nineteen in 1886, and one hundred and fifty-five in 1887, to more than two hundred in the past year. At the Woking Crematorium, too, in our own country, the number of cremations has been sixty-nine since that method of disposing of the dead had been authorised by parliament. Sir Spencer Wells holds that it will be impossible to prevent the spread of a number of our most terrible diseases, including consumption, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and cholera, if burial in the earth of the bodies of those who fall victims to such maladies is continued, and that our cemeteries, in fact, by preserving the germs or seeds of such diseases, are nurseries for their perpetuation.

According to the *Hospital*, there is a great deal of artificial honey at present offered for sale, and purchasers will perhaps be more careful in buying that sweet product which is supposed to come from the beehive, when they know that it is commonly made of potato starch and sulphuric acid. Some people may think that, by buying the honey in the comb, they will steer clear of such sophistication; but the same authority tells us that the beautiful white comb which looks so nice and genuine is often made of paraffin wax. We hope, for the credit of human nature, that

these statements are not founded upon actual fact.

A French scientific journal gives a recipe for a cement which is coming into use, and which is said to be harder and more enduring than any other known. It is made by mixing glycerine with litharge (oxide of lead). The preparation seems to be very simple: the finely powdered litharge, after being dried at a high temperature, has glycerine added to it until the mixture is of the necessary consistency, that of thick mortar. Another recipe for a cement for a different purpose, namely, for the attachment of paper labels to metal, has also been lately published. The metal is dipped into a strong solution of soda, and is afterwards washed over with the juice of an onion. Paper pasted to a surface so prepared will, it is said, stick with such tenacity that it is almost impossible to release it without destruction.

Most of us have gone through the disagreeable experience of taking a chair at some public park or other place to find afterwards that a fee has to be paid as rental for it. A new Automatic Seat, which requires no attendant to demand the aforesaid coin, has recently been on view in London, and is said to be already in extensive use at various places on the Continent. The chair has a spring seat, and that seat is held rigidly to the back, and cannot be pulled down to a sitting position until a penny is dropped into the slot at the side. The seat of the chair is then released, and the occupier is free to use it as long as he pleases. When he rises, he must place an umbrella or other article on the seat, to prevent it flying back again to its normal position, or he will have another penny to pay before he can again use it. The arrangement is an ingenious one, but still we feel that without any great sacrifice seats might be provided in public places free of charge.

For some time past a method of protecting the vines in various districts of France from the attack of mildew has been adopted. This consists in sprinkling the leaves of the vine with a mixture of sulphate of copper and slaked lime in water. The question arose—owing to several cases of sudden illness last year in persons who had drunk of the product from vines thus treated—whether the copper did not enter into the plants to such an extent as to make the wine from them poisonous. The British consul at Bordeaux, in alluding to this matter, informs us that careful analysis has proved conclusively that the vines so treated are not injurious to health; for although a certain amount of copper is absorbed by the plant, a person would have to drink at least two thousand gallons of wine produced from it before he could absorb into his system enough copper to do him any injury. The trifling amount of copper in the wine is much less than that contained in many other articles of daily consumption. Whether this treatment of the grape affects the flavour or other qualities of the wine produced from it, is a question which must for the present remain an open one.

Under the name of Dalura, a kind of artistic decoration in wood has just been brought to our notice, which will enable many who are fond of adorning their houses tastefully, but whose means are too limited to go to large outlay, to

indulge a little more freely in domestic adornment. Dalura is solid wood upon which, by the combined action of heat and pressure, designs in relief are produced which are simply delicious in their clearness and neatness of execution. The process by which these effects are obtained is very simple. It is carried out by means of a small machine, the principal working parts of which comprise a pair of horizontal steel rollers revolving slowly. The upper roller, which is heated by a gas-flame, carries around its circumference the pattern, the lower roller being smooth. The wood, which may be hard or soft and of any length, is passed between these rollers under pressure, and the special pattern which the upper roller may happen to carry is reproduced on it. The pattern, the result of compression, comes out in relief, which may be varied according to the style of the work. The result of the exceedingly simple operation is that the grain of the wood is retained, the background being toned from a deep to a pale brown, or left the natural colour of the wood, as desired. The depth of the colour is regulated by the heating of the upper roller and the rate at which the wood is made to travel between the rollers, the raised design standing out in the natural colour of the wood. The system may be applied to furniture and internal decoration in a variety of patterns, and both in the curved and straight form. As the Dalura decoration is stated to be waterproof, it may equally be used for outdoor decoration.

Some curious machines, constructed on the principle of 'Put a penny in the slot and the figure will work,' have just been placed at some of the London railway stations. Their arrangement is ingenious, if somewhat complicated, and they are designed to receive and deliver messages. Hence, they have been called Message Cabinets. The mode of operating them is as follows: The apparatus is in the form of a cabinet, the lower portion of which is desk-shaped. In this portion two apertures, one large and the other small, are cut, through which paper for writing messages appears. The upper portion of the Cabinet is a glazed frame, behind which the written messages are made to appear, but hidden from view by sliding-doors. In order to write a message, a penny is placed in the slot in the desk-portion of the Cabinet, by which a small locked handle below it is released. The latter is then pulled, when paper on a continuous roll appears under the two apertures, in the larger of which the message is written, while the paper in the smaller aperture is sufficient for a name, initials, or an agreed sign. The handle is then turned back, when the message recedes from view, the paper being carried upwards to the glazed portion of the Cabinet. The names of the intended recipients always remain in view, however, so that a person expecting to find a message glances down the list for his name or initials. If he finds it there, he places a penny in the slot in the upper compartment, by which a locked handle close to the slot is released. The handle being turned, the door automatically slides back, and the message may be read. On the handle being let go, the door slides back into its former place, and cannot be re-opened unless a fresh penny is put into the slot. The machines seem to be taking well, especially among the curious, for it has been found that the number of

pennies in the delivery slots far exceeds the coins placed in the receiving slots.

'Grains' are a by-product of brewing, and enter largely in the dietary of stock-farms where they can be conveniently obtained. But grains must be fresh from the breweries, because they spoil by being kept too long. To obviate this, Herr Emil Passburg, of Breslau, has applied the principle of evaporation *in vacuo* to the extraction of moisture from solid substances, and has been successful in constructing an apparatus for drying grains. In this instance the process appears to be of special advantage, as brewers' grains contain as much as seventy-five per cent. of moisture, the carriage of which has to be paid for, if they are sent out wet. The retention of water in the grains also acts prejudicially upon them, and if they are not used quickly, they perish. Herr Passburg, at the recent meeting in London of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, described his apparatus. Two of these machines are at present in operation at Messrs Guinness and Sons' Brewery, Dublin, and they are reported to give every satisfaction in their working and the economical results obtained, the cost of drying grains being about six shillings per ton, the apparatus being worked from the boilers and machinery of the brewery.

INDIAN LIFE IN THE FAR WEST.

THE Indian braves, or bucks as they are called on the frontier, consider it beneath their dignity to take any active part in the distribution of rations at the several agencies in the Far West of the United States, except at such times as live cattle are distributed for beef; then they appear mounted and armed, anxious to exhibit their ability as horsemen and marksmen. These times are the only chances they now have to enact again the scenes of the buffalo hunt, and glad are they to take advantage of the opportunity.

On such an occasion, the cattle corral, usually situated a few miles from the agency buildings, presents a picture both novel and interesting. Inside are the cattle to be given out, one head to so many families of Indians; and these animals being nearly as wild as the buffalo, add to the interest. Assembled around the outside of the corral you will find the Indians attended by the squaws, to whose lot falls the works of skinning and dressing the cattle after they have been killed by the braves, who believe that any kind of manual labour is beneath them. While awaiting the arrival of the agent, whose duty it is to deliver the animals, and see that they are properly distributed, these children of the plains amuse themselves with horseracing and exhibiting their skill in horsemanship; or they sit around on the grass smoking, while the squaws hold their horses in readiness for them to mount as soon as the time arrives. In smoking, the Indian exhibits a peculiarity which to a white man would be very distasteful: the pipes are passed from hand to hand around the circle, each man taking a few whiffs, and passing the pipe to his nearest right-

hand neighbour. You cannot offer an Indian a greater insult than to refuse to smoke from his pipe when he offers it.

But the approach of the agent is the signal for general activity: the horses are mounted, and the Indians assemble near the gate of the corral, from which the cattle are driven out one at a time. As soon as the poor animals find themselves free, they naturally start on a run for their feeding-grounds. Then the sport commences, for as each animal is let out, it is followed by a number of yelling Indians, as fast as their ponies can run, shooting arrows into its sides until it either receives a mortal wound, or drops from loss of blood and exhaustion. Sometimes the chase is made doubly exciting and interesting by the pursued turning on its pursuers, when it will fight with as much courage and ferocity as any beast of prey, often goring the ponies, and trampling and 'hooking' the Indians. As soon as the animal drops dead, the squaws gather round it, skin and dress the carcase, and fight like a lot of buzzards over the entrails, which are considered a delicacy by them. But the greatest delicacy you can give an Indian is a fat dog, which he will eat with much relish. At their principal feasts, this is considered the most delicate dish.

The redskins continue to practise many of the customs prevalent before their civilisation was attempted, especially their dances, chief among which is the Sun Dance. This is really one of their religious ceremonies, and is observed by the Sioux nation every year, usually during the month of June, when the Indians form a temporary camp and assemble in large numbers, several thousands often being present. This is the most important period in the lives of the young men of the tribe, being the ordeal through which each has to pass to prove his bravery and to satisfy the older men that he is entitled to be counted among the braves. This ceremony controls the future life of a young Indian; at this time he may be said to step at one stride from boyhood to manhood. The Sun Dance is the last relic of barbarous days; and notwithstanding the efforts made to civilise the red men, they cling to its observance with a persistency which proves how difficult is the task the advocates of Indian civilisation have undertaken.

About ten days are usually occupied in the ceremonies attending the Sun Dance, during which time the chief medicine-man of the tribe holds despotic sway. From the maidens of the tribe, one (a virgin) is selected to cut the pole around which the dance is to take place. After the pole is cut and the medicine-man has consecrated it and invoked the aid of the Great Spirit to sustain the young men in the ordeal they are about to go through, thongs of raw hide are attached to the top, and it is set in its place by the same maiden.

In the medicine-man's tent the young men, who have already fasted for several days, submit to have the flesh on their chests cut in two gashes about half an inch apart, an inch or two in length, and loosened from the bones. Then they march to the pole, and each in turn has the loose end of a raw-hide thong pulled through the slit and fastened securely. They are then compelled to dance around the pole, to the music of the drums

and tom-toms, straining and pulling back in the endeavour to tear themselves loose. If they succeed, they are declared braves, and worthy to go into battle. In order to show that they are entitled to a special work of distinction, they dance afterwards in a circle, and cut their flesh with sharp knives until they are compelled to desist from loss of blood and weakness.

The other dances customary with the Indians, accompanied by the drums and tom-toms, are then indulged in by the older braves, who vary the monotony of the dance by each in turn stepping into the magic circle, and, with great flourish and egotism, recounting his own deeds of valour and the number of scalps taken by him. After this, a grand dog-feast is prepared by the squaws, and partaken of by the braves with much relish and gusto, where the participants gorge themselves, and sleep off the effects like a lot of overfed hogs in a pen.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

HAVE you forgotten the old, old story

You whispered to me on that golden day

When the sun was flooding the earth with glory,

And hedges were fragrant and white with may?

Our path led over the cowslip-meadow,

Where birds sang gaily from every tree,

And the way was flecked with sunshine and shadow;

But only the sunshine fell on me.

With the lads and lasses to go a-maying,

That morn we had left for a space life's toil;

And we heard the sound of their footsteps straying

Where the hawthorn promised abundant spoil.

Their hearts grew glad in the golden weather;

They gathered the flowers beneath their feet;

But we two loitered behind together,

For the old, old story seemed new and sweet.

'Tis May-time again; and youth and maiden

Hasten away to the country road,

To cut down the boughs that are blossom-laden,

Or help to carry the fragrant load.

The sunshine is flooding the earth with glory;

The birds are singing on every tree;

But you have forgotten that old, old story,

And only the shadows fall on me.

E. MATHESON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.*

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THE HARVEST MOON.

WHETHER as a thin thread of light, tracing her pale curved outline against the clear sunset sky, or as a broad effulgent disc, making midnight brilliant over the frosted plain, or leaving a lane of light across the waves, reaching from our feet beyond our sight, the moon lends beauty and brightness to our world's scenery. She has in all ages been the changeful favourite of poets and lovers, a fact perhaps accounted for by the variety of her appearances, aided by the gentleness and purity of her light. Milton in *Il Penseroso* desires to

Walk unseen

On the dry smooth shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way.

But while the great poet is true to nature in his fancy, he would well know that while the moon might *seem* to be led astray, she never was so. He knew that the stars

Each had his place appointed, each his course.

Yet in Milton's day little was known as to the real nature of these courses, compared with the clear and orderly teaching of our modern astronomy. Especially is this true with regard to the moon, whose motions are now regularly predicted for five years in advance, and the causes of her changeful appearances well understood. Most people indeed know this vaguely, but very few so definitely as to be able to explain such an appearance, for example, as the harvest moon. Not very long ago we read in the 'Answers to Correspondents' of a generally very well-informed paper that there is a moon in March as bright and lasting as that which usually illumines the September evenings, but that nobody notices it then, as it is of no special use to mankind! I think any one who, like a friend of the writer, sprained his ankle during the intense darkness of the moonless evenings of last March, would

answer differently! This answer is as far from the truth as it could well be. The full moon in March, instead of remaining with us evening after evening, disappears with great rapidity. In fact, any person who observes will find that March is as conspicuous for the brevity of moonlight as September is for its duration.

Most people who live in the country will have noticed, too, how the full moon in midwinter rides high overhead, while in midsummer it rolls low across the southern sky. Some of our readers may indeed have asked in vain an explanation of these changes, while most will probably be interested to have one, and to compare it with their own observation of the phenomena. To explain all the lunar changes would of course occupy too much space, and we shall select for our purpose the so-called 'Harvest Moon,' as that is again coming round in due season, and also as it seems to be one of the least generally understood.

This appearance is not due to any lengthening of the time during which the moon is full, and still less to any enlargement of the lunar disc. The diameter of the apparent disc may be as great, or a little greater, and the moon remain what we popularly call 'full' for even a longer time, in winter, spring, or summer, and yet no effect such as we see in September be produced.

The moon in September has this peculiarity, however, that it rises for a good many successive evenings about the same time, say between six and nine o'clock in the evening, and continues to give light all night. This enables harvest-work to go on continuously, night and day, and is found to be a most beneficial arrangement. For example, the moon, if full, say, on the 9th of September (as it is this year), will rise, for more than a week about that date, somewhere between 6.30 and 9.10 P.M. Its time of rising will be later each night by only some twenty minutes, and it will give light the whole night through. This will give a full week during which there will be very little darkness at all. Whereas, if we take the spring moon of 1888, full on the 27th of March, we shall find that it rose then nearly *one*

hour and a half later each evening, and in five days after full moon, instead of rising soon after eight o'clock, it did not rise till half-past eleven. These, too, are not specially chosen cases; more striking ones could easily be found.

Now, when we ask the reason for this beneficent behaviour of the moon at harvest-time, we are met with a most interesting fact at the outset—namely, that the cause of the harvest moon is the same as the cause of the harvest itself. Both depend on the position of the sun in the sky. As the great light of our world withdraws himself southward, and the short days come on, the harvest, stimulated by his summer beams, whitens for the sickle. And this very declining motion brings the full moon into the position in which she gives light to the wagoner and the reaper.

A little consideration will enable us to see how this is the case. The position of the sun in the sky at the time of full moon determines the place then held by the moon, which at that time must be directly opposite the sun, and like

His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him.

Thus, if the sun be high overhead, the full moon will be below the horizon, enlightening our antipodes. If the sun be setting nearly due west, the full moon will be rising nearly due east; and if the sun be setting in the south-west, the full moon will be well risen in the north-east. Now, we can easily follow the theory of the harvest moon if we grasp this elementary truth, that sun and full moon are thus always in opposite regions of the sky, so that if at time of full moon we turn the back of our head to the sun and look straight before us, we shall look right to where the moon is, whether it be below or above the horizon.

But as the midwinter and midsummer positions of the full moon are more simply explained, we may apply this principle to them first, so that our readers may be prepared more easily to understand the more complex case of the moon in autumn.

First, then, take the full moon in December. It then rides high in the heavens, and comes further north at rising and setting than at any other time of year. Our principle demands that this should be because it is opposite to the sun at that time, and of course this is at once evident, for the sun is then farther *south* than at any other time. The full moon, then, must come farther north, which is the case.

Again, in June, the sun is farther *north* than in any other month of the year. His rising and setting are beautifully seen from windows which have even a direct northern aspect. Our principle demands that the full moon should then be far *south* at its rising and setting, which again we find to be the case.

Now, the farther north in the sky the full moon is, the earlier in the evening it will rise; just as the sun rises earlier in the morning the farther

north it comes, until at the farthest north point of its course it rises in summer before four o'clock. Hence the full moon in December, being far north, rises early, and lights the whole of the long winter night. Every one must have noticed the exceeding beauty of a frosty moonlight night at this season, especially if snow be on the ground. The dark night is transformed with a fairy-like brightness. The trees stand decorated with millions of gems, and the traveller can discern his way nearly as well as by day.

Again, in summer the sun being far north, the full moon is far south, and rises late in the evening, though early enough to illumine the short summer night. In fact, both sun and moon reverse the old proverb, 'Early to bed and early to rise;' for if they rise early at any time, they go to bed late, and *vice versâ*!

These two cases of summer and winter show us what happens when the full moon is farthest to the south or to the north in the sky. Now, in March and September she occupies, as we shall see, a position midway between her northern place and her southern, these two months of course being each like a half-way house between summer and winter. In fact, sun and full moon in their yearly changes are like two men walking round a circular track, obliged always to keep exactly opposite each other. The resemblance is closer, for our purpose, if we imagine four little houses to be erected round such a track, each towards one of the cardinal points. When man No. 1 is in the southern house, No. 2 must be in the north one; and when No. 1 is in the western house, No. 2 must be in the eastern. In June the sun is in his north house, and the full moon has to be in the south one. In December the opposite holds true. In March and September they are each in one of the half-way houses to the east and west.

And we see here what misled the author of the answer to which we referred before. He evidently thought that when the full moon was in any of these half-way houses, the same phenomena would occur. But he had failed to take account of a cardinal point in the matter—namely, the *direction in which she approaches and leaves the house*. And it is this *direction* which causes the harvest moon. Hence, we would ask our readers' careful attention to it. We will suppose our men to start, one from the north house, and the other from the south. Let No. 1, leaving the north, walk towards the west house first. If No. 2 is to keep *opposite* him, he must take his way to the *east* house, where he should arrive when No. 1 is entering the *west* one. But No. 1 will be travelling then southwards, and No. 2 towards the north. This is, in fact, what happens with sun and moon on the evening of full moon in September. The sun is nearly due west at his setting, and the full moon nearly due east at its rising. The sun is going southwards to his winter position, and the moon is rapidly going northwards.

Now, we have already seen that *going northwards* in the sky means *rising earlier in the evening*. Hence, about the time of full moon in

September, the moon has a strong tendency to rise earlier rather than later each evening. But its *natural* tendency, with which we are all more or less acquainted, is to rise *later* each evening by about an hour on the average. What we might call the *artificial* tendency, due to its northward motion in September, is not sufficient entirely to counteract this, but it does reduce it from its average of an hour or so, to about twenty minutes, and that for more than a week, about the time of ingathering of corn in this country. But, observe, this all depends on the fact that the moon is then moving north, night after night, for that time.

Now, we are prepared at once to understand why there is not a similar display in the month of March. The sun is then coming into his western house, travelling *northwards*, and the full moon passes her eastern one, of course going in the opposite direction, or *southwards*. Hence, as going northwards means rising earlier in the evening, going southwards means rising later. The full moon in March, therefore, has an artificial tendency to rise *later* every night, and this, added to her natural tendency always to do the same, makes her rise an hour and twenty minutes or so later each evening at that season. In fact, the artificial tendency due to her change of place north or south in the sky in September is *subtracted* from her natural tendency to rise later, and is *added* to it in March. Hence she lingers with us in the former month, and hastens rapidly away in the latter.

And in this we have a curious instance of the subtle interweaving of influences with which we are surrounded, and a suggestion of something on a higher plane than that of mere addition or subtraction. In March, the moon hastens to hide her feeble beams before the advancing might of approaching summer; and in autumn, she seems to linger to console man for the quick oncoming of the wintry darkness.

We might only add, for the information of any one desiring to pursue the problem further, that there *is* a likeness between the moons of March and September, only it is the *new* moon in March which behaves as the *full* one does in September, and of course that thin crescent does little to illumine our darkness.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER XXXII.

'MERRY Christmas, sir,' said the man who brought in Snelling's shaving water. The occupant of the bed grunted an answer which by its sound had little merriment or cordiality in it; but the man who waited on him was either in a resolute Christmas humour or did not notice Snelling's tone. 'Lovely morning, sir, real reg'lar down-right old-fashioned Christmas, sir. Snow six inches deep, sir, everywhere; and the wind that cold, sir, it cuts you like a razor.'

'What's there to be merry about in that?' growled Snelling.

'Don't know, sir,' the man returned. 'Christmas

weather, sir. It's the fashion to be cold at Christmas, sir; and a man might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion.'

'Very well,' said Snelling. 'You needn't wait; I don't want you chattering here.'

The man retired, so far unabashed that Snelling heard him whistling in the corridor outside.

'What's Christmas to him, the fool?' he thought. 'What's it likely to be to me?'

He was not the man he had used to be. He had found out his nerves, and that is a woful discovery for any man to make. He slept ill, and had dreams which he could not remember, but which he knew were horrible. The sense of them clung to him in his waking hours and irritated and depressed him. He began to find himself liable to many fits of anger when things went wrong, and he knew very well that his chill rustic dignity of a year back would have served his turn better with the world.

He dressed and went down-stairs to a lonely breakfast in the coffee-room. A keen north-easterly wind was blowing, and the chimney smoked. At the first mouthful of breakfast he took, his teeth grated on a morsel of burnt coal which had fallen into the dish. He rang the bell angrily and rated the waiter; but the exercise afforded him little relief, if any. Other people were looking forward to a day of pleasure. He was looking forward to a day altogether blank and purposeless, a lonely and unsocial time beguiled by no occupation. The feeling of other people's contentment and happiness emphasised his solitude, and he felt bitter with the whole world. The landlord came in whilst he was marching gloomily up and down the room.

'You'll be going out to dinner, of course, Mr Snelling?'

'Who?' said Snelling. 'Me? No.'

'Not going out to dinner on Christmas day, sir?' said the landlord.

'I suppose,' his guest returned, straightening himself, 'that a man may dine where he pleases.'

'Oh, certainly, sir—certainly, sir! To be sure, Mr Snelling—to be sure. But unluckily, sir, I've given the cook a holiday, and she's gone already.'

'That's very pretty management,' Snelling answered angrily. 'So a man's to go without his dinner because it's Christmas day?'

'I never thought, sir,' said the landlord.

'Then you ought to have thought,' said the outraged customer. 'You ought to ha' come to me and be taught what to think. You've got a man staying in your house, and you send your cook away without asking by your leave or with your leave! You must give me leave to tell you, sir, you don't know how to keep a house of entertainment.'

'Really, Mr Snelling,' said the landlord, 'I never supposed'—

'That's what I'm telling you,' returned Snelling. 'You don't seem to have the sense to suppose.'

'I'm very sorry, sir,' returned the landlord. 'But if it comes to that, I've kept this house for thirty years without any help from Mr Snelling, and I shall look respectfully for'ard to keeping a roof over my head without his help in future.'

'Enough said,' Snelling answered. 'I shall quit the house when it suits my pleasure. We need say no more.'

He and the landlord, who had been neighbours since his boyhood and excellent friends hitherto, parted with bad blood between them. He was in a mood less like Christmas than ever, and last Saturday's newspaper, blotted, limp, and tattered, made him but an indifferent companion. When all's said and done, he had a superstitious reverence for the social superstitions of the day. It was a day on which to eat and drink and be merry, and not a day on which to mope alone and to live on the cold scraps of the larder. Christmas had never been particularly merry to him personally, so far as he could remember, for he was not a merry-making man; but he had a rooted respect for the social tradition, and Christmas without its roast sirloin, its turkey and sausages, and its plumpudding, was a mere monstrosity of time. The very paupers had their beef and plumpudding, and made their hearts merry on that one day of the year.

In an hour or two the landlord put in a second appearance. He was attired by this time in his best clothes, and was evidently ready to pay his Christmas visit. 'I hope there's no ill-will betwixt us, Mr Snelling,' he said. 'There's none o' my side. It was natural in you to be a bit angry, and I suppose it was natural in me to tek offence at it. I'd wish you a merry Christmas with all my heart, if it looked like much chance of your having one.'

'Theer, theer!' returned Snelling with half a sigh; 'let's say no more about it. You'd have asked if you'd ha' thought about it. It's not your business, nor yet your way, to be disoblighing. I was a bit too peppery, I daresay.'

'Come!' said the landlord, 'that's comfortable. I've got a drop o' brown sherry in the private bar, the like of which you don't see often. Just a glass now, Mister Snelling. It's Christmas morning, and that's what you can't say every day in the year.'

Snelling assented; and he and the plump landlord and the meagre landlady drank a glass of wine together and wished each other a merry Christmas. He had never felt so lonely in his life, and he could have clung to the landlord for company's sake. The pair drove away in their dogcart, and he waved them from the door. Then the one servant remaining in the house locked the place up and retired to her own quarters. The silence of the house was oppressive, and the loneliness and monotony of the minutes grew to seem scarcely endurable. The fear lest he should incense Shorthouse by his absence, and through him, should offend Cecilia, had always been present to his mind, but never so strongly as now. His lonely misery pushed him towards company, and was strong enough to have made the worse appear the better reason. If, as he more than three-fourths suspected, Jousserau was his rival, he himself was doing a foolish thing in staying away, and in giving his enemy a chance to put as dark a complexion as he could upon his character. On a sudden it seemed an act of madness to stay away. The one chance he had of a reconciliation with Cecilia lay in this Christmas dinner. If Jousserau's rivalry were real, and not a mere creation of his fancy, his one course was to let her see the two pretenders to her hand together and judge between them. He was very far from being afraid of comparison, for he

was simply powerless to judge of the faculties and charms which were on the artist's side.

'The wench'll want to marry a man, I reckon,' he thought, as he surveyed the reflection of his own stalwart shoulders. 'I could break that little chap across my knee. What's she likely to see in a fellow like him, a little black-avised chap the colour of a piece of coal? She'll want to marry a white man if she marries at all. If it got into her head as I was afraid to face him because of what he said about me—why, I've been no less than a fool to think of shunning him. The only way's to face her, and never to give her a minute alone with him if I can help it. I'll put Shorthouse up to it too. He's not the man to let his daughter marry a foreigner.'

Animated by this new resolve, he rang the bell, and the lonely servant answered from her distant quarters. 'I'm going out, young woman,' he said, addressing her, 'and I mayn't be home till midnight. See there's somebody left to sit up for me.'

The girl promised, and retired; and he went up to his own room to dress. He attired himself with scrupulous exactness. The fire had destroyed his wardrobe, and he had been obliged to provide himself with a complete outfit, so that everything he owned was brand-new. Since he took rather an unusual pride in his person for a man of his social position, the things were of the best. When he was fully attired, he surveyed himself with complete approval; and then summoning the girl anew, ordered her to undo the fastenings of the door, and so passed into the street. A four-mile walk in bright winter weather would make by no means a bad preparation for dinner. The six inches of snow upon the ground made little difference to him; but for comfort's sake, he carried a change of shoes neatly done up in brown paper under his arm.

He found, like most men, that bodily motion in the open air lent a brighter colour to his thoughts; and as he walked, his courage rose so fast that, by the time he had reached the old church in the vale and had so got fairly into the country, he felt like a man foredoomed to conquer. In his lower moods these fluctuations disturbed him, and he recognised his own changeableness of temper with great misgiving. But when the pleasanter hour recurred, it fed and warmed him like meat and fire, and he was always persuaded that the change was permanent.

He reached the house, and found that he had only just arrived in time. Jousserau was there already, and so also were Isaiah and Mrs Winter, who had brought young John with them. There also was a Beacon-Hargate lover with his lass, a young lady from Heydon Hey, an old school-fellow of Cecilia's, who obviously triumphed in her engagement, and audibly instructed her *fiancee* in table matters.

'George, pour out your wine into the little glass, not the big one.—George, don't leave your napkin folded on the table.—George, don't eat with your knife; I do declare you make me shudder.' By these and similar exhortations, the young lady from Heydon Hey made the dinner-hour a time of joy, and indisputably

established her superiority of breeding over the young gentleman from Beacon-Hargate.

Cecilia sat at one end of the table, and the farmer at the other, and Snelling was rejoiced to find himself placed on the girl's right. Jousserau sat by the farmer at the other end, in a position where he could not even exchange a glance with her. The yeoman addressed most of his conversation to his fair neighbour; and his alternate drawl and snap sounded pretty constantly, as he regaled her with a disquisition on the breeding of beef, a subject which arose naturally from the presence of the roast sirloin.

'Theer's nothing like the rough Scotch for flavour, when they're in prime order and have been rested and well fed. A man 'ud no more think of buying 'em as milch-kine than he'd think of marrying an ugly old woman for love.' This was Mr Snelling's notion of gallantry, a genial mixture of implied compliment with solid converse. 'Mixed with the South Devon, I've known 'em do pretty well in that way even; but as for milk, for yield and quality, there's nothing like the Hereford.'

Jousserau talked with even less fluency than Snelling; but Cecilia thought that if he had been seated near her, he might have chosen other and more attractive themes. It is hard to be an unfavoured rival. The poor creature can do nothing right. The stupidest *banalities* of the chosen one will shine brighter than his most brilliant repartee, and if he happen to be the dull man of the two, the lady's conception of him is indeed mournful. Snelling flowed on unconscious so long as the dinner lasted, and conceived himself to be immensely entertaining and polite.

When at last the meal was over—and a Christmas dinner in that part of the world is not a thing to be hurried or to be treated lightly—the gentlemen sat down to a bottle of port, and the ladies retired to the best parlour for tea. The whole meal was strange to Jousserau, and he remarked it and its incidents with a humorous interest. It was about his ordinary hour for breakfast; and the appetites displayed by Isaiah, Snelling, and the farmer, and even by the young man from Beacon-Hargate, astonished him. The young man from Beacon-Hargate was at a disadvantage by reason of the watchfulness of the young lady from Heydon Hey; but he was a trencherman of no mean quality, and gained Shorthouse's cordial good-will by his strict attention to the business of the moment.

The little artist drank his single glass of wine, and found himself reproached by his host. 'The bottle's with you, Mr Jousserong,' said Shorthouse. 'Fill up and pass it on. Niver keep your neighbour thirsty of a Christmas day, of all days in the year.'

'Thank you,' said Jousserau. 'I have drink enough. I do never drink of a morning. I have not your English head.'—Snelling sat warm, full-fed, and self-satisfied, and complacently despised him.—'If you make no objection, I will join the ladies and take with them a cup of tea.'

'Let him go,' cried Snelling. A fellow who could hardly put two words together, who shirked his bottle after the first glass at a Christmas

dinner, and stood five feet four in his stockings, was a creature a true-born Briton might safely despise.

'Oh, come!' said Shorthouse; 'we must mek a better Englishman o' you than that. That ain't how you keep Christmas in your own country.'

'We do not much keep the Christmas in our country,' Jousserau answered; and the four who heard this statement fell back in their chairs and stared at him. Here, indeed, was a heathen state of things, an utter barbarism, the like of which they had never dreamed of.

With few further excuses, the foreigner was permitted to withdraw. The better instructed Britons remained behind, and got solemnly and stupidly bemused on the heavy and ripe old port which was the pride of Shorthouse's heart, and had been in his cellar when his father died. By-and-by they were aware of music in the adjoining room, to which the women-folk and Jousserau had withdrawn. This made them all the more comfortable and contented with themselves, for they knew that if they had been in the chamber where the music was going on, they would have been expected to sit mumchance and to look solemn. They looked solemn, and sat for the most part silent now; but then there is all the difference in the world between doing a thing because it comes natural at the moment and doing it in obedience to an ordinance you despise. Not one of the quartette knew anything about music, or cared more than he knew. The heady old port, the after-dinner lethargy, the warm fire, and the angles of the chairs into which they had fitted themselves, were all inviting.

When Jousserau entered the best parlour, he found Mrs Isaiah holding forth on the ailments incidental to early infancy, for the benefit of the young lady from Heydon Hey. Cecilia was seated by the fireside, rather languidly turning over the pages of a book. Her piano stood open near where she sat, and M. Jousserau, scheming to be near her, made a pretence of that fact, and strolling over to the instrument, turned over the pages of a volume of music which stood upon it. 'Oh, you have French songs,' he said suddenly turning to her. 'Do you speak, then, French?'

'Oh no,' she answered. 'There are English translations to all of them.' She turned round in her chair and read aloud the first line at which he had opened the volume: 'It was Dunoy, the young and brave.'

'A thousand excuses,' said Jousserau. 'Dunois. I beg your pardon. Perhaps it is Dunoy in English.'

'No, no,' said Cecilia; 'I am sure it is not. There is no such name in English. I am really obliged to you for telling me. I should like to be able to sing the French. We were supposed to learn at school; but I have forgotten, if ever I knew anything.'

'If I could have the pleasure to give you lessons,' said Jousserau eagerly.

The girl blushed, and at that the little artist blushed and began to flutter curiously. If he had kept his own old free-and-easy ways, he would have spoken his mind long ago, for in that respect he had been as quick in action as Denys of Burgundy himself. But there was a nimbus about this particular maiden, a sacred protecting light which half frightened him.

'You sing?' she asked, to cover her own confusion. 'Will you sing that for me, Monsieur Jousserau, and show me what the accent should be like?'

'I will try,' he answered modestly. 'But you must not laugh at me; I sing a little for my own amusement.' He took his seat at the piano, and struck out boldly the opening chords of *En partant pour la Syrie*. He had a mellow and powerful voice, fairly cultivated, and he sang, as might have been expected of him, with spirit and feeling. When he came to the last lines of the first verse, Cecilia was sure that one half the soldier's petition was already granted to him, and Jousserau was quite certain that he had the other:

That I might be the bravest knight,
And love the fairest fair.

Cecilia, though not yet aware of the character of her own sentiments, admired the little man beyond description. It goes without saying that she had never seen anybody like him; and in affairs of the heart, novelty goes for much. It counts for more when all the novelties are admirable, and Jousserau was not merely an astonishing artist, and vouched for by the vicar and his own manner as a gentleman, but he was alive from head to heel, unlike the bovine men she had lived amongst from her childhood, who knew neither how to feel nor express an unselfish interest in anything. The girl had never seen anything like his quick southern smile; nor anything, again, like his deferential and courteous manner; nor anything, again, like his generous, unpretending absence of any assumption of superiority over the rougher and less cultured people with whom he chose to mingle.

When Snelling and his *convives* came in at last, Jousserau was telling stories of his native Arles, and putting so much quaintness, verisimilitude, and fun into them that the two girls and the elder woman were brimming over with laughter.

'We've got nothing to thank you for, Isaiah,' said Mrs Winter; 'but if it hadn't been for Mr Jousserong we might have been as dull as ditch-water. I will say this for Mr Jousserong,' she added, still laughing with both hands spread out upon her knees, 'he's the best good company I ever met.'

The phrase stung Snelling, and left a dull, slow, burning pain of jealousy. Cecilia, like the others, was beaming with good-humour, and he thought with a pang that she had never looked so in his presence, and that he had no power to move her in that way. Very good, then; let a solid man show his own particular qualities. This foolish froth of fun, over which two silly young women, and one silly old one, were cackling with enjoyment was not the only thing in the world. The solid man did his best, and talked parish politics in that bassoon-like drawl of his, with its rise and snap in the middle of every sentence. Everybody listened perforce, but nobody laughed. He had killed the innocent and harmless gaiety, and Cecilia looked bored and weary. She went back to her book again, and began to turn its leaves over as listlessly as before. The orator resented her want of interest angrily; but he had neither the will nor the means to show his disapproval. The girl had been happy whilst she

talked with Jousserau. Was it possible that, after all, breadth of limb, length of purse, and solidity of character were not the only things to woo a woman to a marrying mind?

CHARTREUSE.

WHEN the republican government in France suppressed so many of the religious Orders, an exception was made in favour of the Carthusians of the Grande Chartreuse; and much occasion for satirical remark did this exception provoke, because the reason for the exception was so manifest—that the French were unwilling to drive a flourishing manufacture out of France into Switzerland, whither, or to Tyrol, the Carthusians would have migrated at once, carrying with them their secret, had the republican government resolved to extinguish them. But this was not the sole reason of the exception made in their favour: the Carthusians of the Grande Chartreuse pay to the state annually a duty of six hundred thousand francs for alcohol; and if the Carthusians were abolished, the state would accordingly be six hundred thousand francs the poorer annually, and Austria or Switzerland so much the richer. But that was not all. Another consideration was, that the expulsion of the Carthusians and the transference of their business elsewhere would most assuredly have roused disturbances in the Department of Isère.

The manufacture of the famous liqueur Chartreuse is a benefit to the entire Department, as the inhabitants are well aware, and relieves them from onerous rates. For the Carthusians who manufacture it are the members of a strict Order, one of the very strictest, and they do not want money for themselves; they live the most solitary and abstemious of lives, indulge in no splendour, not even of ecclesiastical buildings; and all the profits made by the sale of the liqueur, the secret of whose manufacture they alone possess, goes for the general good. It is said that the profits obtained from the sale of the liqueur amount to the annual sum of one hundred thousand pounds sterling—a princely income; but the Carthusians make a princely use of it. Almost all of the income is spent in the relief of the poor and in works of general utility. There is hardly a hospital or asylum of any sort in Dauphiné for sick, for insane, for orphans, that has not either been wholly founded or supported more or less by the Carthusians of the Grande Chartreuse. But this does not exhaust their munificence: they build bridges, contribute towards the construction of new roads, of schools and churches. They pay towards the conveyance of water by pipes and aqueducts to the towns from the pure mountain-springs. Further, hardly a tradesman who gets into difficulties in Grenoble and other towns and villages of the Department but appeals to the abbot of the Grande Chartreuse for help; and the abbot, after careful examination, and after having satisfied himself as to the honesty and respectability of the man in trouble, will lend him the money necessary to avert ruin without demanding interest on the sum. It is said—but such cases cannot be proved—that the Carthusians have come to the assistance of certain officials who had

not dealt over-scrupulously with public money in their trust, and have saved their reputations, and given them opportunities of recovering themselves.

Recently, not a little uneasiness reigned in the Department, for it was rumoured that the house of Rothschild had offered to buy the manufacture and the receipt of the General of the Order for the sum of eighty millions of francs. We can understand that this offer was a tempting one, if it had been made; for the manufacture of the liqueur had greatly extended, and was extending annually, to the disturbance of the object for which the Order was constituted. That Order was established by St Bruno to be no other than a collection of hermits. The Carthusians are not like ordinary friars and monks; they do not meet in hall for common meals. Each hermit has his own cell and garden, or yard, a little workshop, and a sleeping apartment. His food is handed in to him through a trap-door in the wall, so constructed that neither he who serves nor he who receives the food can see each other. Each monk is required to exercise some trade or profession, as idleness is strictly contrary to rule. The monks live on the simplest diet; and meet each other only in church for united offices, with one exception. That one exception is a peculiarity of the Order. Every Saturday the gates of the monastery are thrown open, and the monks have perfect liberty for a couple of hours to make excursions and take walks together—solitary if they like, or in twos and threes, just as pleases them, and talk as much as they like.

Now, with men under such a rule and adhering to it with the utmost strictness, the growth of the great business of Chartreuse-making must be somewhat of an encumbrance, and the temptation must be great to be rid of it. The belief, very prevalent in the Department, is, that the house of Rothschild desire, having effected the purchase, to turn the manufacture into a Joint-stock Company. This prospect by no means pleases the inhabitants of the Department. It is said, and again denied, that Pope Leo XIII. favoured the project of the Rothschilds when mooted some years ago; and that he sent a messenger to the General of the Order strongly urging the abandonment of the manufacture. The *Osservatore Romano*, however, denies that this was so.

There has occurred friction between Rome and the Order on other occasions; notably, when, after the taking of Rome by the Italians, Pius IX., feeling the loss of his income through the absorption of the Papal States into Italy, sought indemnification through Peter's Pence. He then demanded of the Carthusians an annual subvention of a million francs. This they considered as extortionate, and the General remonstrated. The pope insisted. Thereupon, the General lost patience, and declared that the Order would only pay into the papal coffers what it chose, and would bind itself to no particular sum. As may be imagined, such opposition did not meet with favour at the Vatican, and the Benedictines have been encouraged to rival the Carthusians with a liqueur of their own composition; so also have the monks of Tre Fontane, with the 'Eucalyptica,' derived from the Eucalyptus plantations in the Campagna near Rome; but none of these can, in the estimation of connois-

seurs, equal the delicate flavour of the Chartreuse. This liqueur leaves the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse, in Dauphiné, in peculiarly formed, low, broad bottles, with the label and seal bearing the arms of the convent and the letters 'D.O.M.' (Deo Optimo Maximo) as pledges of genuineness.

It must not be supposed that the monks are engaged in distillation of spirits and the mixing of herbs and bottling of liqueur. They live apart from the manufacture in their abbey in the High Alps of Dauphiné, and the manufacture takes place in extensive factories in the same mountain basin, but disconnected with the abbey. This abbey of the Grande Chartreuse is the headquarters of the Order, which has other houses in France, Italy, Switzerland, and Austria—in all, fifteen. The manufacture is carried on by paid operatives, and the village population is employed in the collection of the requisite herbs. Some of these are becoming scarce owing to the extent to which they have been gathered. The herbs are mixed with *eau-de-vie*, which is purchased by the abbey, not manufactured by it, and then they are distilled along with the spirit. Only one of the monks, the Steward, supervises the operations; and only one of these operations is conducted in secret, and that is the mixture of the herbs, in which consists the secret. The rest of the brothers of the Order have nothing whatever to do with the manufacture; they follow their silent, quiet life independent of it.

The manufacture of Chartreuse is of comparatively modern origin. Till 1835, in the Grande Chartreuse alone, an elixir was made of certain herbs steeped and distilled in brandy for medicinal purposes; and it was solely as a remedy that the original Chartreuse was employed and distributed by the brothers. That their decoction would become a liqueur for the palate of luxury never occurred to them. In time, however, both the manufacture was improved and the fame of its excellence extended; so that the rude old workshops in which the brothers distilled the herbs no longer sufficed, and new buildings were erected, and operatives came into that Alpine basin to lend their aid to the perplexed and overworked brothers. Now, the manufacture has called into existence quite a small town. Formerly, three kinds of Chartreuse were made—the white, the yellow, and the green; but the white has been abandoned of late years. The green is both the strongest and the most expensive. There is more alcohol in the green than in the yellow. It is hinted that the reverend fathers themselves regard a blend of the two as the perfection of the liqueur in the proportions of one-third green to two-thirds yellow.

Near Florence is the Certosa, in the Val d'Emmo, where the Carthusians also manufacture a Chartreuse liqueur, green, deliciously flavoured with angelica. The monks are suppressed, and only a few old ones linger on, and are not permitted to take novices. Hence their Chartreuse will probably perish with them. In Florence itself the Dominicans of Sta Maria Novella had also their manufactory of elixirs and scents. They have been dispersed, and the Government has sold their manufactory, their very pots—and portraits of the inventors of the several elixirs—to speculators, who are installed in their room, and who trade

on the old credit of the manufactures of the banished friars.

Will the Chartreuse of the future have the qualities in such perfection as that of the present? Will the guarantee of a Joint-stock Company be as reliable as that of the Order of St Bruno? The amount of Alpine plants is limited. More than a certain quantity of the liqueur cannot be sent forth in the year, and this it is which gives to the Chartreuse its high cost. We can hardly expect that a Company will be as scrupulous in adhering to the receipt. Let us hope that the good brothers will not sell their secret and their factory, but still send forth the bottles labelled D.O.M.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAP. I.—MR DOTTLESON IS PUZZLED.

MR MONTAGUE DOTTLESON, East India merchant of Calcutta and London, was writing letters in the library of his private residence in Blakewood Square, Kensington. It was Sunday afternoon, and the rain was coming down with steady persistency, as though it had made up its mind to keep Londoners indoors for the rest of the day. Mr Dottleson, who was a methodical man in everything, made a regular practice of going for a long walk every Sunday after lunch; and when the weather presumed to interfere with this arrangement the effect upon his temper was infelicitous. Accordingly, it is our misfortune to present him to the reader at a moment when he is decidedly snappish and surly.

'Very aggravating,' said he, throwing down his pen and going to the window; 'no chance of its clearing up either. How I detest a wet Sunday!'

He picked up a book, and made himself comfortable in an armchair; but he had hardly read a page when the door opened and his daughter Kate appeared. She was a fair, pretty girl of twenty, whose gentleness and tact saved her from coming in collision with her irascible parent at times when other members of the household shrank from the consequences of intruding upon his privacy.

'Well, what's the matter?' asked Mr Dottleson curtly.

'Grandmamma isn't feeling very well this afternoon, papa.'

Kate had not completed her errand, but knew from her father's manner that she had come in at a time when it was best to say as little as possible; when he was in this humour, he was certain to jump at any opportunity for grumbling, and would finish her message for her.

'She wants that doctor, I suppose?' snarled Mr Dottleson.

'Perhaps we had better send for him.'

Mr Dottleson threw down his book and frowned savagely. 'Isn't it a very singular thing, Kate, that your maternal grandmother should select this impecunious young prig Lakeworth to be her medical attendant, when there are half-a-dozen experienced practitioners living within a stone's-

throw of the square? Isn't it very curious that Mrs Lamshed never knew what illness was or asked to see a doctor until she met this Dr Lakeworth at Scarborough last summer? Her confidence in him is positively touching, and passes my comprehension altogether.'

It was evidently a mystery to Kate also, for she shook her head slowly and looked out of the window. It was a fad of her grandmother's to have Dr Lakeworth; and when a patient has reached the eighties, perhaps one physician can do little more than another.

'I don't know why she likes him, papa.'

'I suppose you must send for him; but I don't imagine he will thank Mrs Lamshed for bringing him through a mile and a half of back streets on a day like this, just to tell her that her heart is much the same as it was the day before yesterday.'

Kate left the room without making any reply, and her father walked over to the hearthrug and proceeded to address the figure he saw reflected in the mirror above the mantel-piece. Many people have a habit of 'talking to themselves,' and Mr Dottleson cultivated it to a remarkable extent; it was his peculiarity, though, that he could not take himself properly into confidence unless he saw himself in the glass. He stood with his left hand thrust into his waistcoat pocket, emphasising the remarks he made half aloud with his right forefinger.

'Now, will you have the goodness to tell me what my mother-in-law wants with this young medico? He's got no practice to speak of; he's got nothing any one can see to recommend him, and he lives most inconveniently far away. Ever since she met him last year, she has required medical advice, and no advice but his will do. When she thinks she's seedy, he's called in to earn a fee; and when she's well, he's called in to receive it. He's never out of the house. I wonder he doesn't take lodgings next door, to be close to the gold mine.—I tell you candidly,' continued Mr Dottleson, suddenly withdrawing his hand from his pocket and tapping the palm impressively with his finger-tips—'I tell you candidly that if I didn't know the old lady would alter her will without compunction, I'd forbid Dr Charles Lakeworth the house.—Why, bless my heart! if Mrs Lamshed lives ten years longer, she'll spend every shilling of her twenty thousand in physic and fees.'

This final prediction, although made by himself, so worked upon Mr Dottleson that he swung round upon his heel and stamped on the floor.

Mrs Lamshed, who was the mother of his departed wife, was eighty-one years of age, and in spite of her frequent calls for the doctor, gave every promise of maintaining her interest in mundane affairs for ten or even twenty years longer. 'I'm an old woman,' she was wont to say; 'but I was an old woman when I was forty, and I haven't grown a day older since—not a day.'

And indeed Mrs Lamshed seemed almost as active and sprightly now as she had been half a century ago. Fourteen years before, the middle-aged, dust-dried lawyer who looked after her concerns had come to urge the desirability of making her will.

'Make my will!' cried she. 'I'll make it, if you're afraid you won't live to do it, Smuggles;

but I hadn't begun to think about it yet! Why should I? However, the solicitor's arguments prevailed, and the thing was done, 'to oblige her old friend, who had always taken good care of her affairs, and was in a hurry to finish them.' And though the fact has no bearing upon this story, we may mention that the engrossing of Mrs Lamshed's will was the last bit of professional work the careworn Smuggles ever did for his client. He was twenty years her junior; but he passed from Lincoln's Inn to another place long before she began to use spectacles. The spring of vitality was strong in Mrs Lamshed.

Mr Dottleson turned away from the mirror to which he had been confiding his woes, and went up-stairs to see his mother-in-law, whom he found in the drawing-room with Kate.

'I'm sorry to hear you're not well,' he said, going to her side.

The old lady looked up and smiled. 'I'm getting very feeble, Montague, though I don't look it. I am not quite up to the mark, and thought I'd like to see Lakeworth.'

'They sent for him half an hour ago. But don't you think, now, that a more experienced man should be called in?'

'Lakeworth will do nicely, Montague; he understands my constitution.'

When an old lady is convinced that one particular man 'understands her constitution,' no reasoning will move her. Mr Dottleson knew this, and did not press the expediency of making a change.

'What do you think is wrong, this time?' he said, sitting down near her.

'It's the heart,' replied Mrs Lamshed with a deep sigh, which did not seem quite genuine somehow.

Mr Dottleson tried to put on a look of grieved anxiety, but only succeeded in appearing sulky and incredulous. 'I trust not—I hope you're mistaken,' he said. 'I must speak to Dr Lakeworth when he comes.'

His tone implied that he held the young man personally responsible for the condition of Mrs Lamshed's heart, whatever it might be, and intended to know what he meant by it. He rose as he spoke and went back to the library, where he tried to interest himself once more in his book.

'I don't think papa likes Dr Lakeworth,' said Kate, as soon as the door had closed behind her parent.

'I don't know why, I'm sure; but he doesn't seem so pleased to see him as you do, child.'

Kate laughed a little, and said no more. It was *her* heart, and not her grandmother's, which gave reason for Charles Lakeworth's frequent visits; and the eagerness with which she pounced upon any excuse for calling him in to see Mrs Lamshed had been a fruitful source of amusement to that lady, until she allowed Kate to see that she understood the manoeuvre.

Mr Dottleson had never thought of his mother-in-law's favourite in connection with his daughter. He was essentially a grasping mercenary man, and the fear always before his eyes was, that Mrs Lamshed might alter her will and bequeath her property to this doctor. He had heard of ladies who had cut off their rightful heirs in favour of their medical attendants, and Mrs Lamshed was

eccentric enough for anything. If any one had told him that Kate was the attraction, he would have laughed at the idea. She had nothing, and would have nothing but what he chose to give her; and it was not likely that a man who had to push his way in the world would encumber himself with a wife. Dr Lakeworth was dancing attendance on the old lady in the hope of getting her money, and really she seemed so fond of him that the danger was making him very uneasy.

He got up and opened the door slightly, that he might hear the doctor's arrival, and also ascertain whether Kate stayed in the room during Mrs Lamshed's interview with the young man. Dr Lakeworth went straight up-stairs when he came, and remained with the two ladies for fully an hour and a quarter, whilst Mr Dottleson sat fuming and fidgeting in the library below.

'Much value the fellow's time must be,' he sneered, looking at his watch, when the door up-stairs opened, and Mrs Lamshed's shrill cracked voice arose, cautioning the doctor not to forget that he had promised to come and see her on Tuesday.

'I'll waylay him as he goes out, and find out, once for all, whether there's any actual necessity for these incessant visits.'

'Good-afternoon, Mr Lakeworth,' he said, meeting the doctor in the hall. 'Just come this way for a moment, if you please.' He led the way into the library, motioning the young man to follow him with the pompous air which had gained him the sobriquet of 'Majestic Monty' among his City friends.

'I wished to ask you whether there is any cause for anxiety regarding Mrs Lamshed's health,' he said when Charles Lakeworth was seated.

'Mrs Lamshed is under the impression that she is suffering from some internal malady; but I am unable to detect anything amiss. Of course any organic complaint would be serious to one of her advanced age; but I have no reason to suppose there is the least cause for anxiety.'

Perhaps the confident tone of Dr Lakeworth's reply irritated his questioner; for Mr Dottleson put on his most majestic air, and fixing his *pince-nez* on his somewhat rubicund nose, he elevated that feature until he could bring his dull fish-like eyes to bear upon his companion. 'Is that your opinion?' he asked with light stress on the possessive pronoun.

'That's my opinion,' responded the doctor quietly.

'Then there's no actual necessity for your rather frequent professional visits?'

'I can do nothing for Mrs Lamshed but allay her fears about herself. They are groundless; but a lady of her years is naturally prone to make much of any little feeling of indisposition.'

Mr Dottleson lay back in his chair, considering what he had better say next. If he made any attempt to discourage Dr Lakeworth's calls, it would infallibly come to his mother-in-law's ears, and her resentment might produce results very detrimental to himself. It would not do to attack the position from this side, when he had only his suspicions to work upon; it would be less risky to go to the root of the matter with Mrs Lamshed. He rose from his chair and extended his hand. 'I'll say good-evening, then, Mr Lake-

worth: you have relieved my mind very much regarding your patient.'

Charles Lakeworth left the house, and Mr Dottleson went in search of his mother-in-law. He meant to lose no time in putting her on her guard against this insidious enemy; but he knew that he would have to approach the subject very carefully.

'I am very pleased to learn from Dr Lakeworth that your fears about yourself are unfounded,' he said cheerfully.

'Oh yes; he thinks I'm all right,' replied Mrs Lamshed. 'I've great confidence in Lakeworth.'

'I'm afraid he takes advantage of it to drain your purse pretty heavily in fees.'

'He wants 'em,' replied the old lady dryly. 'Poor fellow! he finds it hard to make both ends meet. But he'll make his way; I'm going to help him.'

It was bad enough to hear that this hanger-on was sent for more to benefit himself than the patient; but Mrs Lamshed's last words made Mr Dottleson turn red with anger. 'Help,' in his vocabulary, was synonymous with money, and here was his mother-in-law coolly telling him, her heir, that she was going to give help to an utter stranger who had no claim upon her whatever. It was quite time that he did speak to her, so he cleared his throat and began without more ado: 'You know that of late it has often occurred to me that Dr Lakeworth's attention to you is not so disinterested as it should be. I may be wrong, but I cannot get over the idea that he has some ulterior designs upon us.'

Mrs Lamshed put on her spectacles and stared at her son-in-law. 'Do you suppose I'm a fool, Montague Dottleson?'

'My dear madam, you misapprehend my meaning,' said Mr Dottleson with anxious suavity; 'but really I have known such frequent cases in which kind-hearted ladies have been led away by their gratitude towards scheming physicians. I never for an instant imagined that Dr Lakeworth or any one else would be able to bend your sturdy sense of what is right and just so as to serve his own interests; but he comes so frequently, he stays so long, and'—

'And you think Lakeworth expects my money when I've done with it, and comes here to keep my friendship for him alive?'

'I am bound to confess that this had crossed my mind.'

The old lady leaned over, and tapped her son-in-law gently on the knuckles with her spectacle case as she replied: 'You are the fool, Montague Dottleson. You're as blind as a mole. If you hadn't betrayed these unworthy suspicions about an honourable man, I might have opened your eyes for you; but since you have such an undeservedly bad opinion of him, I shall leave you to grope your own way to daylight. I've made my will, Montague, and you know what it says; but there's plenty of time to add a codicil to it, you know—plenty of time.'

Mr Dottleson saw that he had made a grave mistake in mentioning his distrust; but he could not repair it now, and beat a hasty retreat. Mrs Lamshed had hinted broadly that there was something going on which he was too blind to see, and which she was going to let him find out for himself. Whatever it might be, he would be very

cautious in making his investigations; that remark about the possibility of making a codicil had gone home, for he knew it had not been spoken idly. The will as it stood was in his own favour. Mrs Lamshed had bluntly observed when she made it, that Kate was only six years old, and there was no knowing what she might grow up like; so her money should be left to one who would at least take care of it—namely, Montague Dottleson. She had a higher opinion of her son-in-law at that time than she had now; but he had always been kind and attentive since she went to live with him, and she had seen no reason, so far, to alter her designs.

'What can the man be after, if it isn't the money?' queried Mr Dottleson on the hearthrug of Mr Dottleson in the mirror. 'He can't be so much attracted by Kate. She's a pretty girl and a good girl; but she's got nothing. Then, again, her grandmother was always of a saving turn of mind, and she wouldn't encourage him to pay expensive visits if she had no object in view. It's absurd to suppose that she pays him to come here for nothing. If he admired Kate, he'd come without being sent for, and her grandmother can't fail to know that.'

His mental vision had been so dimmed by the atmosphere of money in which his life had been passed, that he did not understand the possibility of man or woman being guided by any other motive. Love was a misty unreality outside the pale of his reasoning powers, and therefore did not enter into his speculations at all. His affection for Kate took the characteristic shape of finding a wealthy husband for her; she might choose for herself, as she had a right to; but measuring her heart by the size of his own, it never struck him that her choice might fall upon a man whom he would reject as ineligible.

THE LINCOLNSHIRE 'WARPINGS.'

A WASTE of soft brown mud, glistening in the sun, save where it is overgrown with a matted carpet of rankest, greenest water-weed, or shadowed by a tall forest of gray-plumed reeds. Here and there a solitary post, or a long line of short stumps and rails—all that is still visible of what was once a five-foot fence—throws its dark reflection upon the smooth surface as upon a mirror. Countless birds of the sort that delight in marshes and still pools wheel through the air, run over the flats, or swim in the narrow channels that wind in and out in all directions between sloping banks of mud. You stand upon a low reed-fringed bank, raised by man's hand above the dead level of the surrounding country. In front, as also to right and left, stretch similar banks—the dark frame enclosing the scarred mirror of mud between. Behind you, far away in the blue haze, a line of small hills bounds the horizon. It is low-tide on the 'warpings.'

Three hours have gone by. You stand, as before, on the bank; but all is changed except the banks and the hills. Before you ripples a sea of turbid water, brown as the mud which it has covered, and breathing still a salt breath of the sea from which it has come. The flats, the pools, the patches of green weed have disappeared. The very reeds have vanished, all

but their feathery heads that sway and nod, in a drowned way, just above the surface. The birds, too, are gone, save where a few gulls scream and tumble about some floating fish, or a flight of wild-ducks whistle in the invariable wedge-like order through the evening sky. The water eddies at your feet, ruffled by the rising breeze, splashes spitefully against its banks, and hurries on with knots of white spume starring its brown flood. It is high-tide on the 'warpings.'

All along the banks of the Trent and the Yorkshire Ouse lie acres of land reclaimed from the sand and heather that once were their sole produce. Now they are golden with corn-fields or green with the dark forests of potatoes for which Lincolnshire is famous. Between the eras of wilderness and cultivation came that of warping, when the soil lay alternately drowning under the flow, starving under the ebb of the great tidal rivers. For it is the river that has wrought the change and spread fertility over the once sterile ground. In a few years, when the soil is again exhausted, the fields of potatoes and corn will again disappear beneath the waters, to emerge revived by their power.

Twice in the twenty-four hours the tide rushes up from the Humber, covering the interminable sandbanks that choke the great estuary, and the long flats that skirt the river's banks; and as it comes, it sweeps on with it always a new load of silt, stolen from those flats and banks, to be deposited wherever the tide reaches in a soft, smooth, fertilising layer. Each tide will leave its contribution. When the flow is less strong, it brings a lighter quantity of silt; but when the change of the moon brings stronger tides, when the east wind forces the waters of the North Sea westward in greater volume, the river rises in its might. The in-coming flood, pent back by the sand-bars of the Humber, rears up in a wall of discoloured water, and sweeping forward with a hoarse murmur from shore to shore, gathers fresh force and height as it crowds within the narrowing banks, until it forms a resistless torrent seven or eight feet above the level of the stream up which it rushes. It goes ill then with any boat which lies too near the shore or rides at too short an anchor. Everything must yield to the flood. The click of the capstans as the cable is paid out echoes over the river long before the roar of the 'eagre' is heard; and the barges lie with slackened chain ready to rise on the sudden wave—for rise they must or be buried in the whirl of foam and mud. The heaviest vessel is lifted up and tossed round like a cork; and as the 'eagre' rushes along amongst the stones and reeds, it tears up the mud—'warp,' as it is named—in huge mouthfuls, churns it up in its murky eddies, and carries it far away up the stream. In three hours' time the tide is spent. From bank to bank the river is full to the brim. Mud-flats, reeds, and stones have alike disappeared; and from far away in the fields about you may see the very hulls of the barges sailing on and the sunlight glittering on the metal-work of the great coal-steamers as they pant up the now silent river.

It is this flood which, like that of the Nile, is turned to account by the farmers whose lands march upon the Trent and Ouse. Throughout

the lower reaches of the two rivers the banks are studded with black doors or shuttles of solid timber framed in strong masses of stone. Behind is a 'dyke' or 'warping drain,' through which the river is led to the required spot. Sometimes this dyke will be twenty yards or more across; often less than half that width. The doors, opening outward towards the river, enable the keeper to control the tide as he pleases; for if they are once closed, the strongest pressure from without only closes them the more tightly. But when they are set wide and the river is rising, the thunder of the stream as it rushes through the narrow entrance, lashed into creamy whiteness in its downward plunge, boiling, eddying, foaming, shaking the solid masonry above like an earthquake, makes itself heard for miles over the low lands beyond. So swiftly comes the tide, that no doors can admit it fast enough; the level of the water in the dykes is always below that of the still rising river. Even when the river has ceased to rise and the ebb has been long in progress, the water still plunges furiously through the 'drain-heads' to seek the lower level of the drain within.

No artificial means are needful to carry the water to the destined spot. The broad area that lies between the wolds of Yorkshire on the one side and those of Lincolnshire on the other—the basin of the Trent, Ouse, and Don—is unbroken for miles by any elevation. Far as eye can see, extend the so-called 'Carrs' or 'Levels,' intersected by dykes, dotted with farmhouses and hamlets, and sparsely varied with such trees as love the lowlands and are of speedy growth, willows, aspens, elders, and poplars. But no hill, not even a knoll or an artificial barrow, breaks the monotony of the view; and the river is restrained only by its well-kept banks from submerging the surrounding fields. At odd times, under the strain of a rainy autumn or a flood-tide of unusual height, the bank gives way. A narrow crack opens in the rampart of clay. For a moment the water spurts through in an inoffensive jet; an instant later, the bank yawns from top to bottom, and the river bursts out in a mighty torrent. The solid walls of earth that have stood for years are torn down like a child's sand-castle on the beach; the crops are ploughed up and swept away; and the desolation is only checked by some intervening bank that marks the area of some old 'warping.' But such floods are rare. Experience has taught the necessity of maintaining the banks in good order—experience bought of up-torn roads, of corn-sheaves rotting in the mud, and above all, of acres of potatoes submerged and slowly rotting away. For the farmers of North Lincolnshire and of Ireland alike pin their faith to the crop of 'tatars.'

And yet the same flood which can ruin in an hour a whole season's labour, becomes, when controlled, the Lincolnshire farmer's greatest ally. It is not many years since the land from Gainsborough to Goole, and from Goole to Hull, was a marshy waste, not unlike the Essex saltings, where only some solitary gunners could find subsistence by shooting and netting amidst its countless thousands of wildfowl. Now it is a land of corn and pasturage—not a rich land, perhaps, and not beautiful as are the Shropshire

plain and the weald of Kent; but yet the outlook from Alkborough Cliff, where the Lincolnshire hills abut in a steep spur upon the junction of the Trent and Ouse at their foot, is wonderfully pleasing. Eastward lies the Humber, reaching away to Spurn and the German Ocean. Northward the Ouse winds in and out amidst its 'levels,' through Goole, with its docks and shipping; through Howden, nestling amongst its elms, where is still held one of the oldest horse-fairs of horse-loving Yorkshire; by Cawood Ferry, where Dick Turpin crossed the stream on his famous last ride; by Selby, whose tall spire is a landmark for miles around; and on to York, whose towers may be dimly seen through the haze on a clear day. Westward lies the Trent, bright as silver; and amongst the wide corn-lands that lie between the twin rivers gleams now and again the smaller stream of the Don, upon whose banks, on the farthest horizon, the Romans have left their memorial in Doncaster—'the fort upon the Don.' Alkborough Cliff is the termination of those hills which form the eastern boundary of the vale of Trent. To your right and left they slope to the very verge of the river and its estuary, and reappear far beyond in the bolder and loftier Yorkshire wolds. The hamlet lies at your back, half hidden in the trees; and your feet stand upon an old-fashioned circular maze. Below, in the river—barely a stone's throw distant, it seems—the keels and schooners are lying at anchor; and you catch the click of the cables again as they prepare for the incoming tide, or the faint stroke of the shipwright's mallet where the trees hide the diminutive dockyard of Burton, below the slope, on your left. Truly, the old Saxon who first beached his *cool* at the hill foot and established himself here, can have had small idea of the rich scene of town and village, crops and herds, which his descendant of this century should look upon from this same Alkborough Cliff.

ARMSTRONG'S REVENGE.

ONE bright June morning not many years ago, a big ungainly farm-servant, holding by a halter a large and uncouth plough-horse, stood before the shut door of a battered wooden building, the surroundings of which at once proclaimed it to be a smithy, although through the chinks in its weather-beaten walls no forge-fire gleamed or cheery hammer rang. The ploughman, astonished to see the place shut at an hour long after that at which the blacksmith usually started work, retired a pace or two and gazed up at the chimney; and not seeing even the faintest trace of smoke issuing thence, he turned and looked about him with a puzzled expression on his face. A man breaking stones on the other side of the road, noticing the farm-servant's bewilderment, approached, and, after the usual morning salutation, proceeded to explain what had become of the blacksmith. We will give that explanation in our own words.

Hamilton Armstrong was the name of the blacksmith in question. His workshop was situated close to a wayside station on the main line of one of the great Scotch railways, but at a considerable distance from any town or village. Being, however, kept pretty busy at work for the neighbouring farmers, and being consequently well-to-

do, and having, moreover, as his nearest female neighbour, a very pretty girl, the daughter of the porter at the station, it was the most natural thing in the world that he should wish to make her his wife. Unfortunately, this was more easily determined on than done, for he had a rival. This rival was the driver of a goods-train which was almost daily shunted into the siding near Sarah's house, to allow of a passenger express passing, and who took advantage of this momentary respite to chat with the porter's daughter. Whether it was because he was a far-away bird that his feathers seemed fairer than Armstrong's in Sarah's sight, or whether he was intrinsically a man of more worth, the gossips—for there were gossips even in those solitudes—were not agreed. Rightly or wrongly, however, Sarah gave him the preference.

Having made up his mind to ask Sarah to be his wife, Armstrong was not long in finding an opportunity for doing so. Though he knew he had a rival, he was hardly prepared to hear from Sarah that she had already promised to marry Duffy, the engine-driver. But Armstrong was not going to yield without making a special effort to win her. He pleaded long and fervently with her to retract her promise to his rival, whom he was persuaded she had only accepted because he had been the first to ask her. But Sarah was quite sincere, Duffy being really the man of her choice; and Armstrong pleaded in vain.

For the next week or two, the blacksmith moped about and did scarcely any work. On the day on which Sarah's marriage was to take place he left the smithy in the evening, and went wandering into the country, returning late at night. Next morning, he went away again, now walking with uneasy step along the quiet country lanes, and now sitting dejectedly by the roadside, muttering to himself. The neighbours soon came to hear of his strange behaviour; and it was whispered that he must have gone out of his senses, as an uncle of his had done under a similar affliction.

'That was yesterday,' the stone-breaker wound up, 'and he's away along the road by the railway this morning. They should look after him, or he'll be lying down in front of some train, or jumping down into the deep rock-cutting and breaking his neck.'

If Hamilton Armstrong had not gone mad as the people supposed, he certainly acted like a madman. Stung to the quick by his rejection, he had no heart for his work. He shut up his smithy, and went out to try to walk off the fever that burned within him. Proceeding along the path by the side of the railway, his heart filled with bitter hatred, the idea of taking a terrible revenge upon Duffy gradually shaped itself in his mind. At first, he tried to shut his ears to the suggestions of the tempter; but little by little he grew familiarised with the idea, until he got so demoralised that he began to think in a speculative way how he could best avenge himself upon the engine-driver. Duffy's train always passed the station, going east, about half-past seven in the evening. Shortly before it came the twenty-seven minutes past seven passenger train. The device of placing an obstruction on the line suggested itself, only to be immediately set aside.

At this point in his meditations, the sound of a signal going down suggested to him the idea of tampering with the signals.

He returned home and retired to rest. Tossing restlessly on his bed, he was revolving in his mind his various schemes of revenge, when a diabolical idea struck him of a plan whereby he would be able to accomplish his object without leaving any trace of foul-play, so that the whole blame of the catastrophe would fall upon Duffy, who would not survive to tell his side of the story, or even if he did, and asserted his innocence, would not be believed. Armstrong noticed that if the counter-weight at the bottom of the signal-post were lifted up, it would allow the signal-arm to go down, just as if it had been lowered by means of the lever in the signal-cabin, the wire between the cabin and the counter-weight remaining motionless all the time; while as soon as the counter-weight was lowered again, no trace would remain of the signal having been touched. By adopting this mode of lowering the signal, the objection to his last-mentioned plan would be done away with. The only danger would be that the pointsman might notice that the signal was down; but that was not likely, as the lifting of the counter-weight would not affect the lever in the signal-box, and it was improbable that the signal-man's eyes would be drawn towards the signal when he was not either lowering it or pulling it up. This plan would enable Armstrong to get some distance away, and so prevent suspicion fastening upon him; and the fact of the signal being found all right afterwards would preclude all possibility of a suspicion of the signal having been tampered with.

Armstrong had begun his speculations with the view only of discovering how he could be avenged on Duffy, if he wished to avenge himself. The successful issue of them in a plan securing at once death to his rival and immunity from detection to himself was the cause of his resolving to go further. Thus by imperceptible degrees he had been drawn into plotting to murder.

In an almost gleesome mood he rose in the morning and hastened along the embankment to the signal which he proposed to use for his dreadful purpose. The signal stood at about the deepest part of a long rock-cutting, and was planted on the slope of a small embankment above the cutting. An examination of the place satisfied Armstrong that the best plan to adopt would be to attach a long cord to the counter-weight, and, taking the cord in his hand, to climb the signal-post, so as to command a long stretch of the line and be able to lower the signal-arm at the right moment; for to be a moment too soon or too late would be fatal to his plan.

His plan was now matured; but a long period of waiting elapsed before an opportunity for carrying it into effect presented itself. With the patience and perseverance of a wild animal waiting for its prey, he betook himself evening after evening to the signal by various roundabout routes, so as to ensure that no one would know that he went to the same place every day, affixed his cord to the counter-weight, and waited—only to see the passenger train dash past without slackening speed and pass the distance-signal without stopping.

At length, when the days had crept in consider-

ably, and thus rendered the evenings more suitable for the carrying out of his plan, as one evening he listened anxiously in the dusk to the sound of the approaching passenger train, a thrill of pleasure shot through him, for he noticed that it was slackening speed. Taking the cord in his hand, he climbed rapidly up the signal-post, and was overjoyed to find the passenger train stopping just on the station side of the distance-signal. Trembling with excitement, he turned in the direction whence the goods-train would come and anxiously awaited the sound of its approach. Several seconds, which to him seemed hours, elapsed before there was any sign of the approach of the goods-train. The passenger train, however, still stood at the distance-signal, throwing up long oblique lines of light into the misty air. At length with fluttering heart he caught the faint sound of Duffy's train approaching, and soon the head-lights, overshadowed by a cloud of steam, golden with the furnace-light, began to twinkle dimly, like stars at twilight, in the distance.

'Now or never,' thought Armstrong, taking two or three turns of the cord round his hand. He then tugged lustily at the cord; but the counter-weight would not rise. With an oath, he twisted his legs round the signal-post, passed the cord through the lattice-work a little above him, so as to obtain a better purchase, seized the cord with both hands and pulled with all his might. The weight yielded to this violent effort: the signal-arm descended. Armstrong's wild laugh of joy at the accomplishment of his nefarious purpose was almost immediately stifled by a cry of terror and pain. In his excitement he had forgotten that his head was immediately below the signal-arm, and his savage tug at the counter-weight had brought the signal-arm down upon his head with terrible and fatal force. His nerveless limbs loosened from the signal, and falling with a thud upon the sloping embankment, he was shot over the edge of the sheer precipice that formed one side of the rock-cutting and landed upon the opposite line.

Meantime the goods-train had entered the rock-cutting. The signal-arm having been lowered until it was in line with the signal-post, and having been checked by the entanglement of the cord in the lattice-work when it had only returned half-way, stood at clear. But for this accident, Armstrong's fiendish scheme would have been frustrated; for the support being taken away from the counter-weight, it would have descended, and so elevated the signal again. And now, to gratify one man's jealousy and hatred and punish one man, a hundred innocent men and women in the passenger train were to be sacrificed.

As the goods-train came on rattling and roaring through the cutting, the driver and stoker, all unconscious of the imminent peril in which they were, stood on the footplate watching the signals and the line in front of them. A glance at the signal, as he caught sight of it, showed Duffy that it stood at clear. His eye then wandered downward towards the rails, when suddenly it was arrested by a dark object lying on the other line.

'That's surely a man lying on the up-line, Tom,' he remarked to his fireman, laying his hand upon the regulator.

'Good God, so it is!' cried Tom in great excitement.

Without another word the steam was shut off, the link-gear reversed, and the brake applied; for the two men knew that the up-express was due in three minutes, and that if the man who was lying on the line—who might be unconscious through drink or through having fallen over—was left there, he must inevitably meet with a horrible death.

As the train stopped with a shock and a bumping of buffers and clanking of coupling-chains along its whole length, Duffy jumped down into the six-foot way with the engine lamp in his hand. Bending over the huddled-up form, he held the light above the blood-covered face and peered into it. A few seconds elapsed before Duffy moved; and Tom, wondering why he knelt so long looking into the unconscious man's face, jumped down beside them and asked: 'Is he dead, Duffy?'

'Yes,' answered Duffy, raising his head as if he had just wakened out of a dream.

'Who is he?' continued Tom.

'Armstrong the smith.'

At this moment the brakesman of the train came along to see what was wrong; and after Tom had explained the matter to him, they lifted the dead man and carried him to the van. Duffy and Tom then returned to the engine, and were just about to start the train to advance to the station and see what could be done with Armstrong, when Tom caught sight of some one running along the line with a lamp in his hand.

'What's up?' cried Duffy.

'Who can this be, and what can he be wanting?' asked Tom.

At this point the man with the lamp approached the engine; and when he had come within the light of the furnace, the two men recognised him as the signal-man. 'It's a blessing you noticed it!' he cried, panting with the exertion of running so fast.

'Noticed what?' both men on the engine exclaimed simultaneously.

'Something's wrong with the signal. It's standing at clear just now, and yet the lever's right for danger. I heard you passing it without slowing up, and then I noticed the signal was wrong. I'm glad you saw the train in front in time to pull up.'

'Is there a train in front?' Duffy asked.

'There is. The seven twenty-seven passenger's blocked there by a truck that went off the rails.'

All at once the whole matter became clear to Duffy. Armstrong had been trying to wreck the train, and had apparently fallen down into the cutting when putting the finishing touches to this trap for his enemy. Although Duffy thought this perfectly plain, he did not breathe a word of his thoughts to those around him. Was not his enemy lying dead in the van? He would let bygones be bygones.

'No, we didn't notice that,' he said to the signal-man. 'We stopped because we saw a man lying on the up-line.'

Here the signal-man climbed on to the engine, and the up-express went thundering past, creating a miniature and momentary hurricane as it went.

'It's Armstrong the smith,' added Duffy. 'He's dead.'

'Is that so?' the signal-man exclaimed, and then lapsed into silence, feeling unable to say anything appropriate to the circumstances.

'I'll go up with you and see what's wrong with the signal,' Duffy said to the pointsman after a pause.

Reaching the signal, they found the cord, loosened it from the trellis-work of the signal-post and let the counter-weight fall again. It had not suggested itself to the signal-man that any connection existed between the dead man on the line and the mysteriously lowered signal; but in spite of Duffy's reticence, the cause of the accident became perfectly apparent to him when he saw the cord attached to the signal counter-weight, and put that fact and the fact of Armstrong's being found dead on the line together.

'If ever anything was providential,' said the signal-man, as he and Duffy returned to resume their respective duties, 'this is. Here's a man that intends to wreck your train; he falls over the embankment just when he gets the thing arranged; then you come on seemingly to a certain smash, when you happen to see his body on the line, pull up just in the nick of time, and are saved.'

The signal-man had not probed the matter to the bottom; for the exact purpose of the cord had not occurred to him any more than it had to Duffy. Duffy was pained at the signal-man's discovery of the crime, and said nothing.

When they had reached the train, and the signal-man had told his version of the story to Tom and the brakesman, Duffy, who had stood aside while the story was being narrated, approached the men, and said: 'Now, lads, you know what Armstrong was trying to do, and why he did it; but that's no reason why anybody else should know. We'll not say a word about the signal; but when we take back the corpse, we'll say that we found him dead on the line, and that he had seemingly fallen over the embankment down into the deep rock cutting, and been killed.'

The three men solemnly promised to do this; and in spite of the *post-mortem* examination, in the report on which considerable stress was laid upon the peculiar nature of the wound upon the scalp, and the procurator-fiscal's inquiry, no one ever elicited more from these men than Duffy that night allowed them to tell.

Strangest fact of all, the engine-driver has never told his wife; that is the only secret he has from her.

SEA-SLANG.

THE nautical vocabulary is so varied and extensive, that there is some difficulty in distinguishing between sea-words and phrases that are technical and those which may fairly be called slang. Of the former, several collections have from time to time been made. The earliest is the *Accidence for Young Seamen*, published in 1626, by Captain John Smith, the historian of Virginia, and the hero of the famous Pocahontas story. It may be noted, by the way, as a curiosity of authorship that this, the first printed book on seamanship and nautical terms, was written by an army captain. More than one hundred years later, William Falconer, the author of the *Shipwreck*, published his *Marine*

Dictionary. The latest and most copious of these vocabularies is the late Admiral Smyth's comprehensive *Sailors' Word-book*, a work which, in addition to a very full collection of all technical sea-words and phrases, contains many purely slang expressions that are as familiar to the landsman as to the sailor. But apart from the words peculiar to the theory and practice of seamanship, there is a large number of special terms and phrases which either have been or are now in use among sailors, serving the same purpose as the many cant expressions in favour with shore-going folk.

The nautical names for some of the usual articles of food on board ship are suggestive of the coarse and unappetising nature of the fare. The stock dish of salt-beef is known as 'junk,' 'old-horse,' 'salt-horse,' and 'salt-junk.' Mr Clark Russell in one of his sea-stories declares that 'salt-horse' works out of the pores, and contributes to that mahogany complexion common to sailors, which is often mistakenly attributed to rum and weather. A savoury mess is 'lobscouse,' or 'scouse' as it is sometimes more shortly called. It consists of pounded biscuit, small pieces of salt-beef, and a few potatoes, boiled up together and seasoned with pepper. Smollett in *Peregrine Pickle* mentions the 'composition known by the name of lobscouse' as one of the sea-dishes of which the genial banquet given in honour of Commodore Trunnion's interrupted wedding was entirely composed. A dish of cold fish and potatoes is known as 'twice-laid,' and may be considered as a near relation of the mysterious 'resurrection pie' of school-days, or of the familiar 'bubble and squeak.'

When midst the frying-pan, in accents savage,
The beef so surly quarrels with the cabbage,

as Peter Pindar sings in very limping rhyme. A pudding made of dried peas boiled in a cloth rejoices in the enticing name of 'dog's-body.' The hard ship-biscuits are called 'hard tack'; while the ordinary loaves of white bread to be obtained ashore are christened 'soft tack,' or 'soft tommy.' The latter epithets will be familiar to readers of Marryat, and also to the many hearers of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, wherein the 'bumboat woman,' recounting her wares, sings of 'soft tommy and succulent chops.' 'Midshipmen's nuts' are broken pieces of biscuit eaten by way of dessert. The late Charles Kingsley in one of his letters mentions friends who 'got midshipman's half-pay (nothing a day and find yourself), and monkey's allowance (more kicks than halfpence).'

A very old sea-name for gruel, and formerly for hasty-pudding, is 'loblolly,' but the use of the word has not been confined to sailors. Ned Ward, in the *London Spy*, speaks of coffee as 'Mahometan loblolly'; and Garrick, in his farce *Peep behind the Curtain*, says: 'My ingenious countrymen have no taste now for the high-seasoned comedies; and I am sure that I have none for the pap and loblolly of our present writers.' In old days, the surgeon's mate or doctor's apprentice was derisively termed a 'loblolly boy.' Poor Roderick Random talks of the rude insults of the sailors and petty officers, among whom he was known by the name of 'Loblolly Boy.' Days on which no meat is served out for rations have long been known on board ship as 'banyan days.' The name is said to be derived from a caste of Hindu traders or merchants,

the Banians, who practise total abstinence from all animal food. Lamb tells us that when he was at Christ's Hospital they had three banyan to four meat days in the week. It is a case of 'six upon four' when provisions run short, and rations are allotted in the proportion of four to six men. To food, naturally succeeds drink.

Many of the ordinary cant names for alcoholic liquor are used both by sailors and by landsmen; but there are a few terms peculiar to the sea. To 'splice the mainbrace' is to give out an extra allowance of grog. 'Six-water grog' is very weak liquor, six portions of water to one of spirit. Weak or poor drink is also sometimes called 'rumbowling.' Of the innumerable euphemisms for drunkenness, partial or entire, a few are of nautical extraction. 'Half-seas over' dates from the seventeenth century. It occurs in Dryden, and later in the *Spectator*, No. 616, in a lively letter professedly written by a country wit upon the occasion of the rejoicings on the day of the king's coronation, when 'the alderman was half-seas over before the bonfire was out.' The origin of the phrase is doubtful. It is often referred to the Dutch *op-zee zober*, or over-sea beer, a strong beer said by Gifford to have been introduced into Holland from England; but more probably its origin is purely nautical, and may be traced to the reeling motion of a vessel in a stormy sea. 'Three sheets in the wind' and 'a sheet in the wind's eye' are two more expressions strongly suggestive of the unsteadiness caused by intoxication. At Greenwich Hospital the cant term for drunkenness is 'yellow fever,' because the sailors when punished have to wear a parti-coloured coat in which yellow is predominant. 'Bulling the barrel' is an operation well known to sailors. When a spirit-cask is nearly empty, a few gallons of water are put into it to keep the wood moist and prevent leakage; this is called 'bulling the cask'; and, as old Tom in *Jacob Faithful* explains, what with the little spirits that may be left and 'what has soaked in the wood, if you roll it and shake it well, it generally turns out pretty fair grog,' which is known as 'bull.' To 'suck the monkey' is a phrase explained in *Peter Simple* as having originally been used among sailors for drinking rum out of cocoa-nuts, the milk having been poured out and the liquor substituted. It is now applied to the act of drinking on the sly from a cask by inserting a straw through a gimlet hole, and to drinking generally. Barham, in the legend of the *Black Mousquetaire*, says:

What the vulgar call 'sucking the monkey,'
Has much less effect on a man when he's funky.

To 'tap the admiral' is a variant of this phrase.

Every one knows what a lubber is. The word is old: it is found in the earliest known English comedy, *Roister Doister*, written about 1550:

He is louted and laughed to skorne,
For the veriest dolte that ever was borne,
And veriest lubber, sloven, and beast.

'Lingering lubbers lose many a penny,' says thrifty Tusser. 'Lubber's hole' is a sea-term for any shirking of duty, from the name given to the opening in the maintop, used in preference to the shrouds by boys and timid climbers. A sailor who rose from the ranks was formerly said to have 'crept through the hawse-holes,' which, pro-

perly speaking, are the holes in the ship's bows through which the cables pass. Marryat, in the *King's Own*, says: 'The kind and considerate captain was aware that a lad who creeps in at the hawse-holes—that is, is promoted from before the mast—was not likely to be favourably received in the midshipmen's mess.' In the army, a man so promoted is called a 'ranker.'

Those amphibious beings the marines, often called 'jollies,' used to represent everything that was contemptible in the eyes of a sailor. A 'marine' and a 'lubber' were synonymous terms. Dana, in his *Two Years before the Mast*, says that on an American vessel 'soger' (soldier) was the worst term of reproach that could be applied to a sailor. 'It signifies,' he says, 'a skulk, a shirk, one who is always trying to get clear of work, and is out of the way, or hanging back, when duty is to be done.' 'Tell that to the marines,' is a relic of that period. 'What the devil has a ship to do with horse's furniture?' cries Sir Bingo in *St Ronan's Well*; 'do you think we belong to the horse-marines?'

They may tell that yarn to the horse-marines,
For we bean't such fools as we looks,

sings a recent burlesque writer; but as a matter of fact the value of this fine body of men is now well known and appreciated.

On board ship, 'son of a cook' is a very uncomplimentary epithet; 'swab' is used in much the same way, and is also applied to the epaulet of a naval officer. A lazy man is sometimes said to be 'slack in stays,' a phrase that has no feminine association, but is simply the technical way of saying that a ship is slow in going about. But if a sailor wishes to thoroughly condemn a lazy mean rascal, he brands him as a 'dirty dog and no sailor.'

Various nicknames are given by sailors to one another and to petty officers. The master's assistants have long been known as 'bungs' or 'bung-starters,' because it was part of their duty to stand at the grog-butt and superintend the serving-out of the grog. The skimmings of the coppers in which the fat salt pork is boiled for the crew are called 'slush'; consequently, the ship's cook is dubbed 'slushy'; while his assistant enjoys, with no apparent reason, the name of 'Jack Nasty-face.' 'Nipcheese' is an old and somewhat libellous name for a purser. A 'ship-husband,' according to Admiral Smyth, is the owner's agent; but Marryat applies the term to a sailor very fond of his ship. 'He was,' says that lively writer in *Percival Keene*, 'as we use the term at sea, a regular ship-husband—that is to say, he seldom put his foot on shore; and if he did, he always appeared anxious to get on board again.' Ships trading with the East which are manned by lascars are obliged by the insurance regulations to carry steersmen of some other nationality, usually European or Manilla men, who are known as 'sea-cunnies.' The names common to sailors in general are mostly of shore manufacture. 'Tarpaulin' is the oldest. It occurs in James Howell's *Parley of Beasts* (1660); and six years later, Mr Pepys enters in his *Diary*, October 20: 'He did hope he should not see a tarpaulin have the command of a ship within this twelve months.' 'Tar' is simply a contraction of 'tarpaulin,' and is almost as old a word. Ned Ward in his *London Spy* (1703) speaks of a

'drunken tar, as great in his thoughts as an admiral;' and earlier still, in Durfey's *Commonwealth of Women* (1686), a sailor is spoken of as 'old tarr.' Other well-known names at present in use are 'salt,' 'shell-back,' and sometimes 'lob-scouser.'

The songs popular with sailors are called 'chanteys' or 'shanties.' When a sailor dies, he is said to have 'lost the number of his mess.' Mr Chucks the boatswain remarks to Peter Simple, on an eventful occasion, that he does not think well of the expedition in which they are engaged. 'I have an idea,' he says, 'that some of us will lose the number of our mess.' A better-known phrase with similar meaning is, to go to 'Davy Jones's locker'—that is, the bottom of the sea. The origin of this expression is uncertain. To 'pipe the eye' is to weep; readers of Hood will remember how Ben the carpenter, when he returned to the faithless Sally Brown,

Began to eye his pipe,
And then to pipe his eye.

Litter on deck, sailors call 'raffle'; in American vessels, according to Dana, a confusion of things is, or was, called a 'hurrah's nest, everything on top and nothing at hand.' The converse of this condition is known as 'ship and shape and Bristol fashion,' or more generally nowadays simply 'ship-shape.' To 'haze' is a very expressive word to a sailor; it means to harass or punish by hard and often unnecessary work.

In the old days of privateering, East and West Indiamen were wont to make a gallant show of cannon-mouths frowning from their lower port-holes; but as these pieces were all wooden, and not intended to be fired, they were known as 'quakers.' A curious cant name for a ship of war is 'Andrew' or 'Andrew Millar.' Its origin is quite unknown; but it has been pointed out that Antonio, in the *Merchant of Venice*, speaks of one of his vessels as his 'wealthy Andrew'; and it has been conjectured that in this case the ship was named after the celebrated Admiral Andrea Doria, who died in 1560. But to trace any connection between this 'Andrew,' however general the use of the name may have become, and the 'Andrew Millar' of modern sailors' slang would be difficult.

MY VIOLIN.

ART naught but deal, with form and screw and line?
Hast not a soul that answer makes to mine?
Heart speaks to heart—oh, surely mine to thine,
Else, couldst thou thrill as if with thought divine?

Whence come those groans that rend thy throbbing
breast?

Those low sweet tones that fill my soul with rest?
E'en when despair within my heart was guest,
I told thee all, and life again was blest.

Soul or no soul, thou'rt all in life to me;
Scarcely dream I dream that is not blent with thee:
Where'er I roam, in sorrow or in glee,
Thou, Violin! a valued friend shalt be.

N. GRANT.

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AT HOME.

How to make it 'sweet home,' that is the question. Not dull, or sour, or bitter, as many homes are, but our 'ain fireside,' the place that has no place like it—this is what we all want it to be.

If one could fly over the house-tops, like the man in the story, and unroof them to peep in, or if a true census could be taken, we should find that for most people 'home, sweet home' is only an abstract idea, not a matter of experience. Leaving unhappy families out of the question, peaceful folks in general consider their home as the place where they do as they like, and get food, rest, and shelter. It never occurs to them that it is sweet. They hanker after a new one, or for some possible change. And several other places seem to be not only like it but much better than it.

We want to get 'home, sweet home' out of the abstract and into the concrete. The popular notion of it, as a vague state of life, is taken from fanciful pictures and verses. These represent home as a holiday house, where the children are making a perpetual rush upon a returning father, and where the family sit in a fireside circle with nothing to do except to share the frugal meal—it is always frugal with the poets. Mrs Hemans is a little more definite in her beautiful lines :

There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunelessly along
Some glorious page of old.

But even this deals only with evening amusement; and it is not always evening any more than it is always May; moreover, the children have to be sent to bed, and the woman 'may sing too often and too long.'

As regards the other descriptions, sometimes there are no little ones to make welcome with the poetic scramble, sometimes there is nobody to be rushed upon—or at least that pretty scene cannot go on all day. The fireside circle is a bad suggestion when one is eating ice and trying to

get cool; life is not story and song, but is often made of tiring tasks, vexatious details. And lastly, one is not satisfied with the frugal meal, except in print. In fact, the typical description is not able to stand close scrutiny; and hence the ideal home is supposed to be a vague enviable thing, about which common mortals need not trouble themselves. A great mistake; for though the poetic description becomes weak and almost grotesque when looked at closely, it is still in a sense good and true; for it is like the artist's cartoon daubed broadly to give the general colouring; and the general colouring of home is the spirit of love and contentment, which these poor words and symbols of the poets have tried to represent.

As for contentment, in this case it cannot mean the absence of anxiety or of ambition, nor even that we possess what we hoped for; but only that what we have, we find to be sweet. As for love, it is so much a necessity in home-life, that the very word has come to apply much more to the presence of the people than to the peace shared with them. Change all possessions, and it remains unchanged; transfer the household, and it still is home; but take the circle of our affections away, and everything is gone. The word 'home' has, then, a complex meaning—the dwelling-place, the domestic property and arrangements as a whole, but most of all the united life under one roof. The English-speaking races are proud of this beautiful word; in many other languages the best word to be found instead has a narrower meaning—only 'the house' or 'the hearth.'

Now what is necessary for a happy home? Charles Lamb's suggestion was that there should be in every house a baby rising six months and a kitten rising six weeks. A very nice suggestion too, but slightly impracticable. Kittens have a knack of growing up; and we do not know the shop in fairyland where babies can be purchased *ad lib.* in bandboxes. Luckily, the necessities of the ideal home are more within reach than King Baby, who cannot be bought for gold. With a

suitable dwelling-place and prudent management, it is easy enough to solve the problem of how to make home sweet. First as to the house—it ought to be healthy, bright, and sufficiently spacious. Then as to the management—it includes the practice of rule and order and the right use of income. On the important question of income as a factor in the ideal home, we cannot put the matter in a nutshell better than our old friend Mr Micawber did. In one of his conversations, something turns up to the following effect: 'Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six—result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six—result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and, in short, you are for ever floored!' A calamity so shocking as Mr Micawber describes must not overtake our ideal home, whatever else happens to it.

Turning next to the character of the home circle, we imagine them to be the ordinary God-fearing and law-abiding folk who form the bulk of the middle classes. The household will be sustained at its best by three simple qualities—virtues in the strict sense of the word, because exercises of strength—home virtues, common things of every day, like necessary water, salt, or bread. These three are good temper, cheerfulness, and energy. The house has been described specially with a view to their preservation. Health, brightness, and sufficient space make it easier to foster these good gifts. The opposite conditions in a house will give the opposite results; the unhealthy home, gloomy and uncomfortable, produces ill-temper, dejection, and languor. But, given the suitable dwelling-place and the sensible management, good temper, cheerfulness, and energy can more easily be cultivated. In a character they rise together, parts of one growth, like the three flowers on a lily stalk.

They are very necessary to enable us to conquer and put out of sight the small vexations of every day; still more needed are they in the critical times of anxiety, the visitations of sorrow, against which no roof can protect, no door can be barred. The knowledge of what life really is—the weariness of daily annoyances, the dread of greater griefs—makes us conscious of a vast difference between the peaceful homes of poetry and romance and the real homes of vicissitude and work. This difference is bridged over by our three household virtues. Mutual good-temper, cheerfulness, and energy are a triple strength, making the family brave in passing trials, and absolutely independent of those trifling troubles that spoil peace and take the poetry out of life.

Cultivating, then, these three splendid qualities, the home circle find in sufficient and interested occupation a healthy appetite for the times of rest and union and amusement. Idleness means discontent, and work apart means joy together. Amusement is necessary to complete home-life. Remember its evenings are to be the safeguard of the young folks from wishing to wander; its innocent gaieties are to be the brightest picture in the children's memory for ever after.

There is one thing, and that perhaps the chief thing, still to be added to our ideal home. The sweetness of it is the sweetness of the woman who

is its reigning spirit. She does more than reign, and she is more to it than a queen to a kingdom. In the 'sweet home' there is always a woman who is its centre and its soul. Everything depends on her. Every one's happiness belongs to her. If she knew her responsibility, it would frighten her; if she found out all her preciousness, it would take her breath away. But there is no trembling, no self-consciousness; she simply remains in her place, like a fair column that upholds an arch, because, though fragile, it is built so truly. The Germans have a beautiful word instead of housekeeper or housewife; they say 'house-mother.' The youngest maid or matron who takes care of the home has earned the title of the house-mother, as if she was the dear owner of everything, and everything looked up to her in return. There is no reason why her happy lot should be felt as a heavy care. What can be a greater triumph to a woman's heart than to have created 'home, sweet home?' And it is woman's privilege to create out of common things and daily life that earthly paradise.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE last departed Earl of Barfield had been something of an eccentric and a good deal of a miser, and the new lord was disposed on coming into his estates to strew what the old man had gathered. For years, Barfield Hall had slept with closed eyes in the care of one or two servants on board-wages. Now, its old-fashioned saloons were thrown open again; an army of workmen had invaded the place; and in the course of a four months' occupation, had so far refurbished it that it was hard to recognise. Van-load after van-load of furniture was discharged at its doors; and tons of venerable rubbish were carted away and consigned to a new oblivion. When the old Earl had been twelve months in the family vault, his successor came down with the young Countess and took possession, to the much rejoicing of the local tradespeople, as well as the smaller local magnates, who had long mourned the absence of their natural chieftain.

His young lordship, as it was the fashion to call him, was by this time well into the forties; but he was apparently determined to make the best of such time as was left to him, and went in heartily for all sorts of social entertainment. Dinners, social and political, luncheons ditto and ditto, garden-parties, carpet-dances, ceremonious balls, private theatricals, whatever he could think of for the enlivening of the country-side and the entertainment of his guests, his lordship offered.

Amongst other public posts he held was that of Lieutenant-colonel of the County Yeomanry Cavalry, and with his new scope for generosity, and his native desire to be agreeable to everybody, his lordship took upon himself to hold the annual yeomanry ball in his own house. Hitherto, the ball had been promoted by subscription, and had been held in the local Assembly Rooms, a dingy establishment, given over for the greater part of the year to the uses of a cart and coach builder, and cleared of its stock on one or two occasions only in the whole round of time between January and December.

Snelling was a yeomanry corporal, and received with the rest of the people interested a ticket for himself and a ticket for a lady. He would have offered the latter to Cecilia; but he knew that Shorthouse, as a private of twenty years' standing, would have his tickets also, and that the courtesy would be useless. Members of the troop were of course understood to appear in full parade uniform, and Snelling's clothes having been destroyed with his other belongings in the fire, he was compelled to order new ones. Cecilia was certain to be present; and since Snelling thought rather better of himself in his spurs and scarlet than in any other attire he had the right to wear, he made the life of the tailor to whom he took his instructions a burden. The clothes came to the *Barfield Arms* two days before the date fixed for the ball, and being tried on, and not turning out absolutely to his satisfaction, were taken back again with instructions that they should be altered.

This care about detail threatened for an hour or two to rob Snelling of the ball, for the amended regimentals came home only in the nick of time. Even the fashionable arrivals, who had a prescriptive right to be later than the common people, had put in their appearance when Snelling reached the Hall. He was unaccompanied, meaning to leave himself entirely free to devote his evening to Cecilia. It was not his way to look on anything as hopeless because it had once eluded him, and in point of fact if the prize he sought had fallen at once into his hands, he could never have taught himself to care for it. It was the refusal and the risk which stirred him; and they stirred him so deeply, that if he had secured Cecilia now, he would never again have grown indifferent to her.

Almost the first person he encountered was Shorthouse, with a face as red as his tunic. The good man clung heroically to the tunic and waist-belt of five years ago, and refused, in spite of the strangling testimony they afforded, to admit that he had grown in girth by a hair's-breadth. Their tight embrace made his breathing a little difficult, and he wheezed at his friend and neighbour in an unaccustomed voice.

'Bob, ode lad, I want a word with you.'

'Two, if you like,' said Snelling, who was in a better humour than common at the thought of a free hour or two in which to prosecute his courtship.

'Come into one of these here corners,' said the farmer, 'and sit down.—Now, listen to what I'm going to say. Bend down a bit; I don't want nobody to overhear.'

Snelling, resting his busby on his knees, leaned forward with his ear at Shorthouse's lips.

'Art in the same mind thou wast in six months ago?' the elder man asked him.

'As to what?' Snelling queried, turning his face towards him.

'About my gell?' Shorthouse whispered.

'I'm as much of that mind,' Snelling answered gruffly, 'as a man needs to be, if I could see my way towards it.'

'Very well,' said Shorthouse. 'I'm game to lend a helping hand. I'll have no foreign chaps sneaking after a gell o' mine. Her'll marry an Englishman, or her'll stop single.'

'You've seen that, have you?' asked the disappointed suitor.

'Seen it?—yes. I put it to 'Zaiah Winter two months gone by, and he asked me what sort of a maggot I'd got in my head to think of such a thing at all. I've found her to-day with a book I'd never seen afore. I took a look at it, and it turned out to be a Bible. It's done in French and English, and it's got a cover in bone or ivory, or summit o' that sort, with angels and tree-boughs and all sorts of things cut into it. That French chap had gi'en it to her, and her never said a word to me about it. I said nothin' neither; but I can put two and two together. I've got a father's feelin' for the wench, and somehow her bein' motherless meks me softer with her; but sparked up to by a foreigner her shall not be; I'd sooner see her in her coffin.'

'That's how anybody who knows you,' hummed Snelling in a slow deep murmur, 'would expect to hear you talk.—But what's going to be done in the matter? You can kick him out at any minute, and what he's after is plain enough; but what kicking him out will do for me, I don't see.'

'Bob,' said the elder, 'you've made a sad waste o' time i' that particular. You've niver studied the ways of the petticoats. A gell's "No" counts for nothing. Cecilia's poor mother said "No" to me three times, till at last I went up to her, and I said: "Look here," I said. "Make a hend o' this," I said. "Tek me or leave me." Her took me for better or worse that instant minute; and better it was, for her father farmed the thinnest bit o' land between here and Cold-field; and though I say it as shouldn't, there warn't a likelier chap than me within six mile. The young generation's a bit better; but they was a weedy lot about Hoyden i' my marrying days. A gell's "No" is just a sort o' "Follow me, lad," and that I found out when you was going about in corduroys and a round jacket.'

Hope began to knock at Snelling's heart again; but he contrived to keep his common aspect of massive self-possession. 'You think,' he asked, 'it's worth my while to speak again?'

'I'll mek it so,' said Shorthouse, 'if I've got any v'ice i' the matter. I'd sooner lay her cold in her grave than let her wed anybody but an Englishman. I wonder at the young fellow's folly. He says to me one day at 'Zaiah Winter's house, himself: "You're John Bull, you are, inside and out. A John Buller man than you be," he says, "I never see." And yet in spite o' that, it's as plain as the nose on your face as he comes a-courtin' Cecilia.—He's here to-night.'

'What?' Snelling snarled, in a voice which drew half-a-dozen pair of eyes upon him.

'Hush, hush!' the farmer warned him; 'tek it easy, lad—tek it easy. I'll see no mischief comes o' it. They was talkin' together at the other end o' the room when you and me run agen one another.—Don't go yet, Bob; wait a while. I've another word to say to you. You're not quite so young as you used to be, and you've got a bit perhaps too solemn a church-going style about you. Spark up a bit; smarten thyself, ode lad. Why, i' my courtin' days, I'd have a dozen wenches on the giggle afore I'd been five minutes among 'em. They like a merry-

hearted man, Bob. Thee canst tek that for gospel.'

'What brings him here?' said Snelling, who had but little merriment to waste on anybody.

'I don't know,' the farmer answered. 'I found him a-jabberin' away with Sir Ferdinand and Sir Ferdinand's lady; and her ladyship in special piping like a jenny-wren, in his own foreign lingo, and swayin' and laughin' and smilin' at what he said as if he'd been a hemperor. They seem inclined to mek a lot of him; and I ain't one of them as sets himself up against his betters. The young man's all right, I mek no doubt; but "hands off" is my word to him.—Now, Bob, brisk up a bit, get away; you've got my good-will.'

Snelling rose slowly, with a single nod in answer. He looked quite soldierly in his handsome uniform, and was as well set up by nature as most men can be by the exercises of the drill-yard. As he approached the upper end of the ballroom he saw Jousserau in the act of presenting Cecilia to Lady Blacquaire, who took the girl's hand kindly and with no air of patronage. Cecilia bore herself perfectly; but it was evident for all that that she was a trifle scared by immediate contact with so much greatness.

'That's where it is,' said Snelling to himself. 'The silly little thing's got it into her head that because he's friends of a sort with that kind of folks, she will get amongst them too. Her head's a bit turned with the notion, and that's where he gets the advantage over me. She'd never have thought about him if he hadn't come to church in my lord's carriage.'

He dared not intrude himself while Cecilia was with her ladyship; but when once they had parted, he strolled towards her, and made a stiff half-ironic inclination to her in imitation of the manner of his officers and other people of quality. 'This is better than the Assembly Rooms last year,' he said, by way of opening a conversation.

'Very much better,' Cecilia answered. 'It is very kind of his lordship to have the ball held here; but we can't expect him to do it always, and it will spoil us for next year.'

At this instant the county member, in passing, shook hands with Snelling, whose vote and influence were worth conserving, and tapped Jousserau on the shoulder. 'Excuse me, Mr Snelling,' he said; and then to Jousserau in his own language: 'I want to introduce to you a friend of mine, a great admirer of your last picture, by the way. He is an excellent fellow, but'—

All Sir Ferdinand's acquaintances were excellent fellows, and they all had a 'but' to their excellences.

'Shall I find you a seat, Miss Shorthouse?' Snelling asked, when he and Cecilia were thus left to themselves. 'You'll be getting tired if you stand between the dances.'

Cecilia took his proffered arm. He conducted her to a seat and sat down beside her. He wanted to follow Shorthouse's advice and to make himself brighter and livelier; but he could think of nothing to start upon. His rival was in his thoughts, and his unexpected appearance at the ball was irritating. 'I hadn't expected to find our French friend here,' he said. 'What brings

him at a yeomanry ball, I should like to know?'

'I suppose,' returned Cecilia laughingly, 'that none of us would be here if we had not been asked. Mr Jousserau has been telling me that he means to paint pictures of English life. He thinks that a yeomanry ball would make a very brilliant scene for a picture, and I fancy that he is here chiefly to make observations.'

'Well,' returned Snelling, 'that's what I should call as rare a bit of impudence as I ever heard of.'

'Impudence!' said Cecilia, in a tone of astonishment. 'What can you mean, Mr Snelling?'

'I'm a part of this assembly,' he responded, 'and I've an objection to being stared at and took stock of by anybody as wants to make money out o' me without my free gift and permission.'

'Really, Mr Snelling,' said the girl, 'I think you are a little too sensitive.'

'Perhaps so, perhaps not,' he answered. 'Anyway, that's my feeling.'

Cecilia said nothing; and a moment later Shorthouse appeared and took a seat beside his chosen son-in-law. He nudged Snelling with his elbow, and gave him a wink and a nod towards Cecilia, as an intimation to begin to make himself agreeable. Snelling not putting these instructions into immediate practice, the farmer began an elaborate pantomime, clumsily expressive of an invitation to dance. Snelling, fearing lest his companion's motions should be observed by the girl, put an end to them by a nudge of the elbow and a warning frown. He was in the very act of turning to obey the dumb injunction, when the band struck up the first bars of a polka, and there was Jousserau standing before Cecilia. The girl rose, and the two sailed away together in time to the music. Snelling, in blank astonishment, turned on Shorthouse, and he and the farmer stared at each other in a mutual indignation.

'Is that company manners?' Snelling demanded. 'A young lady is sittin' talking with one man, and another comes and whirls her off from under his very nose!'

'I suppose the man had axed her beforehand,' said Shorthouse. 'Why didn't you ax her yourself, when I told you?'

'I was turning round,' Snelling responded angrily, 'when he walked her away from under my very nose. I shall give that young man a piece of my mind.'

'Thee'llt help nothing by meking a row here, Bob, my lad,' returned the senior.

'It's not my way to mek rows anywhere,' Snelling answered; 'but I shall give that young man a piece o' my mind, and a good-sized piece into the bargain.' He got up and strode away to the buffet; and there, not caring that his angry face should betray him, he forced an aspect of hilarity, and clapped one or two of his comrades boisterously on the shoulder. Lord Barfield did things liberally, and there was an ample, and even more than ample, supply of champagne. Snelling thought but lightly of that beverage, and altogether underrated its effect. He knew, indeed, very little about it, and had tasted it perhaps half-a-dozen times in his life; but if any man had told him that he could possibly take too much of it for sobriety, he would have laughed the idea to scorn. He was hot and excited, and

one servant or another filling his glass as often as he set it down, he drank more than he knew, and in a surprisingly short space of time the wine was buzzing in his head, and there was an altogether unaccustomed flush upon his face. His deep voice was always louder and more powerful than he fancied, and now it rang out so noisily once or twice that one or two of his comrades warned him.

'I say, corporal, don't make that row; we shall have his lordship here.'

It never entered the man's head that he had been drinking, or that the wild flush of gaiety with sudden flashes of ill-temper was attributable to the wine. Champagne was a beverage for women, and a solid man like himself could surely drink a dozen of it and feel nothing.

Shorthouse was at his elbow, and took him by the wrist as he laid his hand upon a bottle. 'Come back into the ballroom, Bob, and leave that alone.'

'Leave it alone?' Snelling answered. 'What for? Why should I leave it alone?'

'Well, if you want to know,' Shorthouse responded bluffly, 'you've had enough on it. It's beginning to tell on you.'

'What, that stuff?' cried Snelling with a great roaring laugh. 'That's a good un, and no mistake.' He bent in his vinous mirth, clipping his thighs with both hands, laughing obstreperously. 'Why, I could tek a hogshead of it and never come to harm.'

'You be said, Bob, and come along,' the farmer insisted. 'You've had enough on it.'

But Snelling looked down from his own superior height over Shorthouse's shoulder, and his glance was so intent and wrathful that the farmer turned round to see at what it was directed. Jousserau was standing there, talking to Sir Ferdinand, and in the act of clinking glasses with him. Snelling shouldered his companion out of the way and laid a ponderous hand on the artist's arm. 'I'll thank you,' he said, 'to let me take the liberty of a word with you.'

'Assuredly,' the artist answered, looking up at him.

'What you are,' said Snelling, 'and who you are, I neither know nor care. Parson Heathcote, I'm told, gives you out for a gentleman; but that you're not, and I'd lay my life upon it.'

Jousserau saw his condition at a glance, and he had heard some hint of his proposal to Cecilia. 'Do not let us talk of that,' he said. 'You shall have what opinion you please.—I am engaged.' He turned once more towards Sir Ferdinand, who was staring wrathfully at Snelling.

'Oh, but we will talk about it; I am going to talk about it.'

'I must really beg your pardon, Mr Snelling,' said the county member. 'You may state your opinion elsewhere, but you shall not state it here. Please, understand that.'

'I know you, Sir Ferdinand,' said Snelling, brandishing his arm, 'and I knew your father and your grandfather afore you. I know who you are; but who this chap is I don't know.'

'Captain Hawkes,' said Sir Ferdinand with great smoothness, addressing one of the astonished bystanders, 'I suppose that this person being in military uniform, and you being in uniform also, that he is amenable to your orders. I am not a

military man myself; but I should presume that to be the case. Will you kindly have him taken away somewhere? He is intoxicated, and as you observe, is creating a disturbance.'

'Intoxicated!' shouted Snelling. 'Me? If there's e'er another man here dares to say so, I'll knock him down.'

The gentleman appealed to by Sir Ferdinand made a mere motion of the hand to one or two of the yeomanry troopers, and in an instant half-a-dozen stalwart fellows were about him.

'Come along, Snelling,' said one of them with persuasive good-humour. 'Don't let's have any trouble about it.'

Snelling had not exceeded so far that he had lost all sense of personal dignity. 'I'll have no scuffle,' he said, with unexpected calm. 'I'll take Sir Ferdinand's word for it that I'm not wanted. As for that little jackanapes yonder, I can state my opinion of him at some future time, maybe.' So saying, he saluted his captain and walked from the room steady and erect.

'That's a very unusual condition for Mr Snelling, surely,' said Sir Ferdinand, addressing Shorthouse.

'It's a condition I never see him in afore,' Shorthouse answered. 'The truth is, Sir Ferdinand, the poor fellow's done no fault, but been overtaken in a misfortune. He looked on this here champagne wine like so much ginger pop, and it never entered into his mind to think as it could hurt him. There isn't a more respectable man, Sir Ferdinand, not for twenty mile around.'

An assenting murmur ran about the room.

'Evidently an accident,' said the county member.—'But, Jousserau,' he added in French to his companion, 'what had you done to make the man so angry?'

'My faith!' said Jousserau, 'nothing that I know of, absolutely nothing!'

Snelling meanwhile was raging across the park, with occasional fierce pauses. 'I'm not fit company,' he said over and over again, 'for a place where that foreign monkey can show himself and be made much of. I've had enough of this. I'll change it. I've been soft and quiet long enough. I'll change it all; I'll find a means to be revenged on that fellow.' He shook his fist madly at the lighted Hall, and turning again, plunged on through the darkness with the actual lust of murder in his heart.

THE REVOLUTION IN TEA.

It is a remarkable fact that the importations of Indian and Ceylon teas into this country are now almost equal in weight to, and are actually greater in money-value than, the importations of China teas. And yet the cultivation of tea in India is an industry scarcely fifty years old, and in Ceylon barely ten years old. Between 1866 and 1886 the exports of China tea doubled; but in the same period the exports of Indian teas increased *fourteen-fold*. The consequences, actual and impending, of this revolution in the trade are causing such serious concern in China, where tea is a staple industry, as well as a leading source of imperial revenue (every pound exported paying to the Treasury a duty equal to about twopence

per pound), that a special investigation into the whole subject was lately ordered by the Tsungli Yamen. Sir Robert Hart, who has charge of the imperial maritime customs of China, has embodied the results of the inquiry in a Report which affords a great deal of interesting information.

It is shown that the decline of Chinese tea in favour is chiefly in Great Britain and America—which latter country, however, takes Japan tea now in preference to both Chinese and Indian—for Russia, the next largest consumer, is increasing its demands, although not sufficiently to make up for the loss of the British markets. And it is also stated that the decline in favour of China teas is not due to any deterioration in the quality of the native leaf, but chiefly to the carelessness with which it is prepared for market. The growing favour of Indian teas, on the other hand, is said not to be due to superior flavour, but to superior strength and greater care in preparation, so that a pound of it goes much further than a pound of the Chinese teas.

It is worth while comparing the systems on which the industry is conducted in the two competing countries, so as to understand how the great revolution in the trade has been accomplished.

In China, tea is grown for the most part in small gardens farmed by those who own them, generally men of little or no capital with which to obtain fertilisers and to renew the plants from time to time. The 'picking' is done by the family of the grower; but in the height of the season extra hands have to be employed. To economise this expense, the picking is pushed forward, and the plucked leaves are allowed to stand until the picking is finished, whereby they suffer greatly in quality. A consequence of this manner of proceeding is that the leaves are not evenly 'withered' when the process of manufacture begins.

In India, on the other hand, the tea is grown in large gardens, sometimes covering thousands of acres, superintended either by the owner himself or by a skilled agent. In the Assam district the gardens are in the alluvial valleys of the large rivers, and many of them are formed of ground reclaimed from the primeval jungle with all the richness of a virgin soil. The plants are grown from selected seeds, and the indigenous plant has been found superior to the China plant which was at first favoured. The labour is all done by coolies, brought from the central provinces at a considerable expense, and the wages are high—for India. But with efficient, although costly, labour the greatest care is practised in cultivation, digging, weeding, &c., and especially in the delicate work of plucking. The exact moment to begin picking is determined by the overseer, and the leaves have to be removed in such a way as to cause no injury to the plant. If a leaf be carefully plucked, another will follow in about a fortnight; but if carelessness be used, the branch may be rendered barren for the rest

of the season. Close and constant supervision by European managers and assistants is thus necessary, and by this means the Indian planters get some sixteen successive pickings in one season; while the Chinese get only four. Moreover, in the Indian gardens, when the leaves are plucked, they are at once started on the course of 'making,' and are not left to lie about, as in China; so there is no deterioration.

Each picking of a garden is in India called a 'break,' and in China a 'chop.' But an Indian 'break' is rarely above a hundred chests, and is often only twenty, and it is absolutely even in quality throughout; whereas a Chinese 'chop' may be run up to several hundred chests or half-chests, purporting to be of even quality, but made up of many pickings from different gardens, producing a mixture which is not uniform, at the expense of the deterioration of the better leaves.

In India, each day's picking is immediately 'withered,' and when perfectly and evenly withered, is 'rolled' lightly by a machine. In China, the withered or partially withered leaves are put into small cotton bags, loosely tied, and placed in open wooden boxes, the sides of which are pierced with numerous holes. A man then gets into the box and presses and kneads the bags with his feet, with the object of both rolling the leaves and expressing the moisture.

Next comes 'fermentation.' In India, this is done in the open air, without any extraneous aid; and it is part of the skill of the planter to know the exact moment when to arrest the process, for immediately the proper point is reached, the tea must be 'fired.' In China, after the jumping process above described, the tea is placed in baskets and covered up with cotton or felt mats, so as to retain the heat and hasten the fermentation. After it has stood thus covered up for a certain time, it is taken out and 'fired.' This firing is one of the most important of all the processes, and requires great skill and care. The Indian planter is most particular to see that only the very best hardwood charcoal is used, and that the tea is so constantly turned over that there is no chance of any of it getting burned. A single basket of burnt leaf will spoil a whole 'break.' In China they often make the tea 'smoky' by using ill-made charcoal, and sometimes 'tarry' by firing with soft woods like fir and pine. The 'tarry' flavour, it is said, will often not develop until long after the tea has left China, and some waters bring it out more disagreeably than others.

The following is or should be the process of 'firing' by the charcoal system. After the fire is ready, a tubular basket, narrow at the middle and wide at both ends, is placed over it, and into this tube a sieve is dropped, covered with tea-leaves, shaken on it to about an inch in thickness. The leaves have to be carefully watched while the sieve is over the fire; and after about five or six minutes, they are removed and rolled. As the balls of leaves come out of the hands of the roller, they are placed in a heap on the floor; and when all have been thus manipulated, they are shaken on to the sieves again and set over the fire for a few minutes longer. They may even sometimes be rolled and fired a third time until the leaves have assumed the right dark colour. When the whole batch has been thus treated, it is placed thickly in the baskets and again put over the fire.

The attendant makes a hole with his hand through the centre of the mass, so as to allow vent to the heat as well as to any smoke or vapour from the charcoal, and he then covers it over with a flat basket. The heat of the fire is now reduced, and the tea is allowed to remain over it until perfectly dry. It has to be constantly watched and frequently stirred to ensure equal heating. When the firing is done, the black colour of black tea should be well established, although it afterwards improves in appearance. The tea is then winnowed and sifted through various sieves to divide it into the different kinds.

In India, however, another process for firing tea has been introduced of late years. It is called a 'Sirocco,' and is a machine for applying hot air, which is superseding the charcoal process. It is rapid in its work, and is said to be superior in many ways. The leaf is laid out on wire-gauze trays, which are passed through the hot-air machine at a temperature of three hundred degrees, and in from fifteen to twenty minutes the tea is thoroughly fired. It is then placed in the 'sifters,' which are worked by machinery with either a lateral or rotatory motion, and the different grades are sifted out, such as Dust, Broken Pekoe, and Pekoe. The larger and coarser leaves which do not pass through the sieves are cut to an even size and classed as Pekoe Souchong.

The Hankow Commissioner of Customs declares that the method practised in China of rolling and squeezing the leaves before fermentation goes a long way to account for the large quantities of inferior teas which are sent into the market—of good leaf spoiled.

The weakest part of the Chinese system, however, seems to be in getting it to market. In India, everything is done in the garden, from the picking to the packing ready for shipment in properly branded 'breaks.' But in China, the grower does not prepare the tea for market; he brings it up to a certain stage, and an intermediary 'tea-man' has to complete the work at his convenience. Thus the tea is often long exposed to the influence of the weather before it gets into the lead-lined chests. The 'tea-man' lives mostly in Hankow, Shanghai, or Canton; and about March or April he starts up-country well supplied with copper 'cash.' At some suitable point for shipment he has a central 'hong' or factory, and 'godown' or warehouse. Thence he despatches his agents in all directions; and they scatter sub-agents all through the tea-districts to collect the leaf from the growers. It is gradually brought in to the 'hong' in bags, and may be for days on the road, exposed to the weather thus imperfectly covered. When enough is collected at the 'hong,' the tea-man proceeds to pick and refine it. By means of a revolving sieve, the larger leaves and the smaller are separated; then come mixing and blending, so as to produce an average appearance for different 'chops;' and then it is packed for market.

One of the complaints is, that this packing is very carelessly and roughly done in China, to the further injury of the delicate leaf. The coolies are said to tread it into the boxes with their feet—not always bare—with a total lack of discrimination, and with such amount of pressure as to produce a large proportion of Dust. The Commissioner at Wuhu reports: 'Instead of the

tea being packed carefully, it is rammed down hard, and is put into the chests while still hot. Hastily packed and heavily pressed down, the tea cannot possibly escape injury; and being put in and covered over while hot, it becomes damp when it gets cold. While hot, the tea is very brittle, and gets broken very easily, yielding in consequence a large percentage of Dust. The object of packing the tea while hot is to enable it to retain its aroma, so that when the chests are opened there may be a fragrant odour emitted. The aroma is there, no doubt, but at the expense of the tea, which suffers in consequence. The tea after being fired and packed is conveyed part of the way in wheelbarrows and part of the way by boat. It is handled roughly *en route*, and being protected by a few mats only—and these hastily thrown together—it gets wet. No notice, perhaps, is taken of this circumstance, and hence the tea gets ruined.'

Shanghai merchants complain of the quality of the teas manufactured in Ningpo district under the name of Pingsueys. Some of the dealers, they say, do honourably make and supply pure tea; but the majority mix 'spurious rubbish' with the good leaf, and colour it to look like the genuine article. One of the least harmful forms of adulteration is tea-powder mixed with congee and rolled into pillules, to sell as 'Gunpowder;' but in many cases all sorts of foreign and even injurious substances are introduced.

In Foochow, we find the European merchants complaining of the frauds of 'tea-men' selling a 'chop' of inferior stuff by a false sample of good quality. But a more serious matter, as more difficult of detection, is the large admixture of what is well called 'Lie Tea'—that is to say, leaves other than tea-leaves—and the employment of Congee or rice-water, tea-dust, soot, and other deleterious substances, in the manufacture of locally packed teas. Even the expert is often unable to discover the presence of 'Lie Tea' in the finer grades, so cleverly is the fraud manipulated.

To come back to India: we find a very different system in vogue. The moment the tea is ready, it is packed—loosely, and never pressed, but shaken down—in strong air-tight boxes and shut up at once from atmospheric influences. No leaves are broken in the packing, and no Dust is made in the chest; indeed, many planters pass the tea carefully through a sieve before packing, so as to remove whatever Dust may have formed in the previous processes. Every chest is honestly and faithfully what it professes to be, and every box in a 'break' is precisely the same as the rest of the 'break.'

Here, then, we have the secret of the decline in favour of China teas, and the rapid ascent of Indian teas, in our markets, where sterling quality is so quickly appreciated. In India, a single garden will contain thousands of shrubs, the products of which are picked, withered, rolled, fired, packed, and despatched in one spot and under one watchful, experienced, and faithful supervision. Unremitting attention is given to every stage of the process, and the tea comes into the London market as it left the gardens in the valleys of Assam and on the hills of Cachar or Neilgherry. One profit suffices for grower, manufacturer, and shipper, and thus expenses are minimised, and genuine first-class tea is placed before

the British consumer at a low cost. In China, everything is the reverse, and although labour is cheaper there, there are so many profits to intermediaries, so much handling and such taxation, that the ultimate cost is something like threepence per pound more than the Indian rival, which goes a great deal further.

These facts are instructive, as illustrating how a great nation may lose a great industry by carelessness and dishonesty, and how a few energetic and honest traders may build up in a short time an enormous traffic. It is natural and proper that our sympathies should be with the triumph of our Indian industry.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Kate came down-stairs she found Mr Dottleson in a frame of mind very different from that in which he had spent the earlier part of the afternoon; the storm had subsided in cloudy gloom. Papa had evidently something on his mind, and she busied herself to rouse him.

'Shall we go out after tea, papa?' she began. 'Grandmamma's asleep and the rain has stopped.'

'I'm afraid I have annoyed your grandmother, Kate,' replied Mr Dottleson sorrowfully; 'but really I felt bound to speak to her as I did for your sake.'

'She was rather hurt at what you said; but you can easily make that all right.'

'How?'

'Oh, you might ask Dr Lakeworth to dinner, and make a good deal of him before granny; she would soon forget anything you said to-day.'

'I'll think about it,' said her father, who had decided to act upon his daughter's proposition the moment it was made. 'Your idea is a very good one. It wouldn't do to offend your grandmother; eh, Kate?'

'Dr Lakeworth is a weakness of hers, you know, papa. It's a regular case of love me love my dog.'

'Then next time the dog comes to see her, we'll ask him to stay to dinner with us,' he replied more good-humouredly.

'He is to call on Tuesday afternoon,' said Kate, who saw the chance of doing a little stroke of business on her own account.

'Very well. I'll be here, and invite him myself.'

When Mr Dottleson announced his intention of asking personally for the pleasure of any one's company at dinner, it signified that he intended special honour to the favoured guest; it went against the grain to confer such distinction upon Dr Lakeworth, but circumstances made it advisable.

He came home from the City half an hour earlier than usual on Tuesday, that he might make sure of meeting the doctor, and actually took upon himself to instruct the butler about the wine, a thing he had never been known to do since the memorable occasion upon which the ex-private secretary of an ex-vice-roy of India came to dine with him.

The entertainment was a success from every one's point of view. Mr Dottleson was in high

spirits that day; and as Dr Lakeworth was fully alive to the importance of ingratiating himself with his host, he applied himself to the task with great assiduity. He listened to him with such deference, and received his loudly expressed opinions with such respectful attention, that Mr Dottleson's overweening vanity was gratified, and he reproached himself for the injustice he had done the man. 'He seems a very gentlemanly, well-mannered young fellow,' he mused as they went up-stairs. 'Perhaps, I have really been mistaken in him. Anyhow, I will put matters right with Mrs Lamshed at once. I will give Dr Lakeworth my photograph.'

The fortunate being to whom our friend presented his photograph was expected by the original to bear himself thenceforth as became one who had been distinguished above his fellow-men by an exceptional mark of Mr Dottleson's approbation.

'I had a new photo. taken a week or two ago, doctor,' he said blandly, interrupting the guest's conversation with his daughter. 'If you will come over here, I will show it to you.'

'If papa gives you one, speak to him to-night,' whispered Kate hurriedly, seizing the opportunity with the promptness of true generalship.

Charles Lakeworth gave a nod of intelligence, and followed his host to the end of the room, where he was detained for fifteen minutes criticising Mr Dottleson's uninteresting person as delineated in nine different attitudes more or less constrained.

'I shall be very happy if you care to select one,' he said patronisingly to the victim when the ordeal was over.

Dr Lakeworth's gratitude was sincere, in view of the opening which the presentation indicated as before him. He took pains to select the most flattering portrait, and finally won Mr Dottleson's heart by begging him to inscribe his autograph upon it. His request was so graciously complied with, that almost before the ink had had time to dry he had disclosed his halting tale of love. It was listened to gravely, but not unkindly. Mr Dottleson's blindness was being lifted from him; this young doctor was in love with his daughter, and frankly admitted that he regarded Mrs Lamshed's calls for his services only as a means of his communication with Kate. Mr Dottleson could hardly believe it; but he recalled his mother-in-law's remark, and felt suddenly reassured regarding the object of the young doctor's attention to her. No doubt he might have some other end in view; but it seemed clear that Kate was the primary attraction. So relieved was he at the discovery, that for the moment he lost sight of the fact that the suitor was a struggling professional man, who had in all probability never owned a bank account, and he did not give the point-blank refusal he would have done at any other time. He hesitated, and took refuge in a promise to consider the matter. Kate was young, and he believed Dr Lakeworth was also young. He could give no definite answer now; he must think it over; meantime, he should be glad to see him whenever he cared to look in, though he must not regard the invitation as in anyway foreshadowing consent.

It was not much for the most sanguine lover to build upon; but Charles Lakeworth, who had

never dared hope for anything but a positive refusal, was more than content with the answer.

Alas, poor human nature! A slight lapse of memory hopelessly wrecked all the good work of the evening. Charles was so completely absorbed in Kate Dottleson's society that he quite forgot everything else; and when he bade the family good-night, on the best of terms with everybody and his host in particular, he left that gentleman's photograph behind on the sofa, where he had spent the greater part of the time after dinner. There it lay unnoticed until Mr Dottleson, casting a look round the room before he turned out the gas for the night, discovered the neglected honour sticking ignominiously between the cushions. He raised his eyebrows in veritable astonishment as he picked it up. That such a gift from himself should be forgotten thus was almost incomprehensible; but surprise soon gave place to indignation, which he strove unsuccessfully to smother.

'He didn't want it,' he said to himself, throwing the picture into a dish; 'but he might at least have had the grace to take it away with him, after asking me to write my name upon it. I shall be very careful to whom I give my photograph again; that's all.'

Mr Dottleson was not the man to forget the slight he had received at Charles Lakeworth's hands; and the incident narrated above was no small factor in helping him to come to the decision he did when, next morning, he remembered the young man's avowal of love for Kate. He would not admit even to himself that such a thing weighed a single grain in his disfavour; but it is doubtful whether he would have dismissed the subject from his thoughts with a contemptuous 'impossible,' had his guest held the ground he had gained by treasuring that photograph as it deserved. The good impression his would-be son-in-law had made upon him had been more than obliterated by the unlucky forgetfulness which had wounded Mr Dottleson on his tenderest point—his vanity. He recollected with annoyance that he had given this presumptuous suitor permission to come to the house when he pleased, and had thus placed himself in a somewhat delicate position. Had it been any one else, he would have had no hesitation in informing him at once that he had considered his proposal and found it impossible to give his sanction, and, if necessary, directed him to cease visiting at his house. But, in his own interests, he could not deal so summarily with Dr Lakeworth. Mrs Lamshed's feelings, or, to be strictly accurate, Mrs Lamshed's money, had to be taken into account. To close the door in the face of 'her doctor,' as she called him, might put an end to his intercourse with Kate; but the step would certainly bring about the fulfilment of that half-made threat of a 'codicil,' and that was a contingency which must never be permitted to arise. It was no consolation to Mr Dottleson to discover that his action in asking his *bête noire* to dinner had effected its object in conciliating his mother-in-law, particularly when he found that she regarded it as a formal installation of her favourite as a prospective kinsman. She now looked upon Dr Lakeworth's engagement to Kate as a settled thing, which the course of time would bring to a satisfactory conclusion; and so warmly did

she express her approval of the match, that Mr Dottleson felt reluctantly compelled to be silent as to the views he held on the subject. If he declared his intention of opposing the young people's wishes, his mother-in-law would join issue with them against him; and although she held very decided opinions on the duty of a child to a parent, the fact was by no means a sufficient guarantee to satisfy Mr Dottleson that she would not substitute Kate's name for his own in her will, and thus render her independent of him. That would undoubtedly be preferable to the realisation of his previous fears; but it was an alternative he did not relish. He would treat his only daughter liberally if she married with his approval; but he was more ambitious for her than she was for herself, and there was little chance of their agreeing as to Charles Lakeworth's qualifications.

Mr Dottleson considered the case in all its bearings, and made up his mind that for the present his safest policy would be one of complete neutrality, while he watched for a suitable opportunity to join in the game himself. He had been a little at a loss to know how he had best receive the application Dr Lakeworth was sure to make for the pictorial 'mark of esteem' which he had treated so negligently, and was almost relieved when a week passed and he heard nothing about it. The young man had called the day after he dined at Blakewood Square to recover possession of the photograph; but learnt with some dismay that no one had seen it. He was a modest unassuming individual himself, and whilst quite aware that his neglect could hardly be gratifying to Mr Dottleson, he did not anticipate that it would give such grave offence as Kate appeared to think was inevitable.

'Papa will never forgive you for that,' she said. 'But perhaps he doesn't know you left it here. He would have been sure to mention it had he found it, and he hasn't said a word to me.'

Consultation with Mrs Lamshed determined them to let the matter drop; and Mr Dottleson was thus allowed to suppose that his guest had utterly forgotten the distinction he had received. It was a trifle in itself, but it gave Kate's father the feeling that his authority was being left on one side and himself ignored. It was dangerous for any one who desired Mr Dottleson's friendship to tamper with his self-love.

It was not long before he saw a chance of making the first move towards ousting Dr Lakeworth, and he did not fail to take advantage of it. Almost for the first time in her life, Mrs Lamshed was attacked by a violent cold, which settled upon her chest and defied all efforts to dislodge it. Charles Lakeworth came in every day, and no doubt did his best for her, but, as doctors frequently find, he had to contend with the patient as well as the malady.

'I never have been ill,' said the obstinate old lady irrationally, 'and I'm not going to begin at my time of life.—No; I won't go to bed, Lakeworth. This drawing-room is warmer than my room, and I'm going to stay here.'

So Mrs Lamshed remained in the drawing-room shivering and coughing, whilst Kate and her maid added their entreaties to those of the doctor; but they made no impression upon her; and at last Mr Dottleson was appealed to, to use his influence.

When he understood the condition of affairs, he looked grave, and going down-stairs, shut himself up in the library, where he worked out his project before the mirror to his own satisfaction. 'Now, it's your obvious duty,' said he to himself, 'to put Mrs Lamshed's case in the hands of some one you can trust. You can't honestly say you trust young Lakeworth, for she won't obey him; so you must summon a medical man in whom you have perfect reliance. Now, Dottleson, it won't do to send round the corner for Penkwiss or Musper; you must study the old lady's peculiarities and trade upon them. If she's got a weakness it's the Peerage; and if you mean to undermine young Lakeworth's position, you must shut your eyes to the expense' (Mr Dottleson gulped down his feelings at this point), 'and get some swell physician. Sir Alfred Blodget is your man; he has his finger on the pulses of half the nobility; and if he will come here and talk to her about his illustrious patients and compare her case with theirs, she will take kindly to him. And once I get young Lakeworth away from her bedside, I'll make short work of his philandering with Kate.'

Thus Mr Dottleson reasoned and resolved. It was a costly experiment; but the danger of letting Mrs Lamshed think he wanted to get rid of Dr Lakeworth must be avoided, if possible. She could not but be flattered by a visit from such a man as Sir Alfred Blodget, and her son-in-law was right in believing that her weakness for the Peerage would predispose her to receive him favourably.

'The bill will be something awful,' sighed Mr Dottleson as he closed his letter to the great man; 'but I look upon it as a premium of insurance for the preservation of her will—I mean her life,' he hastily amended.

Mrs Lamshed frowned darkly when he told her what he had done; and it required all his powers of diplomacy to avert a storm. 'I don't want to see another doctor, Montague,' she said pettishly. 'I've told you times without number that Lakeworth is good enough for me.'

'My dear madam, I don't mean to asperse Dr Lakeworth's professional abilities; in proof of this, I have not sent for an ordinary practitioner.'

'Who is it, then?'

'My anxiety has been so great during the past few days, that I am going to ask you to allow Sir Alfred Blodget to see you when he calls; just to relieve my mind.'

Mrs Lamshed's wrinkled countenance grew calmer at the name of the new doctor, and the sagacious Dottleson followed up his advantage at once.

'He will be in to-morrow. I have no doubt that he will take your case on his way from Marlborough House, where I understand he is now in daily attendance.'

The vision conjured up by this adroit remark had an immediate effect upon Mrs Lamshed. She soared lightly to the social altitude of Sir Alfred's august *clientèle*, and expressed a hope that there was nothing infectious at Marlborough House.

'Nothing at all—nothing at all,' responded Mr Dottleson easily. 'The—ah, the Princess has been confined to her room with a severe cough or something; I observed it in the *Post* this morning.'

Mrs Lamshed lay back upon the sofa cushions, and the ghost of a smile flitted across her face. There was something very soothing in the thought that the same doctor was to prescribe for the same malady both for the Princess and herself. A little fellow-feeling with Royalty made the old lady wondrous kind, and Mr Dottleson saw that his point was gained. He did not make any attempt to further his plans just now.

'Slowly and surely, Montague, my boy,' he said pleasantly to himself as he went down-stairs. 'You've got in the thin end of the wedge, and you must drive it home gently, now you have made such a capital beginning.'

Perhaps, if Mr Dottleson could have heard what passed between his mother-in-law and daughter, five minutes after he had left them, he would not have looked quite so complacently on his beginning.

'It's really very kind and thoughtful of your father, Kate,' said Mrs Lamshed. 'Such a splendid opportunity as it will be for Charley!'

'Yes, granny. Why, if it becomes known that he has been in consultation with one of the Court physicians, his fortune will be made; he will be sent for by everybody after that.' Kate was rather sanguine, but then she was in love, and that quite accounted for it.

It is hardly necessary to say that Mr Dottleson had not been influenced by any desire to give Dr Lakeworth such an auspicious opening; the view his mother-in-law took with Kate had never presented itself to him, or the thirty-guinea visit he had requested Sir Alfred Blodget to pay would have seemed an extravagance worse than unnecessary. In fact, it was dawning upon him that he had hooked a fish which might prove unmanageable and be more costly than he calculated on. Suppose Mrs Lamshed made the inconvenient discovery that this new attendant understood her constitution, and encouraged regular visits at the rate of, say, ten guineas for each! She would pay for all subsequent attention, as a matter of course; but the expense would indirectly fall upon him. However, it was no use being frightened by shadows, and he consoled himself with the thought that he had taken the first step towards ridding the house of Charles Lakeworth, happily oblivious of the schemes which the ladies were planning up-stairs.

Sir Alfred Blodget, who had once been aptly described by an incipient page to his mistress as 'a short thick pusson with a square head,' came to see Mrs Lamshed the next day, and commenced his reign by sending his patient to bed, with injunctions to remain there until he called at noon the day afterwards. The old lady submitted meekly; and her first act, when the doctor's directions had been complied with, was to dictate a letter to Charles Lakeworth enjoining him to be present to-morrow that he might meet the great man 'in consultation.' Unfortunately, the servant who was entrusted with the note met Mr Dottleson just outside the hall door, and had to disclose to him the nature of her errand.

'Were you told to take this by hand, instead of posting it in the ordinary way?' he asked as he took the letter and glanced at the address.

'Yes, sir. Mrs Lamshed particularly said I was to take it myself,' replied the maid.

'Mrs Lamshed said so?'

'Yes, sir. Miss Dottleson wrote it for her.'
'You may tell your mistress that I undertook to leave the note at Dr Lakeworth's.'
The woman surrendered the letter, and returned to the house.

THE TYLT-YARD GUARD.

As may be inferred from its title, the Tylt-yard Guard is one of the longest-established military guards now existing in the metropolis. In addition to the duty of protecting the buildings known as the Horse Guards, the party, by virtue of its designation, acts as a memento of the Tylt-yard which occupied a portion of the site of these buildings in the reign of Henry VIII. That yard was, of course, in near proximity to the palace of Whitehall; and there is still a court, surrounded by various military offices, called the Tylt-yard, as may be ascertained by a glance—when the sentinel's back is turned—at the inscription in a sentry-box standing there. This court is situated between the guardroom and Whitehall, and perhaps includes part of the surface of the ancient Tylt-yard.

The Tylt-yard Guard 'falls in' along with the other 'duties' about ten o'clock in the forenoon of 'guard-day.' At the time of the alignment of the various guards, passers-by in adjacent streets may hear the sergeant-major, with an extraordinary expenditure of lung-power, 'dressing' the duties, and employing a formula which has been used from time immemorial, and is much as follows: 'Steady the Queen's; Back Buckingham Palace; Forward the Tylt; Up Kensington!' When the large body of men has been accurately dressed and otherwise got into proper order, the colours are brought up by a colour-sergeant, escorted by two private soldiers, the gravity of whose demeanour clearly shows how important they consider this service. At a given signal the non-commissioned officer places the flag in the hands of a young officer in the centre of the line, arms are 'presented,' and the drums beat the 'salute;' while any men standing about in distant parts of the parade-ground instantly come to 'attention' and take off their forage caps. The captain of the guard then utters the words of command which put all the duties in motion, to the gratification of the crowd without the barrack gates.

When they have passed through these gates, the different guards pursue the nearest way to their destinations, and at once come under the command of their respective officers. The commandant of the 'Tylt' gives the word to 'slope' arms, and thus notifies his presence; for the men, looking 'straight to their front,' have scarcely as yet seen him. A little farther on, arms are 'changed,' the rigid adherence to one attitude becoming irksome if the distance to be traversed is considerable. When at length within sight of the well-known archway of the Horse Guards, arms are changed again; and the sentry of the 'old' guard is seen hastening to the guardroom door to get his party 'turned out.'

After the usual formalities of salutation on the parts of the 'old' and 'new' guards have been gone through, the officer of the former hands over the keys to his relieving comrade; while the ser-

geants enter the guardroom and earnestly consider the 'deficiencies'—so many buttons are awaiting on certain watchcoats, an 'Order Board' in one of the sentry-boxes is slightly defaced, or a dinner-plate has been broken in the 'cookhouse.' Meantime, the men of the new guard are indulging, though in suppressed tones, in a little banter with the party about to 'dismount;' or, more probably, they appear to be in deep thought as they stand 'at ease.' They are speculating as to how the sergeant will 'number them off.' This is to them a matter of solicitude, as some numbers will ensure their bearers a fair amount of sleep during the ensuing night, others will deprive the men of any fairly lengthened period of repose. After a brief interval, the sergeants come forth from the guardroom and join their respective parties. The numbering is accomplished; the 'first relief' being marched off to supplant the sentries belonging to the old guard. About this time, also, two soldiers appear on the farther margin of the Horse Guards Parade, carrying 'shoulder-high' a large iron-bound chest, painted blue, and bearing on its sides in white characters the name of a battalion of the Foot Guards. These men are the cooks, and the peculiar-looking chest contains provisions. Beside them marches a corporal, having under either arm a bearskin-cap case, evidently filled to its utmost capacity with some matter. On inspection, the well-packed matter would be found to consist of tea, sugar, or bars of salt.

Before long, the old guard in its entirety is marshalled under its officer, and straightway marches 'home;' while the party we are chiefly concerned with enters the guardroom. This is one of the older London guardrooms—it is probably in precisely the same condition as when the Great Duke was a familiar figure within the precincts of the Horse Guards. One peculiarity of the older apartments of this kind is, that the sergeant is provided with a table and seat on a raised platform or dais, where he does his writing and discusses his dinner, which latter he thus partakes of in a species of regal state. In the case of the Tylt, his isolation is somewhat augmented, owing to the fact that there is no proper access to the dais—it is only reached by walking over a portion of the guard-bed, often encumbered by the figures of recumbent soldiers. The other features of the guardroom are very much of the conventional sort: pegs whereupon to suspend the knapsacks, a rifle 'rack' with numbered spaces, and of course the printed 'Orders' for the guard. Here, too, is hung up in a conspicuous position a case containing a selection of photographs of the cabinet pattern. They comprise the members of the royal family, and a civilian might wonder why they are placed in a guardroom. The reason simply is, that the younger soldiers may recognise the persons represented, so as to salute them if they should pass their 'posts.' Not far distant from the apartment we have been dealing with is the officer's guardroom. But, unlike his subordinates, the commandant is not compelled to pass all his time with his guard: he may proceed to the clubs in Pall Mall, or call for his brother-officers 'on Queen's.' In the evening he is a member of the well-known mess dinner at St James's Palace; but has to return to the Tylt in time to go 'rounds' at eleven o'clock. Thereafter, the officer

may retire to bed in orthodox fashion; he is not forbidden, like the men, to 'remove his belts' while 'on guard.' Though the guard is always required to 'turn out' to the Bank Picket on its homeward march in the early morning, the officer is not disturbed until the arrival of his servant with a portmanteau from barracks, and is invisible to his 'command' till the time for 'dismounting.'

While waiting for their turn of 'sentry-go' in the large guardroom, the men employ themselves in various ways. Some read, and all thoroughly reblacken their boots, which have lost their lustre on the march from barracks. If the weather becomes wet and greatcoats are ordered to be put on, careful guardsmen divest themselves of their tunics and replace them by old and discoloured ones, which they extract from their knapsacks. But they have to do this quickly. As already hinted, there is a very stringent paragraph on the 'Order Board' to the effect that 'no man is to remove his belts while on guard;' and any delay will inevitably be observed by the vigilant sergeant from his elevated seat.

Soon after 'mounting,' a fanfare of trumpets causes a flutter in the guardroom, most of the men quickly seizing their rifles and moving towards the entrance, where they are met by a vociferous cry of 'Guard, turn out!' by the sentinel. When formed up outside, the soldiers see the cavalry guard approaching. This is 'found' by the household cavalry, and takes up its quarters in another wing of the Horse Guards, where stabling and other requisites for horsemen are provided. The well-known 'statuesque' mounted sentries posted in Whitehall belong to this guard, whose duty, of course, is quite distinct from that of the Tytl.

By the Tytl, five sentries are furnished in and near the Horse Guards; and it cannot be said that their functions materially differ from those of other metropolitan sentinels. One of them is posted at the guardroom door. An important part of his duty is to 'turn out' the guard to the mounted party above alluded to, as well as to the picket on its way to and from the Bank of England. Another sentry is placed in the Tytl-yard; and a third in Whitehall. The latter has a pretty long patrol. He is occasionally annoyed, on turning about, to see urchins perusing the instructions in his box; but by assuming a threatening cast of countenance he easily scares away such curious persons. The two remaining men are stationed in front of public offices. Their posts are quiet and retired; they have, however, to keep a 'sharp lookout' for the notabilities who enter these buildings, and who in certain cases require to be saluted. In addition to performing sentry-duty, the private soldiers have, two at a time, to escort the sergeant when he goes 'on patrols;' and two of them—who are exempted from patrols—accompany the officer in his 'rounds.' About a quarter to eleven, the drummer may be seen to adjust his bearskin, making his way towards the cookhouse. Here he lights the gas and opens the blue, iron-bound chest, in the bottom of which he finds a candle. Returning to the guardroom, he cuts the candle in two, placing one moiety in a lantern, and the other in the fire, which he thereby improves with an eye to the coffee or cocoa which will shortly be prepared. The hoarse challenge

of the sentry outside is now heard, and the reply, 'Friend,' is uttered by the officer, who has returned from the 'Queen's.' Then the sergeant demands the men 'for rounds;' and he himself, a corporal, the two soldiers already noticed, together with the drummer and lantern, proceed to the various 'posts' with the officer. And when the rounds get back to the guardroom, the principal event of the night is over.

In the morning the men who are reposing on the guard-bed are disturbed by the drummer-boy attached to the Bank Picket. He has hastened a little in advance of the main body of the picket to the Brigade Office, where he has left the 'report.' Passing through the Tytl, he announces that the 'Bank' is approaching, and then waits on the Horse Guards Parade till his party arrives. Thus forewarned, the guard is turned out in good time, and 'presents' arms to the picket, whose members look somewhat fatigued by their considerable march from the City. Just as the guard is being 'turned in,' the corporal of the cooks with his two men are seen advancing across the parade. They each carry a bearskin-cap case, containing, not a bearskin, but several small loaves of bread. And about half an hour later comes the officer's servant with a portmanteau. This functionary, after a short interval of gossip in the guardroom, begins to make preparations for his master to 'go off.'

While the members of the guard are making ready to dismount, or 'go off,' great activity prevails. The floor of the guardroom is well scrubbed, these daily scrubblings giving it a furrowed appearance, so that the boards almost look like a tract of hilly country as represented in the models used for the 'war-game.' And when they have completed their preparations, the men anxiously await the stentorian call of 'Guard, turn out!' which will inform them that their vigil is at an end.

HOSPITAL-WORK ON FRESH LINES.

HOSPITALS, their claims, their difficulties, and their drawbacks, have been brought from time to time before the notice of our readers, and we now propose giving some account of a new departure both as regards aims and management.

Those acquainted with the wards of an ordinary hospital know only too well how often a case lingers on, in unsatisfactory lack of progress. It has been an accident, perhaps, and the patient has recovered up to a certain point; but now no advance is being made; and when all remedies have been tried in vain, the unfortunate sufferer has to make way for more hopeful cases.

'Can nothing more be done for Mary Blake?' we inquired of a surgical friend, who had reluctantly given the child's parents notice that she must be removed.

'Nothing, under present conditions. If we could operate again it might mean a cure, but the general health is too bad. The fact is she wants months of country-life and fresh air to give her the chance of pulling round after an operation.'

'This she cannot have at home, of course; but could she not be got into a Convalescent Home?'

'No Home I know of would take such a case.'

She needs regular surgical nursing, and this is not provided at Convalescent Homes.

And poor little Mary, languishing on her bed of pain in her one-room home until death came with happy release, is but a sample of thousands who, in all our crowded cities, are hopeless of cure, for lack of Nature's healing gifts, denied to her town-bred children.

With a view to meeting such cases, an experiment in hospitals has been set on foot for the benefit of London children; and it was our recent privilege to visit the charming little hospital known by the modest name of Heathbourne Cottage. 'Only eleven miles from Hyde Park Corner,' we are told; and we quite agree that 'it might be a hundred.' Indeed, so rural is the place, that having come without instructions, our Jehu finds it a question of patience to fall in with a passer-by; but as we draw up at a long low house, standing back from the road, all doubt is set at rest by an eager little white face, which has evidently caught sight of the stranger, and is conveying the news to companions in the distance.

A kindly greeting awaits us from the presiding genius, a lady who has undertaken the work as a labour of love, and who, with a 'chum' friend, sees practically to the welfare of her flock. We sit down for a few minutes in 'Sister's' pretty parlour, and enjoy a chat which shows how truly work may be its own reward, and as we sit, the low French-windows reveal a little group busily at work weeding.

'Why, they might almost be working for a living,' we remark.

'Oh, they are doing more than that,' says Sister with a smile; 'they are working for a slice of cake! Master Johnnie, who is the eldest of my convalescents, has got into the habit of being lazy, and I am trying to work him into brighter ways, now he is so nearly well.'

'Well, indeed!' we exclaim, as Johnnie hurries past, with an indescribable 'hop, skip, and jump.'

'Why, his walk is simply shocking.'

'It's not elegant,' admits Sister, amused; 'but he is able to do without a splint now; and if he goes to St Thomas's when he leaves, they may be able to do something for his stiff knee.'

'Is it the result of an accident?'

'Oh yes. He is a healthy enough child naturally; but in crawling about, he got a needle into his knee, and that has meant years of abscesses, operations, and stiffness.—Well, Mary, what do you want?' as an excited face peers in at the window.

'Oh, please, Sister, do come and look at this queer thing,' says Mary, a poor stunted specimen, nearly as broad as she is long; and standing on such spindle-legs, one wonders how they support her thick-set frame.

The 'queer thing' turns out to be a frog; and Cockney Mary receives a needed lesson in natural history, including the fact that frogs do not enjoy a hail of stones! Much illness has this poor little maid known in her twelve years of life; but the tiresome abscesses do not pain her now, and she is thoroughly enjoying her taste of the country.

And now we turn our attention to the children's ward, such a capital room, that it is difficult to believe it was not built for its present purpose. Extending the whole depth of the house, with a window at each end, even the bed-ridden children

can enjoy the gardens, back and front, whilst some are carried, bed and all, to revel on the lawn. The ward is made bright by other things than its windows: the eleven little beds, with their spotless counterpanes, look tempting enough to woo sleep to any eyes; whilst the many-pictured walls suggest endless fields of speculation for childish imaginings. A well-polished floor adds to the general cheeriness; and a nice harmonium, the gift of a friend, is both ornamental and useful, the children, as usual, taking great pleasure in singing.

The day is so lovely that only two or three are indoors. Wee Florrie, by the window, lies all day and every day on her face, her head to the foot of the bed; and in spite of pain and weariness, it is a very bright little 'skeleton' who tells of a wonderful doll that has been promised for her 'very own.' By the hour she will amuse herself with a doll, petting and loving it with a tenderness that is pathetic. A scrap-book, too, is a delight to Florrie; and she greatly enjoys some that have been made by stouter hands than her own, in a home where healthy, happy children are taught to give time and pains to the brightening of less favoured lives.

'Can you read, Florrie?' we ask.

'Oh no; I've been in 'orspittle too much.'

'Yes,' adds Sister; 'it is quite true. She and poor Jamie in the garden have never been well enough to go to school, and they have both suffered so much, no one has tried to teach them anything.'

Florrie, we learn, has recently undergone an operation, a distinction which roused the envy of the ward. 'Tarnt me have toroform too?' pleaded a mite of four.

'Oh! I don't like chloroform,' remarked an older hospital habitué; 'ether suits me best.'

'Indeed,' says Sister, 'their comparing of experience would be too comic from such baby-lips, if it were not for the under-tone of sadness.—But,' she adds, 'I must say they do not seem to see the sadness themselves; they are just happy in the present, or take comfort in thinking they will soon be better.'

A bronchial couple on either side the fireplace need screens even on this warm day; and the way those mites of four go through their troublesome fits of coughing and submit to all treatment, might well teach a lesson to most grown-up patients. In addition to bronchial troubles, one little maid is an abscess victim, and the other has lost a leg. The poor 'Museum,' as she is playfully called, was, when received, a choice specimen of the spoilt-child genus, and quite expected obedience to all her commands. Finding she could not get her own way in everything, she commenced a series of cries for 'Mother,' which were kept up by the hour, till her weak point was discovered to be the possession of a beloved 'ampage' (handkerchief), the withholding of which was punishment enough to ensure silence. The precious ampage had to be folded small enough to be within the grasp of Gertie's hand, where it remained day and night, to the exclusion of such commonplaces as dolls or toys! Indeed, the loss of her treasure was quite enough, in Gertie's estimation, to warrant her waking the nurse in charge, with the command, 'Find my ampage!' But a few weeks of gentle control have made

another creature of Gertie, who now attaches a different meaning to the word 'obey;' and in spite of her terribly bandaged head and neck, she is a pleasant little soul to look at. Her vis-à-vis, who would have been a fine child but for her misfortunes, has but one fear, which expresses itself at sight of the doctor, in a monotonous wail of, 'Don't want t' lose me other leg.'

'Is there any fear of it?' we ask Sister.

'Oh no; but she is afraid, because the leg that has been operated on does not heal, and has to be looked at when the doctor comes. She is rather a "special" case: a good operation going on well for a time, and then a cessation of healing power. She has been sent from a London hospital, and we all think the fresh air will give a new start towards healing.'

'But she cannot get into the fresh air?'

'Oh yes; she can. She gets about very well on crutches. It is only their coughs that keep both children in to-day. Our chief aim is to give them all as much open air as possible.' Then leading the way into the garden, she adds: 'Here you have all the rest of my flock.'

A merry little party it is too, full of eager talk, and unconsciously enjoying the bracing air which comes across the heath in refreshing draughts. A capital lawn makes a safe playground; and at sight of us, Baby Dot demands to be taken out of her perambulator for a 'waut' on the soft grass. Such a sweet little thing is Dot! One of those children who win their way to all hearts by a certain nameless grace, which, added to a pretty face and bonnie eyes, make Dot quite irresistible. And yet, alas! she is the victim of a brutal father's drunken fury. Kicked out of bed and cruelly injured, the poor mite was taken off to the nearest hospital, where she was under treatment for many months. The father, after undergoing a term of imprisonment, paid Dot a visit in hospital; but even her baby-mind had grasped facts sufficiently to greet him with loud cries of alarm. He is in prison again, Sister has heard, for wife-beating; but it is very much a case of 'six of one, half-a-dozen of the other.'

Poor Dot is getting better from the hip-injury which left wounds that did not heal in London air; but as the baby-fingers clasp ours, and the sweet voice lisps an offer to 'Det 'oo a butting-hole,' it is impossible to help a shudder at the thought of what lies before the offspring of such parentage. But all unconscious of her future, comes the eager cry, 'Ere 'oo is,' and a daisy of Dot's own picking is confided to our keeping. 'Butting-holes,' Dot's generic name for flowers, tells of her mother's calling; but she is not the only little Londoner who revels in country spoils. Poor wee Jamie, one of the very worst cases, is enjoying a bunch of freshly gathered forget-me-nots, which grow luxuriantly round the garden; and he is for the time at least absorbed to forgetfulness of the many ailments which make him, at eight years old, a physical wreck.

'No hope for him, I fear,' says Sister; 'but he is so dear and good, he shall have every chance.'

'But with such wounds, how can he bear to be dressed?'

'Oh, he cannot; he is only wrapped up loosely, and that gray dressing-gown a friend sent, just covers him up nicely.'

'I suppose you get a good many things sent you?'

'Well'—with a laugh—'not quite so many as we should like. Those pretty wool-hoods the girls have on came from a lady who promises cooler ones next week; and the red flannel jackets for wearing in bed were made at a children's working-meeting. But we could certainly do with more, especially in the way of pinafores and boots. —You see what Gracie is like in the boot-line,' as a child of ten crosses the lawn, in a pair of carpet slippers that must have been large for her mother.

'But surely no one could expect her to walk out in such things?'

'Well, the fact is she could not walk when she came; and her parents are so poor, that the purchase of a pair of boots is not a thing to be accomplished in a hurry; so, for the present she and Alice have to take turns with my only reserve of shoe-leather.'

Alice, whose turn it is to wear the reserve boots, now comes up and asks if she may help to get the little ones ready for a walk. She is the eldest of the party, and though very small of her age, has quite the town-child's precocity, and promptly packs Dot and the 'next youngest' into the perambulator with an experienced air that is very edifying.

Master Johnnie looks on with rather a doleful air, not sharing the general delight in a walk; but he gains something of importance by feeling himself the only male protector of the family!

As the perambulator is led off, Sister remarks: 'That was a useful present, and I am longing for a second; so few of the children can walk any distance without a lift now and then; and nice as our garden is, I do not like to keep them always in it.'

Very nice the garden undoubtedly is. Beyond the lawn, with its borders of flower and shrub, lies a good kitchen-garden, capable of supplying a large share of the household's vegetables; and at the bottom is a gate, opening on to the Heath itself, where one could wander for hours in undisturbed communion with nature.

Looking at the house from the garden, we remark on its suitability for present uses.

'Yes,' replies Sister; 'it is just the thing; the only drawback is no bathroom; but perhaps some day we may be able to build one leading out of the down-stairs ward; you see it would just fit in there'—pointing to a spot which might have been reserved for the purpose.

On the other side of the house is good stabling, with capital rooms above, one of which is secluded enough to offer perfect quiet for a night-nurse, whose rest must perforce be taken during the bustle of day-life. The stable is at present used as a laundry, and the whiteness of the piles of linen would make many a housewife envious.

'Do you keep a laundry-maid for this department?' we inquire.

'Oh yes; but it does not take her whole time, and I should like to get one good family's washing. That is'—with a smile—'until we are happy enough to be able to use the stable for the pony-chaise which is one of my ambitions.'

'I suppose it would be a great help with the children?'

'It would indeed, especially in getting to and

from the station. It is a good three miles off, which makes it awkward sometimes, although there is an omnibus twice a day, and the cabmen are merciful in their charges to us.'

'Does the distance prevent parents' visits?'

'Oh no; they manage it, one way or another, unless, like poor Dot's parents, they do not care enough to take any trouble.'

This little talk has been carried on during our progress through the lower part of the house, including a bright kitchen with a convenient window, communicating with Sister's sitting-room. And now we mount the one flight of stairs which lands us on the top story. Above the large downstairs ward are two rooms, both in only partial use. The larger, overlooking the garden, has been brought into requisition a few times for adult patients, but, as Sister longingly remarks: 'It would make a beautiful ward for eight children!'

'And would that be as many as you care to take?'

'Quite. A larger number would alter the character of the place; we want to keep up the home-feeling, and to know each child personally.'

'Do you take children only?'

'I do not say that; we certainly prefer them; but at anyrate whilst this room is not otherwise engaged, we do not refuse adults really needing fresh air and nursing.'

'Of course, more patients would mean more nurses.'

'Most certainly; and even now we should like a second lady-pupil. A young girl, fond of children, could be very happy here, I am sure; and with such cases as ours, there is a good deal to be learnt. For instance'—opening the adjoining door—'you see, my co-worker, who is also a trained nurse, is taking charge of a very bad case. Annie has had bronchitis, pleurisy, and pneumonia, and was for days in a tent-bed, with a steam-kettle constantly going, and jacket-poultices to be kept hot; and even yet she needs watching day and night.' The little patient looks white and thin enough still; but there is a tone of triumph in her kind nurse's voice as she says: 'We shall pull her through.'

'Do you keep this room for special cases?'

'Oh no; it is really a nurses' sitting-room, or at least it will be, when I get a full staff and a sofa or armchair. Then we have a small room for a lady-visitor, invalid or not'—leading the way to a cosy nest, which, in spite of a sloping ceiling, boasts such a lovely view over miles of heath, tree, and water, that we feel sure it would never be empty were its existence better known.

'I should not mind a few more comforts for this room,' says Sister; but adds with a laugh: 'You will think there is no end to my wants.'

'Well, you have not put the usual first, at anyrate. I suppose you "want" contributions?'

'They would certainly not be refused! And unless I get outside help, I shall never be able to complete my number.'

'I think your patients pay, or are paid for?'

'Invariably. I have had too much experience not to make this a rule; but the payments only just cover the cost of maintenance.'

'I suppose fresh air freshens appetites?'

'"Freshen" is a mild way of putting it: the increase is simply incredible; and besides plenty of good nourishing food, our children consume an

alarming amount of their beloved cod-liver oil, which is not by any means a cheap dainty. Then, too, in such a case as Annie's, the expenses are heavy. Three pints of milk in the twenty-four hours, cream, new-laid eggs, and two ounces of brandy, besides champagne at the worst, makes a considerable hole in seven shillings a week!'

'And how do you meet the expenses other than maintenance?'

'I make myself responsible for everything; but I reckon on some portion of the expense being met by friends and helpers.'

And we venture to think the 'reckoning' will not be in vain. Our last impression lives still in the memory; and we wish our readers could share the sight of the happy group of children seated at tea in the bright ward, made brighter by the glow of a setting sun. Each little face is gravely intent on doing justice to the bracing Bushey air, an intendment fully shared by terrier Tip, the house-friend, who is on capital terms with the children, especially at meal-times.

And remembering the chance of renewed health that is thus being provided for the sickly children of Babylon, all will agree in wishing well to this new effort, which, if successful, will doubtless be copied in all directions, and be the means of greatly increasing the usefulness of existing hospital-work. Full information can be obtained on application to the Lady Superintendent, Miss Derham, Heathbourne Cottage, Bushey Heath, Herts.

THE ORIGINAL MAGNA CARTA.

IN that amusing book, the *Curiosities of Literature*, D'Israeli describes how Sir Robert Cotton found his tailor holding in his hand an original Magna Carta, which he was about to cut up for measures; and the story, whether true or not, may make us thankful for the happy chances which have preserved some of our most valuable national documents. No doubt, many of the highest interest have been destroyed; but some, such as Domesday Book, still survive; and when we think of the perils from neglect and from active violent enmity, their survival is a matter for wonder and thankfulness. The Articles of the Great Charter of King John is another fortunate survivor; and one or two Great Charters themselves exist which have a fair claim to be called originals.

The Great Charter, it will be remembered, was agreed to by King John on the 15th of June 1215 at Runnymede. It was, in truth, not an Act of Parliament or statute, but a treaty between the king and his subjects, and was framed upon a series of forty-nine Articles drawn up by the barons and presented to the king. There were consequently two separate documents: one, 'The Articles of the Great Charter of Liberties;' and the other, 'The Great Charter' itself. Neither were signed by either the king or the barons. Both were sealed with the Great Seal of King John; and, as we shall see, there is some evidence that the Great Charter was sealed by some of the barons; but the barons do not appear to have sealed the Articles.

The original Articles are in the British Museum, and a fac-simile of them is exhibited to the public. They are written in Latin, on parchment ten inches and three-quarters broad,

and twenty-one inches and a half long including the fold for receiving the label. To the label, the Great Seal of King John is still appendant; but, unfortunately, the whole document has been greatly damaged.

Its history is very obscure. At an early date it was probably deposited at Lambeth, and it apparently remained there till 1645. At the end of the seventeenth century it was in the possession of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, and he gives, in the *History of his Own Time*, the following account of the manner in which he came by it. When the impeachment of Archbishop Laud was brought to the bar of the Lords, 'he, apprehending how it would end, sent over Warner, Bishop of Rochester, with the keys of his closet and cabinet, that he might destroy or put out of the way all papers that might either hurt himself or anybody else. He was at that work for three hours, till, upon Laud's being committed to the Black Rod, a messenger went over to seal up his closet, who came after all was removed. Among the writings he took away, it is believed the original Magna Carta passed by King John in the mead near Staines was one. This was found among Warner's papers by his executor; and that descended to his son and executor, Colonel Lee, who gave it to me. So it is now in my hands; and it came very fairly to me.' For this conveyance of it we have nothing but conjecture. As Burnet had been allowed to search all the public records, Lord Dartmouth suggests that the above account was intended to allay any suspicion that he had obtained so valuable a document in a less justifiable manner.

From Burnet the Articles descended to his son, Sir Thomas Burnet; then to his son's executor, named Mitchell; from whose daughter it was bought by Earl Stanhope, and presented to the British Museum in 1769.

When the Articles had been agreed upon, they were reduced to the form of a charter, and this is the true Magna Carta of King John. It is said that a very large number of originals were made, and one was deposited in each diocese, some say in each county, but this is scarcely probable. One of these originals is still preserved in the very curious and interesting old library at Lincoln Cathedral. It is said to have been discovered among the documents there, in 1763, by Dr Richardson; and the word 'Lincolnia' endorsed in a contemporary hand on two folds gives reason to believe that it was the charter transferred by the hands of Hugh, the then Bishop of Lincoln, who is one of the bishops named in the introductory clause. In the British Museum are two more originals, both belonging to the Cottonian manuscripts; but they are not considered of such high authority as that at Lincoln.

One of the Cottonian charters has a small part of the Great Seal of King John still attached; but the whole is much injured; the other is in better preservation, and, though it has no seals, it has three slits in the parchment, apparently for labels to which seals have been attached, that in the centre being the largest. It is therefore possible that seals of barons were formerly attached to it, and it is probably the document referred to in Smith's catalogue of the Cottonian

manuscripts, dated Oxford 1695, as having the seals of some of the barons appendant. It may also be that described by Isaac D'Israeli in his *Curiosities of Literature* as having been rescued by Sir Robert Cotton from his tailor, who was about to cut it up for measures.

Such is all that we have succeeded in discovering about originals of the Great Charter of King John. The fact that there are two documents of the same date has given rise to much confusion and to many misstatements, even by authors who might have been expected to have known better; but this is not the only source of error, for there were several reissues of the Great Charter, originals of which are apt to be confused with the Magna Carta of King John. The first of these reissues was by Henry III. in 1216. An original of this *Magna Carta Regis Henrici III.* exists in Durham Cathedral. It itself states that it was sealed by Gualo the legate and William, Earl of Pembroke. The seals are lost, but the labels to which they were affixed remain. The second reissue was in 1217, and the original is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It still bears the seals of Gualo the legate and William, Earl of Pembroke. The third reissue was in the ninth year of Henry III. (1224-25). There is an original at Durham Cathedral, which has unfortunately been injured by the accident of having some ink thrown over it; and there is another original at Lacock Abbey, in Wiltshire, the seat of Charles Talbot, Esq. Both have the Great Seal of Henry III. still attached.

Among the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum there is an original confirmation of Magna Carta, dated 36 Henry III. (1251-52). It is bound up in a volume of charters. In 1297 Edward I. sealed at Ghent a confirmation of Charters; and Magna Carta is consequently described in modern editions of the statutes as either of the ninth year of Henry III. or of the twenty-fifth year of Edward I. The history of these original charters is a good illustration of the haphazard way in which some of our most valuable public documents have been preserved, and makes it easy to understand that many others have disappeared or only exist in a fragmentary condition.

T W I L I G H T.

THROUGH the black arch of interlacing trees
Burns the red sunset, and a blue mist lies
Cold on the darkening meadows, whence arise
Faint dewy odours as the evening breeze
Sweeps o'er the sombre grasses of the leas,
And in the gloom of leafy branches dies;
Waking to being as the daylight flies
An adumbration of dim memories.
Ah! the enchanted realms that used to be
In the wide reaches of our childhood's sky,
Vague, lonely, far, immeasurably high,
In the mysterious fields of Infancy,
Beyond whose ultimate verge we could descry
The brooding shadow of Infinity!

MARY GEOGHEGAN.

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HOW LEPERS WERE TREATED IN OLDEN TIMES.

By A. E. GIBBS, F.L.S.

THE disease of leprosy, and the terrible and lingering sufferings it entails upon its wretched victims, have lately been forced upon public attention by the story of the heroic life and death of Father Damien, the noble-hearted priest who devoted himself to a living martyrdom that he might bring spiritual consolation to the poor sufferers in the leper settlement in Molokai. Although it is well known that leprosy is prevalent in eastern lands at the present day, and people are familiar with the stories of Sacred Writ which show how common the dread disease was in by-gone times in Palestine and adjoining countries, yet few are aware that four or five hundred years ago it was a fearful scourge in this island home of ours. All over England there were to be found institutions, erected by the Church or by the aid of the benefactions of pious donors, for the segregation and relief of the afflicted. At one time nearly every town had a leper hospital or village in its vicinity, whilst many places were provided with more than one, as Norwich, which had six, or Lynn Regis with five. Professor Simpson tells us that in 1226 there were two thousand leper-houses in the then limited kingdom of France. In very early times this disease, which has truly been described as one of the most incurable and loathsome of human maladies, existed in Britain, and was the subject of some very severe and cruel laws. The state of filth in which our Norman forefathers lived was very conducive to the spread of the disease; and at the time of the Crusades there is no doubt it greatly increased owing to the intercourse which then took place with eastern lands. The disease was naturally very much dreaded, not only on account of the fearful character of the malady and the intense physical suffering it caused, but perhaps even still more because it resulted in ostracism from society and the breaking of all the bonds of kinship, which must have

been far worse. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a leper was not allowed to hold property, was deemed incapable of making a will, and lost all the privileges of citizenship. He was hunted from the towns and driven from the dwellings of men; he was forbidden to drink from the running stream, lest he should defile it, and it was unlawful for him to touch things that were used for food by man. Anything was deemed good enough for the leper. Fish left putrid and unsold in the markets were thrown to him; and game and animals found dead in the woods were sent to the nearest leper hospital. He was scarcely treated so well as a dog; whilst the hawk that sat upon the fist of the baron or squire received far more attention. His was a terrible doom—a living death. 'Sick and heart-broken and alone,' he was doomed to isolation, or to keep company only with those who were afflicted like himself. When a man was accused of leprosy, he was examined by a doctor; and if found 'guilty,' all hope was gone, and he was compelled to bow to the terrible verdict of banishment from the society of his fellow-men, which the law pronounced necessary for the health of the community. He was taken to a church, where a fearful and gloomy service was read over him. Often the mass for the dead was used, and earth was thrown upon his feet, the priest reciting such sentences as 'Sis mortuus mundo, vivens autem Deo.' Ten terrible prohibitions were laid upon him; and after a blessing from the priest, the poor wretch went forth into solitude. Thus the grave closed almost literally over him.

Nor did the disease spare the great ones of the earth. Richard de Wallingford, the Abbot of one of the richest monasteries in the kingdom, the world-famed Abbey of St Albans, was a man of immense learning and great piety, and, for his time, possessed marvellous scientific knowledge, but, like Naaman of old, 'he was a leper.' His influence and wealth enabled him, though not without great trouble, to maintain his position as ruler of the Abbey until his death.

The Church of the early Middle Ages became

the champion of the poor leprous outcasts, and established in different centres hospitals for their reception. Near to the great Benedictine foundation of St Albans, two of these institutions were erected—one for men, dedicated to St Julian the Confessor, the patron saint of hospitals; and the other for women, to the Blessed Virgin, and called, from its situation among the meadows in the Ver Valley, St Mary de Pré.

The Hospital of St Julian has a particular interest for us, as there has fortunately been preserved a document in which are set out the rules laid down for the government of the leper community. From them one may obtain a very good idea of the mode of life in a foundation of this character in the fourteenth century. St Julian's was not a wealthy house. Compared with such large foundations as the great lazaret-house at Sherburne, in Durham, which had an endowment of £142, 0s. 4d., Burton Lazars, in Leicestershire, or Maiden Bradley, in Wiltshire, the income of the Hertfordshire hospital was small, and the pittance allowed to the brethren very humble. The inmates were permitted to provide themselves with extra comforts if their means allowed them; but if they were entirely dependent upon the charity of the foundation, and received only the scant rations the house furnished, they were infinitely better off than they otherwise would have been.

The Hospital was founded by Abbot Geoffrey de Gorham, who ruled at St Albans in the twelfth century. He was a man of great energy, and he appears to have made provision for the maintenance of the place by giving it a handsome endowment. Two popes and two kings were induced to specially interest themselves in the Hospital, Henry II. making it a perpetual grant of one penny a day from the royal treasury. In 1344, Abbot Michael de Mentmore made the special regulations for the government of the house which have been preserved for the information of nineteenth-century students. They show that the government was placed in the hands of a Master. There were always to be at least six lepers maintained; and in applications for admission, leprous monks of the monastery of St Albans were always to have preference, especially if they were natives of the town; but laymen were also eligible. If the applicant were a villain or serf, he had first of all to obtain his freedom.

The most strict regulations were enforced as to the dress of the lepers, a precaution justified by the terrible nature of their malady. They were to have a tunic, supertunic, and hood of russet, and curious and particular directions were given as to the shape and mode of fastening these garments. Out-of-doors, a black cloth cape was allowed to be worn, but it was to be closed after the manner of a mantle. It was probably much the same sort of thing as is worn at the present day in that least progressive of all European countries, Spain, where people are muffled up at night in a long black mantle, the folds of which are so arranged as almost to hide the face, leaving only the eyes visible. The lepers had besides this cape a cowl of the same colour and made of the same material. Their shoes were high cut, fastened round the leg with three or four knots, and under these they were allowed to wear stockings. They had to attend church every day, and

a list of the services at which they had to be present is to be found in the document. Most stringent were the regulations forbidding them to leave the Hospital, and ordering the gates to be kept closely shut. Strict injunctions are set upon them, enjoining them to dwell in unity and brotherly love. Says the Abbot: 'Since slander disturbs the minds of the peaceful, let not the leprous brethren presume to slander one another, either chaplains or lepers; let them not relax their tongues to a whisper, but mutually study to carry themselves with brotherly love, in true charity;' an exhortation which might with advantage be studied by inmates of charitable institutions at the present day.

The provisions made for the sustenance of the lepers are curious and interesting. Their diet was not very varied. Each leper had seven loaves every week, five of white bread and two of brown, made from corn 'just as it had been threshed from the sheaf.' Every seventh month each man was given fourteen gallons of ale, or, if he preferred it, eightpence instead—beer was an inexpensive luxury in those days—fourteen gallons for eightpence. On certain feast-days the rations were increased, and Christmas Day was celebrated right merrily, for each had forty gallons of ale, or if he chose, forty pence, and two quarters of pure and fine corn. The sum of fourteen shillings was also divided between them on that day, to be spent in the purchase of mufflers. On St Martin's Day each one had a pig from the common herd. In order that there might be no quarrelling or unfair division, the pigs were driven into their presence, and each one, in order of seniority of admission, chose his animal; and if the supply of pigs gave out, or there were no pigs, an equivalent was given in money. On the 14th of February, each one received a substantial valentine in the shape of a quarter of oats; and during the winter, or in Lent, a bushel of peas and a similar quantity of beans for making pottage were served out. On the 24th of June each received two bushels of salt, or its current value. On the same day four shillings a head was paid to them for clothing; while St Alban's Day, St Julian's Day, and Easter Day were marked by the gift to each of one penny. On Ascension Day a sort of spring-cleaning evidently began, for they each received a halfpenny, 'for the taking away from themselves of dirt.' Shrove Tuesday, always a day of rejoicing in the Middle Ages, was probably celebrated by eating pancakes, for each man had given him measured flour of the weight of one of the white loaves. With these gifts the lepers were commanded to be content, the remainder of the property of the Hospital being devoted to the maintenance of the Master and the priest brethren. The latter appear to have been better clothed than the lepers, and in all respects better provided for; but they were as strictly confined within bounds and forbidden under penalty to mingle with the outside world. This interesting institution appears to have survived until the reign of Henry VIII., when it was suppressed with the parent monastery.

Hardly fifty years had elapsed after the death of Abbot Geoffrey de Gorham, founder of St Julian's Hospital, when a similar institution was built for the relief of women. The Hospital of St Mary de Pré was founded by Abbot Warren, in obedience to a divine command miraculously

conveyed to him, and the foundation was attended with the usual superhuman occurrences with which the students of monastic records are familiar. When the Hospital was erected, Abbot Warren caused certain leprous women to be shut up in it; but the number to be accommodated is not stated. Proper offices were erected for them, and a cloister was constructed, and they were directed to give themselves sedulously to prayer. A strict rule was enforced; no one was allowed to go out; and punishments were inflicted upon the refractory. So large were the Abbot's gifts to the new institution that the monks grumbled, and a bitter feeling arose between the Abbot and the convent.

In the course of time leprosy died out, and the Hospitals were devoted to other uses, that of St Mary de Pré becoming a simple nunnery. Enough, however, has been said to show how real and terrible an evil leprosy was to our forefathers in the Middle Ages.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE more Snelling thought of it that night, the more definitely he saw how shamefully ill-used he was, and how distinct a right he had to be revenged. The morning's reflections brought with them a gnawing sense of shame, for he could not doubt that his conduct had seemed to justify his expulsion. That of course made things none the better for his adversary. It is no cure to hatred to find itself altogether in the wrong. It is easy for the man who has right on his side to be magnanimous. When the disputant has not a dialectic leg to stand on, it is only in human nature that he should lose his temper. Neither real love nor real hate stops to ask questions: each is its own supreme reason.

Snelling heaped up a store of hatred which he held in reserve against the innocent cause of his disgrace. If the thing could have been done with safety, he could have killed him, and that looked so far removed from likelihood that he gave himself the satisfaction of openly admitting as much to his own mind. If the means had lain ready to his hand, he would not have dared to contemplate them; but since they did not, and were never likely to come within his grasp, he allowed himself to covet them.

If it had not been for his ward, Jousserau could never have come into his life at all. And there—as if there had been a need of it—was another reason for his hatred of young John. From the hour since he had first taken charge of his nephew's fortunes, no good thing had befallen him. He had encountered nothing but libel, defeat, and shame. If it had but occurred to him to think that there was not an event in the whole history which was not clearly due to his own villainous first intention, the reflection might have been of service to him.

Amongst other petty annoyances came the difficulty of finding a new house for himself. The winter was a hard one, and unusually protracted, and for months it was impossible to begin the rebuilding of the old place, which lay in unsightly ashes. He was compelled to live on at the *Barfield Arms*, or to go into lodgings; and little as he

liked the former course, he preferred it to the other. He had a long-drawn dispute with the Insurance Company, and since he could produce no complete inventory of the goods lost in the fire, it was made clear to him that he would have to sit down with a considerable loss on that score.

He passed months in miserable anger, and developed a standing grudge against the world at large. John stayed with Isaiah Winter, and his guardian was contented to see but little of him. Of Jousserau he saw nothing whatever, and only heard that he had fitted up as a studio a large room in the upper story of Isaiah's house, and was working there in almost complete retirement. There was just one drop of sweetness in his cup: the Frenchman visited no more at Shorthouse's. The old farmer had made up his mind by this time as to Jousserau's intentions, and when he had talked of his suspicions to Cecilia, he had seen enough to make him believe that she was growing dangerously interested in the foreigner. He put his foot down, therefore, in John Bull fashion, and with no periphrasis forbade Jousserau the house.

Things were in this state when the spring came slowly up that way, and stayed in that position until the beginning of summer. Then two things happened which set Snelling's cup of bitterness fairly brimming over. In the first place, Proctor came with a beaming countenance to announce the discovery of precisely such another outcrop of coal as had been found on the land of Farmer Day. As in the former case, the coal lay against the great stone wall of the Fault, and was immediately workable at a startling profit. But it was on John's land, and not on Snelling's. It was, in point of fact, at the very limit of John's property, and his guardian owned nothing within two-thirds of a mile of it.

'The boy's in luck,' said the mining engineer. 'By the plot you've given me, he has five hundred and seventy acres, and I make no doubt there isn't a yard of it that won't pay—and pay well—for the getting.'

'Yes,' said Snelling darkly, 'the lad's in luck, as you say.'

How he hated him for it is beyond the power of words to express. Proctor went on to explain that the discovery was equal to the proof of coal on Snelling's own land. Passing beyond John's workings, where they were developed, he would be able to reach his own coal, and to work safely under the sand-drift which had impeded his first operations.

'He'll be rich before I shall,' said Snelling.

'Yes, sir,' returned Proctor, rubbing his hands, 'that's pretty true. In point of fact, Mr Snelling, the lad's rich already.'

This was the first phial of bitterness, and Snelling in tasting it made no wry faces, at least in public. It was Parson Heathcote who brought the second, and who held it so repeatedly to his lips that he could not forbear a sign or two. The summer weather had barely set in, and the bricklayers were at work raising new walls on the foundations of the old. Snelling naturally rode over from time to time to see how the work was progressing; and Master John, with a boy's native longing for danger, was naturally there on half-holidays to run about the bare rafters which already stretched over the cellars, and to climb

anything which looked particularly breakneck and inviting. Snelling rode there on a Wednesday afternoon, and found his nephew perched on a dangerous eminence at the south-west corner of the old house, where the wall had by some accident or series of accidents escaped the fire.

'You'll break your neck one of these days, Master John,' said the uncle in a tone of good-humoured remonstrance.

'I'm all right, uncle,' John responded. 'I've been up here a dozen times.—Haven't I, Patsy?'

'Faix, ye have, then,' one of the workmen responded; 'but not with my good-will, young gintleman.'

Snelling took no further notice of the boy, but calling the man in charge, sat in the saddle to listen to his account of progress. Whilst the two were talking, the vicar jogged up on a steed as comfortable and as highly polished as himself.

'Good-day, Snelling,' he said. 'Rebuilding the old place, I see. I was glad to hear you were insured.'

'They're pretty slow in paying,' Snelling growled. 'I can make nothing out of 'em as yet.'

'Oh, they'll pay you—they'll pay you!' said the vicar. 'Very just and liberal office.—Hillo! who's that perched up there?—Snelling, Snelling! that's dangerous. Do you see your nephew there?—Come down, you young rascal; come down at once. Upon my word, it makes me giddy to look at him.'

'It's all right, sir,' piped John. 'There's no danger. I've been up here lots of times.'

'Curious!' said the vicar, 'how the repetition of an offence appears to justify it to the boyish mind.—Take care there, sir!—The boy puts my heart in my mouth.—Really, Snelling, you should exercise more authority; you shouldn't allow him to peril his limbs in that way.'

'Ah!' returned Snelling angrily, 'there's one blows hot, and one blows cold. The whole countryside gets filled with lies about me because I want the lad to learn his lessons; and I suppose I'm up to some wickedness now because I let the young monkey have his way.'

At this instant, John, half-way down from his perilous height, missed his foothold, and fell, bringing a handful or two of loose rubble down with him. The vicar cried out in terror; but the lad was on his feet again in a second, laughing. 'No harm done, sir, unless I've spoiled my jacket. It's lucky, though,' he added, 'that I fell into the mortar, and not on to the stones.'

'Come here, sir,' said the vicar sternly; and John approaching, took hold of the reverend gentleman's stirrup leather and looked up at him with so fearless a good-humoured candour that wrath was more than half disarmed.

'If I were your uncle,' the vicar said, 'and had charge of you, I should follow an escapade of that sort by a smart application of the cane, Master John. You have shaken an elderly clergyman's nerves, and that is a thing, let me tell you, which, from the elderly clergyman's point of view, merits punishment.'

'Really, sir,' John urged, 'it's quite safe. I've been up lots of times.'

'His neck won't get broke that way,' said Snelling with a pretence of a rough *bonhomie* he was far from feeling.

The vicar shook his riding-whip at John, who smiled at him in the certainty that no harm was coming.

'The soundest whipping won't dust that jacket for an hour or two,' said the parson, smiling also in spite of himself.—'No more mischief now, do you hear?'

'I'll be careful, sir,' the boy answered, and so moved away.

The vicar moved his horse a foot or two nearer to Snelling's. 'By-the-by,' he said, 'this reminds me. They tell me that coal has been found on your nephew's land. He will be a wealthy man one of these days.—You mustn't take offence at what I'm going to tell you, Snelling; you're much too sensible a man for that, I know. But even if it were otherwise, I should feel it my duty to speak.'

'Say on, sir, if you please.' It galled him to be told that John was going to be wealthy. The bitter avaricious grudge against the boy was always in his mind.

'You are John's guardian,' pursued the vicar, 'and it is your plain duty, and will of course be your pleasure, to breed him up in accordance with his prospects. Now, this is all very well if he were going to be farmer, miller, and maltster, like his father before him; but, as I gather, the boy will have so much money that the education he is receiving will be scarcely finished enough—scarcely fine enough—to meet the case. He has the local accent rather strongly, and here he can never get rid of it. You should send him to one of the public schools. Let him have a tutor for half a year, and then send him to Rugby.—Rugby's pretty close, you know, and he wouldn't be out of your sight there. Then in half-a-dozen years he might go to Oxford. You must really make a gentleman of the boy, and give him his chance in the world.'

'He's being bred,' said Snelling, 'as well as he's got any right to ask to be, better than his father was afore him, and better than I was. I don't want a young jackanapes from Oxford lording it over me. If he learns enough to manage his property when he comes into it, he'll have no right to grumble.'

'Believe me, Snelling, you're wrong. The whole district will think so. You have not merely the boy's best interests, but your own reputation to consider. By the time he comes of age, your nephew will be one of the wealthy men of the county, if all tales be true; and you must rear him in accordance with his expectations. Things have been said, you know, Snelling—I don't believe them, I never have believed them. If I had believed them, you may take it for granted that I shouldn't be sitting here and talking to you now. But the things have been said all the same, and you have your own reputation to consider.'

'Hold hard a minute,' said Snelling, in his heaviest tones. 'We'll have a look at that matter, if you please, sir, and we'd best go to the fountain-head.—John!' he cried, raising his voice, 'come here a bit, while I talk to you.'—John came, and his guardian turned upon the parson. —'There he is; ask him anything you like. If you'd prefer it so, I'll ride away.'

'My dear sir,' said the vicar, 'I don't wish to ask the boy any questions.'

'Very well, then,' said Snelling with a surly persistence, 'I do.—John, you've got nothing to hide; you can tell the truth without fear, favour, or affection. Have you got anything to complain of?'

'No, uncle,' the boy answered—'nothing.'

'You ran away from home the better part of two years ago, didn't you?'—John spread out his hands and made a little grimace, as if protesting against this raking up of bygones.—'What made you do that?'

'I should have got a thrashing if I hadn't,' said John, somewhat shyly.

'Who from?' his guardian demanded. 'Me?'

'No,' said John; 'Mr Macfarlane.'

'Now, answer me truly; did I ever lay a hand upon you in my life?'

'No,' the boy answered; 'never.'

'Sence you've come to know and understand, sence you've come back to live with me, have I ever spoke one unkind word to you?'

'No, uncle,' John said again; 'never.'—It was hardly accurate, but it was true enough in the main, and a happy boy's memory for reproof is short.

'Now,' resumed Snelling ponderously, bending over in the saddle and emphasising his question with his riding-whip, 'do I treat you harsh or do I treat you kind? Is there anything you've got to find fault with?'

'No, uncle.'

'Very well, then,' said his guardian, turning once more towards the vicar.—'You can put them questions to him by yourself, sir, if you like it better, and he'll answer 'em the same way.'

'You mistake me altogether,' the vicar answered.—'You can run away, John.—I never charged you in my own mind with unkindness to the boy; I only wanted to hint to you that people are watching your guardianship of him in some quarters a little jealously, and that you are expected to do your duty by him. You can only do that by giving him an education of a higher kind.—Don't you see, my good fellow, that the case demands it? The boy will be wealthy one of these days. Not merely well-to-do, but rich; a dozen times better off, perhaps, than his father ever fancied. He must have his chances.—Now, think over what I have said, like a good sensible fellow, as you are; and so, good-morning. I hope we are none the worse friends or neighbours for what I have said; but I had to discharge my conscience.—Think over it, Snelling; think over it, and you'll agree with me.'

Isaiah trundled up in the brake, behind the pair of steppers, as Snelling, with rather a bad grace, shook hands with the vicar. The clergyman saluted Isaiah with a cheery 'Good-morning, Winter,' and a motion of his whip, and then jogged away, as unconscious, good easy man, of having laid fuel to Snelling's murderous fires as ever man was in this mixed world of the result of his interference with another's business.

'Now, wheer do you think I've come from?' said Isaiah genially.

'I'll tell you when I've time to think about it,' Snelling answered, wheeling his horse round. But then, suddenly remembering that he had not too many friends in the world, and that

Isaiah, in spite of the fact that he housed his two enemies, was the one man on whom he could rely for kindly feeling, began to objugate the vicar.

'Don't mind me,' he said. 'That parson's put me out o' temper. He runs that eagle-beaked nose of hisn into everything.—You were going to tell me something, 'Zaiah; what is it?'

'Why,' said Isaiah, readily pacified, and accustomed from of old to his ancient employer's moods and tempers, 'I've been over to Brummagem to mek a bid for Tallymount Hall.'

'Tallymount?' repeated Snelling. 'What do you want with Tallymount? The place is in ruins.'

'It ain't so bad as you'd fancy,' said Isaiah. 'There's four rooms there as sound as nuts; there's three or four more as fifty pound 'ud put right for the next twenty year. As for the ruins, there's seventy or eighty of 'em; but they don't count. There's a stable in fair repair—you could do it up for a fiver—and there's a noble kitchen, just like it was left in old times, when the Tanants had got money in their pockets. There's six acres of the old park-land left, there's two acres o' garden, and a biggish pad-dock. If a bachelor has a fancy for living wild and lonesome, he can do it there as well as any-where.'

'I reckon you're i' no danger o' being a bachelor again, Isaiah,' Snelling answered.

'No,' returned Isaiah, laughing. 'It ain't for me; it's for my lodger. Between you and me, gaffer, them painting chaps is the queerest kind o' cattle as lives. He's seen the place, and he's took a fancy to it, and he's wild about it. He says he could live and die and lay his bones there with pleasure. I told him only yes'day—"Here you are," I says, "in a house brand-new, furnished from top to bottom, with the mortar hardly dry on the walls," I says; "and everything brand-new from the roof to the kitchen poker; and here you be," I says, "mad to live in a tumble-down, old haunted place as nobody's looked at this thirty year." But he's fell in love with it, and there's no shaking him. He's got me to do the business for him; and I've as good as done it. I'm standing out on a matter of fifty pounds on a seven years' lease; but young Tanant wants the money; and I think he'll tek what I've offered. You might as well pour water into a sieve as money into that young man's pocket.'

'Isaiah,' said Snelling, with a smile of meaning, 'in matters of business I've always found you pretty close until now. If I meet you to-morrow, you and me will have a laugh about this.'

'As how?' said Isaiah.

'I'll tell you when we meet again,' Snelling answered. 'I'm a bit pressed by business for the moment. That meddling vicar has kept me here for a good half-hour.—Good-morning, Isaiah.'

Isaiah returned his salute, and sighting young John, bade him come home to change his clothes. Meantime, Snelling rode away. Here at least was a chance of placing a thorn in his adversary's side. If Jousserau wanted to live in a ruin, he should at least pay for that privilege. He would raise him by a hundred pounds or two, and if he lost the money entirely, he could afford to do it for the gratification of his hate.

A half-hour's ride helter-skelter along the

country road, and at a decorous jog-trot through the town, brought him to the land-agent's doors. Snelling knew the doors well, for his own bank stood opposite. He threw his reins to a street boy and dismounted.

'Tallymount Hall's to let; what's your price for it?'

The clerk he accosted looked up from his work, referred languidly to another clerk, and looked down again. The second clerk advanced, and leisurely turning over the leaves of a volume made up of printed scraps and manuscript entries, turned it round upon the counter voicelessly and stuck an uninterested finger on a page.

'Seven years' lease,' said Snelling. 'No repairing covenant. Three hundred and fifty pounds.—Give me a pen, young man, and draw up a receipt.'

He drew his own cheque-book from his pocket and filled in a leaf of it, standing there at the counter. 'Send somebody across the road with that,' he said gruffly, throwing down the leaf he tore from the cheque-book.

The clerk, staring a little at the heavy emphasis with which he spoke, took the cheque in to his employer, who, recognising the name of the signator, came out smiling. 'We are in treaty for this already, Mr Snelling.'

'My money's as good as another man's, I reckon,' said Snelling; 'and here it is.'

'Your money is quite good enough for me, Mr Snelling,' responded the man of business. 'You can have a receipt in the meantime, and the formal receipt can be ready to-morrow.'

'There's one spoke in the Frenchman's wheel!' said Snelling to himself as he waited. There was no trifle too small to soothe his hate; but he looked about in his own mind in vain for the draught that would quench it.

IN THE ALBANIAN MOUNTAINS.

I AM sitting on an old packing-case outside an Albanian cottage in the great mountains, looking down a long arid slope of stony plain to the distant hills across the lake. At my side a lithe, broad-shouldered mountaineer sits cross-legged upon a thick cloak spread upon the boards. It is a brilliantly hot afternoon in July, and the sun would be unbearable were it not for a row of poplar trees which shelters us from the heat without obscuring the view, and so I and my companion sit still in the shade and watch the thin blue rings of smoke from our cigarettes floating lazily upwards in the heavy air. We do not talk very much; but as the mountaineer is an intelligent man, and actually speaks Italian, I gain a good deal of information from him at first hand. He is a keen politician in his way, and has wonderful odds and ends of knowledge stowed away in his brain; but his little world is only the mountain and plain of North Albania, and his idea of Europe is entirely derived from what he sees of the Austrian Lloyd steamers at the port of Medua. As he discourses upon his fellow-countrymen, the Sultan, and the Great Powers—utterly bewildered by matters which are to a European the simplest things in the world—he seems to me like a man groping in the dark, straining his eyes to pierce the gloom that draws so impalpable and

yet so dense a veil between him and what he seeks. And somehow, on this dreamy afternoon, when mountain, plain, and lake sleep under the July sun, I find myself half slipping into his mode of thought; and as I lean back against the cottage wall and look with half-shut eyes at the blue haze quivering in the valley below, my life in England seems a thing of the remote past; I seem to have always lived in Albania, instead of only for a few years. Perhaps, after all, the Skipetar are right, and the European sovereigns are only chiefs of Frankish tribes, who take advantage of the quarrels among the Sultan's subjects to further their own petty aims. All other countries seem vague and unreal, and only the politics of the rocks and lowlands of Albania appear of any consequence.

Soon I am aroused from my dream. Of course my friend knows that I am an Inglese; that all the Inglese are very rich; and that, as they have no room in their own little country, they wander about the territories of the other Frankish tribes, much as his own clan of Skreli is forced by want of pasturage to migrate every year to the richer land by the coast near Medua; so, to increase his knowledge, he asks me, as delicately as possible, in order not to hurt my feelings by the comparison, whether London is as big as Scodra. I inform him that in my country there are a thousand towns bigger than Scodra, and that he might ride for three or four hours in a straight line through the bazaars and streets of London without getting out into the country. The struggle between incredulity and politeness is plainly shown on the mountaineer's face; and I see that I have lost greatly in his esteem by my assertion, and that he looks upon me—to put it plainly—as a liar. He knows from priests and other Franks that the Inglese have no country but London, a miserable place, where it rains all the year; and where no one would stop who was not forced, as is proved by all the Inglese who are free to move wandering into other Frankish lands, and even into the realms of the Sultan. Nothing will shake his opinion; it is hopeless to fight against this wall of colossal ignorance. We English are too given to thinking that all foreigners see us as we see ourselves; not as merely the inhabitants of two little islands in the northern sea, but as the masters of an empire that rings the circle of the world and floats its navies upon every sea. The more ignorant foreigners who draw their information from priests or demagogic newspapers look on England as a foggy island peopled by uncouth heretics, who are only tolerated because they fling gold broadcast in every direction. My Skreli friend has no doubt derived his geographical and historical knowledge from some French or Russian source, and therefore despises me as an untruthful braggart, though he is too polite and perhaps too politic to say so.

I have come up into the mountains for a few days to see village life and to get a breath of fresh air, for the lowlands and the city are stifling. Not a drop of rain has fallen for two months; the grass has become sand, and the plants are drooping in the gardens for want of water. The little village of Zagora, in which I purpose spending the next day or two, lies at the head of the long wedge-shaped piece of stony land, running up from the lake and shut in by bare and lofty

mountains, which constitutes the territory of the Skreli tribe. Down the centre of this valley, and at the bottom of a steep ravine, runs the river which waters the arable land. A narrow strip of ground on each bank is cultivated, forming a winding ribbon of dingy and sun-burnt green between the bordering expanses of white stones and parched rocks. But the tribe has its winter pasturage near Medua; and towards autumn the whole of Skreli, men, women, and children, with their flocks and their herds, their horses and their household goods, will desert their mountain home and file in long procession across the stony plain through the bazaar of Scodra, and so, by way of the Zadrima, to Medua. My companion, finding I cannot be trusted to tell him of my own country, changes the subject to himself and his belongings, which are for me more interesting topics than comparisons between London and Scodra. And so I learn that in summer-time he is a farmer in the mountains, and in winter a boatman at the wretched seaport of San Giovanni di Medua, where he has learned a fair amount of Italian while bringing passengers and their baggage to shore. In this fashion he manages to earn enough money to make him a little bit of a mountain dandy, and to enable him to carry better arms than the mountaineers of the neighbouring tribes who spend all the year round in their rocky homes. He informs me that he is very well known at the port, and gets plenty to do; and then, being in confidential mood, tells me about his family and his children, and that he has a blood-feud with one of the most powerful families of the neighbouring Hotti tribe, and so never goes out of the village alone, for fear he should be shot for the blood he owes his enemies. His sister, he explains, married a man of Hotti, and it was considered a splendid match, as that tribe is the most powerful in the great mountains, and takes the post of honour in time of war. About a year after the marriage, the husband repudiated his bride, and sent her home, giving no reason for the outrage, but merely saying he was not going to keep the woman any longer. Such an insult was not to be tolerated; so my host and his brother, seeing that there was no chance of obtaining for their sister the restitution of her rights, looked out for an opportunity of killing their brother-in-law.

'He was very cunning,' says my host reflectively, playing with his pistol; 'but I waited for him every day, and at last I caught him alone, and then I shot him for the slight he had dared to put on our family.'

'And so you owe them blood?'

He grins, and arranges his pistols in his leather *sila*. 'His father and brothers,' he replies, 'often come into our country to look for me, and wait for me outside the bazaar or on the road to Scodra; but I never go into the city without my brother and my relations; so they cannot exact the penalty without fighting a battle.'

'But surely that must be a great nuisance for you?'

He shrugs his shoulders: 'Some day they will catch me alone, as I caught him, and then they will shoot me if they can.'

'And your sister?'

'She is in the city.'

'Has she married again?'

'Married? Oh no! She begs: she has her child.'—Then seeing my look of astonishment, he adds: 'What is she to do? We cannot support her; she does not belong to us now; and the Hotti will not keep her. But I have avenged the insult; I have shot her husband.'

Truly, honour and dishonour are arbitrary words! My companion is, according to his own code, a man of strict honour. His sister has been repudiated by her husband without cause or reason; and he feels that he has done everything he can be expected to do when he has shot the erring husband and left the poor woman to escape starvation as best she may by begging in the streets of Scodra a bare subsistence for herself and child!

But the sun has been gradually sinking towards Mount Rumia, and once he is below the hills everything is dark. The women, with little kegs strapped on their shoulders, come out of the cottages and strike across the fields. 'They are going to draw water from the river,' explains my companion; 'shall we go to see them?' He carefully looks to his arms, and then we rise and, joining two or three other men, stroll through the maize and tobacco fields, between the wait-a-bit thorn hedges, to the ravine. During the violent rains of autumn and winter, the Prolitar, as the river is called, dashes a foaming torrent along its rocky bed; but at the end of the summer it has become like most mountain streams, a quiet little river, half lost among the pebbles it flows over. In Indian file we descend the narrow path that winds through the brushwood edging the steep sides of the ravine, and I should feel put to shame by the activity and sure-footedness of the young girls, were it not that I know they would make a much worse scramble of it than I do had they boots on their feet instead of raw-hide sandals. Soon we get to the bottom, and then we seem to be in an amphitheatre, for, owing to the abrupt turns and winds of the river, we are shut in on all sides by almost perpendicular walls of rock. The floor of the ravine is covered with sand and pebbles, and down the centre trickles the dwindling stream, across which we easily jump. The narrow space is crowded with the inhabitants of all the Skreli villages, whose only water-supply in summer is drawn from the curious well in this part of the river's bed. The men lounge about conversing in groups, and every now and then a marksman fires his pistol at a stone or bush on the side of the cliff with a bang that startles the echoes from crag to crag, and makes one fancy, from the violence of the concussion, that a hundred-ton gun at least has been discharged.

Under an overhanging rock, a quaint parapet and basin have been carved out of the living stone, and round them the maids and matrons are gathered in picturesque groups, laughing and chattering. It is the mouth of a well that sinks deep down beneath the bed of the river, and is never dry in summer. When the rains come and send the torrent from the mountains, the well and its curious basin are covered deeply by the tossing waters; but when the hot weather returns and the river runs nearly dry, the well is uncovered again, and, as to-day, the buckets and long ropes are eagerly competed for by the crowd of women, who fill their little wooden

kegs every day just before sunset. Only one man comes down to draw water, an old white-headed man, bent now and infirm, but who has evidently been a magnificent broad-shouldered giant of over six feet in height. I ask why he is drawing water for himself. 'Oh!' is the reply, 'he has no women or relations; he lives by himself; besides, he is quite crazy.' Poor old man! he is the last of his family; his wife and daughters are dead; and his sons have succumbed to steel, bullet, or fever, leaving him alone in his old age. The border wars, blood-feuds, and malaria of the lowlands, that have taken away his brothers and sons, have passed him by, and left him an infirm veteran, no longer a great warrior, but a useless survival of the past. He speaks to no one, but having filled his keg, shoulders it, and toils slowly and alone up the steep path.

The shadows deepen among the cliffs; the last woman has filled her barrel and staggered panting up the rocky ascent; and so we return home too, my Malisor friend keeping his hand on his pistols and glancing suspiciously at every bush, for perhaps some Hotti avenger is lurking in the deep shadows and even now levelling a pistol or rifle. Luckily, there is no enemy near, and we reach the village in safety, or rather the row of six tiny houses which is the principal part of the hamlet. Most mountain cottages are built detached from one another, and consist simply of a single room on the bare ground, with perhaps a small apartment screened off for the mistress of the house; but here are half-a-dozen cottages built all in a row like modern villas, and only inhabited on the first floor, after the fashion of the houses in Scodra. Each house in the row has its ladder leading up to its first floor, and its little balcony with the living-room opening out of it. In no other mountain village have I seen this arrangement, which is evidently an innovation on the received architecture of the Malisori, and is no doubt to be ascribed to the tribe's yearly residence on the sea-coast.

The usual mountaineer's supper is soon prepared—roast mutton and cakes drenched in honey, and then, after coffee and more cigarettes, I think of going to rest, for it has been a long day since I roused my little household in Scodra at about two hours after midnight, before the sun had begun to rise. I have no fancy for sharing the stuffy little inner room with the grandmother, the mother, the wife, and the children of my host, not to mention other less visible occupants, nor a plank bed on the balcony with a couple of mountaineers; and that is why I brought the little tent that gleams white in the moonlight through the shrubs among which it is pitched. My hostess and her sister cut me plenty of soft fern in the afternoon and spread it on the floor of my tent; and so, after wishing my Albanian friends 'Good-night,' I retire to my own lodgings. As I stumble through the thicket by the imperfect light, my footsteps rouse the watchdogs, which strain fiercely at their chains and make the valley ring with their savage barking. From the distance comes an answering chorus of yelps, marking the position of neighbouring villages in the darkness of the night. The moon, already low down in the sky, casts long shadows across the land, and almost obscures the glitter of the stars, and dims the brilliance of the comet that

is blazing away across the heavens above the row of tall poplar trees outside the village. Creeping head first into my narrow tent, I wrap myself in a rug, stretching full length upon the fern, the softest couch a man can have; and soon the baying of the watchdogs weaves itself, an indistinct bass, into the current of my dreams.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER III.

MR DOTTLESON, who had just come back from the City, walked away to the park, and sought a secluded bench, whereon he seated himself, and drew out the letter he had taken possession of. What did his mother-in-law want with this young doctor now? And why did she send her letters by hand, instead of putting them in the postbag? He had a right to know what it meant, and he intended to find out. The envelope was carelessly gummed and came open without difficulty. He unfolded the enclosure, and bit his lips with chagrin as he read it:

MY DEAR DOCTOR—Come and meet Sir Alfred Blodget here in consultation at noon to-morrow; he is coming to see me.—Yours sincerely,

MARIA LAMSHED.

Mr Dottleson stared at it, and a few emphatic words escaped him. What *could* his mother-in-law be thinking of? To ask a young man who was little more than a medical student to come and 'consult' with the very first authority of the day! It was ridiculous; it made a farce of Sir Alfred's visit. What an outrageous thing it was for the woman to do!

'Of course, it can't be allowed,' he said to himself; 'and I'll just take the responsibility of posting this letter—in time to be too late for him to keep the appointment.'

He replaced it in his pocket, and returned home, deeply vexed at what he looked upon as a mean attempt to take advantage of his generosity. His thoughts flew back to the conversation he had had with Mrs Lamshed the day before; how he had urged his dutiful anxiety for her health as the reason for calling in Sir Alfred Blodget; and then, in spite of himself, he recalled how he had carefully arranged this to supplant Dr Lakeworth; and now, instead of doing anything in that direction, his scheme was made use of to benefit the man. Oh, it was very disheartening, and enough to aggravate any one. No wonder that Mr Dottleson entered his house in a frame of mind which caused Kate to avoid him, and made the servants quake in their shoes as they waited upon him at dinner. Everything had gone wrong, as things have a way of doing when our little tempers get the better of us: the soup was smoked, the fish done to rags, and the joint as tough as leather. Kate, who was skilled in reading the paternal barometer, took little time to discover that the hand was set at 'Stormy,' and knew better than to deliver herself of her grandmother's message, asking if Mr Dottleson was quite sure he had left the note for Charles Lakeworth at the right house; indeed, she had a faint suspicion that the said note might have caused the present disturbance in the domestic atmosphere, and judiciously abstained from referring to it. So her father,

shielded by his smouldering passion, was allowed to keep it in his breast-pocket undisturbed, and the untruth he had ready remained unspoken.

He started for the City earlier than usual next morning; he wanted to evade being questioned about the letter until he had despatched it, but he was careful not to commit it to the post until nearly eleven o'clock. Then he felt easier; he had foiled the first attempt to make capital out of his liberality, and had gained time to remonstrate mildly with Mrs Lamshed upon the absurdity of her ideas. It occurred to him more than once during the day that detaining the letter was not quite the best way of beginning operations; but if that cropped up, as it was tolerably sure to do, he must plead failure of memory or make some excuse of that kind. He walked home to Blake-wood Square that afternoon, wondering much what the result of his manœuvre had been, and warning himself that he must be prepared for an outburst of wrath heretofore unheard of on the part of his mother-in-law. The nearer home he came, the more awkward he felt his own attitude in the matter to be, and had he found it necessary to confront Mrs Lamshed at once, he would have made out a poor case for himself.

It chanced, however, that she was indulging in her customary afternoon siesta when he came in, and he was fully posted by his daughter in the events of the day before the old lady awoke. It seemed that punctually at twelve o'clock Sir Alfred Blodget had called; but there was no Dr Lakeworth to meet him. At Mrs Lamshed's earnest request, he had consented to waste five minutes of his valuable time in waiting to be introduced to 'her doctor.' At a quarter past twelve, just as Kate entered the room, he drew out his watch and rose to go; she dashed recklessly into the breach and succeeded in detaining him until nearly twenty-five minutes past the hour, but still no Charles Lakeworth appeared. Then the great physician had looked annoyed, and picked up his hat, making caustic remarks about the independent manners adopted by struggling practitioners. When Mr Dottleson heard this, he felt that he had at all events sown the seeds of a good misunderstanding between Sir Alfred and Dr Lakeworth, and that his task with Mrs Lamshed would be easier; but he had not heard all that Kate had to tell him. Three o'clock brought Charles Lakeworth to the house in a flutter of disappointment; he had with him the note which had been written yesterday, but which the City post-mark proved to have been despatched to-day. Grandmamma had been exceedingly angry, and told Dr Lakeworth that she would sift the matter to the bottom as soon as Mr Dottleson came home, and further promised to make another opportunity of introducing him to Sir Alfred Blodget.

Mr Dottleson did not feel quite so well after hearing that; but as he received a summons from his mother-in-law almost immediately after Kate had finished her story, he had no time to prepare a brief for his defence.

Mrs Lamshed was lying amongst her pillows panting for the fray; she waved her son-in-law to a seat at the bedside and attacked him at once. 'It was a great pity you forgot that note, after taking it from Sarah, Montague; the contents were most important—most important.'

'So Kate has been telling me,' said Mr Dottleson; 'and so I imagined from the fact of your sending it by hand.'

'It was worth anything to Charley Lakeworth to meet Sir Alfred professionally. Considering how the boy stands towards Kate, you ought to regret having deprived him of the chance he had to-day.'

Mr Dottleson was very far from regretting it, but did not think it advisable to say so; on the contrary, he hastened to expound his own views. 'You could not have weighed the matter with your usual good sense, when you asked that young fellow, who is scarcely more than a student, to meet such a man as Sir Alfred in consultation. Sir Alfred would, I am sure, have felt grossly insulted had he seen the person you wanted to introduce to him in such a manner.'

It was an unhappily worded sentence; the back-handed allusion to her 'good sense,' the suggestion that Sir Alfred would have been grossly insulted through her instrumentality, and finally the careless reference to the 'person,' stung the old lady to the quick. She turned upon him sharply and spoke with rising temper.

'You're jealously careful of Sir Alfred's sensibilities, Montague. You don't see the advantage of extending a helping hand to a deserving man who wants it, do you?'

'I have no wish whatever to impede his progress'—

'Or to help it either, no doubt; you seem to forget that he's engaged to Kate.'

'He isn't engaged to Kate, and won't be, till he can satisfy my requirements.' Mr Dottleson was a passionate man, and was letting his feelings get the mastery of him. It irritated him sorely to be taken to task like this by Mrs Lamshed, and he lost sight of his own interests in the anger of the moment. Mrs Lamshed paused for a few seconds, and then produced the card she always had in her sleeve when she wanted to crush her son-in-law; but this time it failed utterly. 'Must I remind you again that there's still plenty of time for me to alter my will, Montague?'

'I have no control over your intentions, madam; you are quite aware that my daughter Kate is dependent upon me, and will ultimately inherit all I possess.'

It was a very gentle hint that if he were cut out of her will in favour of Dr Lakeworth, Kate would be the real sufferer; but it had its effect upon Mrs Lamshed.

'I don't think Kate would lose much. Those two will be faithful to each other, however long you may keep them apart, in your greed.'

'I will never raise a finger to thwart Kate's happiness if she marries a man of whom I can approve.'

'Then you don't approve of Charles Lakeworth?'

'No, Mrs Lamshed; I do not. As things stand now, I most emphatically disapprove of him; and there's an end of it.'

There was a dead silence for five minutes, until Mrs Lamshed spoke again, calmly and quietly: 'Please ring the bell, Montague.'

He did so without a word, and stepped back to his place by the bedside, where he stood facing his mother-in-law. Mrs Lamshed neither moved nor spoke till her maid appeared and asked for

her commands. Then she collected herself as if for a spring, and sat bolt upright with her white hair falling upon her shoulders, whilst she pointed with her thin trembling finger to the door. Her sunken eyes flashed with suppressed excitement as she spoke the words which Montague Dottleleson remembered till the very last day of his life. 'Send for Smuggles's partner,' said Mrs Lamshed.

Although the order was ostensibly addressed to the maid, Mr Dottleleson knew that it was in reality given to himself. He offered no protest; perhaps he recognised that it would be useless; he pulled out his watch and glanced at it before he answered, which he did in tones whose coolness surprised himself and were evidently not pleasing to Mrs Lamshed. 'It's now half-past six, and the office will be shut.—Do you know the gentleman's name and his private residence?'

His mother-in-law glowered angrily at him for a few seconds before she replied: 'No, I don't. I want Smuggles's partner.'

Mr Dottleleson bowed, and quitted the room: he was in no hurry to discover the nameless individual who was to assist in altering the will. 'I'll wait until to-morrow,' he thought as he went to his own chamber; 'she may have changed her mind by the morning.'

But morning came, and Mrs Lamshed was as firm in her purpose as she had been the evening before. Her son-in-law went to her room to make inquiries about her health before he set out for the City, and was startled at the change for the worse which had taken place during the night. Her breathing was heavy and laboured, and there was a listless apathy in her manner which contrasted painfully with her wonted brightness. She seemed indisposed to speak to any one; but when he referred to her demand for 'Smuggles's partner,' she roused herself with an effort. 'It's Starbone and Smuggles—Lincoln's Inn—ask for—his partner.'

'Are you well enough to attend to business to-day?' asked Mr Dottleleson anxiously.

'Yes,' said Mrs Lamshed. 'Send him to me now—at once.'

He said nothing more; but as his gaze rested on the form of the old lady, who seemed to be drawing near her end, a dark thought crossed his mind. She could not last very long; she was breaking up rapidly; a few days, in all likelihood, would see the last; he could forget her commission to-day, and perhaps—

'Don't forget to call at Starbone and Smuggles's office, Montague; I shall expect the solicitor here at twelve o'clock.' She spoke more fluently than she had done before, and seemed to hint pointedly at his singular forgetfulness in that matter of the note to Dr Lakeworth. He turned red under her searching eyes, and hastily dismissing his half-formed design, promised to attend to her wishes without fail. After all, it would answer no good purpose to neglect them; she could easily send another messenger, if she distrusted him; and he felt that he had little claim to her confidence. She would put the true interpretation on his remissness, and visit it all the more severely upon him. No; he must close his eyes to the nature of his errand, and execute it with that honesty whose mother is necessity and whose child is self-interest.

He had no difficulty in finding Messrs Starbone and Smuggles's office, where he was received by the surviving partner, a gaunt melancholy man, who dwelt in a little back room lined with battered tin deed-boxes.

'Mrs Lamshed?' said the gaunt man wearily—'Lamshed?'—Ah, yes; I remember: 10 Potfield Gardens, isn't it?'

'That was Mrs Lamshed's address at one time,' said Mr Dottleleson. 'My mother-in-law now resides with me, at No. 21 Blakewood Square. She is particularly anxious to see you as soon as possible. Could you conveniently call upon her at about mid-day?'

The melancholy solicitor chewed the stump of a very old quill pen thoughtfully, and referred to a memorandum slab on the table. 'To-day is Wednesday. I will attend Mrs Lamshed at noon,' he said in a funeral voice.—'Will you be good enough to say that I—Mr Reginald Slimp—will be in attendance at noon?'

Mr Dottleleson shook hands with him and withdrew. He intended to telegraph down to let his mother-in-law know that he had lost no time in carrying out her directions; it would look disinterested and might have a softening effect. Accordingly, he wired, telling Mrs Lamshed that she might expect Mr Reginald Slimp to be with her at the hour appointed. 'I may wash my hands of it now, I suppose,' he said as he affixed the telegraph stamp. 'I may sit down and wait for the earthquake.'

That was a long-remembered day at 21 Blakewood Square. Mr Slimp arrived at twelve o'clock, armed with a formidable parchment envelope, which he carried in his hat up to Mrs Lamshed's room. The old lady dismissed her maid with instructions not to return and to prevent others disturbing her until she heard the bell, as she was going to be busy with the visitor. Charles Lakeworth called, and, for the first time during his acquaintance, was told that his patient was engaged, and could not see him.—Was Miss Dottleleson engaged? No. Then he would see her; and was taken up-stairs forthwith.

'Is anything wrong, Kate?' he asked as he took her hands. 'Why won't Mrs Lamshed see me?'

'Hush!' said Kate (the old lady's apartment was next to the drawing-room). 'There was a quarrel of some kind last night, and grandmamma sent for her lawyer. I suspect it's about her will. He is with her now; they've been shut up alone together for nearly an hour.'

The bell rang sharply at that moment; and a message was sent to the butler to go to Mrs Lamshed at once. He was not detained very long; he was only called upon to sign his name, after seeing the old lady inscribe hers at the bottom of a document; and a few minutes after he left the room with the maid Sarah, who also acted as a witness. Mr Slimp with his papers followed, looking, if possible, more melancholy than ever. His aspect gave an increased air of solemnity to the occasion, and impressed the under-housemaid who let him out with the conviction that something very deep and mysterious indeed had taken place up-stairs.

Sir Alfred Blodget paid his visit soon after the solicitor had gone, and found the invalid with her grand-daughter and the young doctor for whom he had been kept waiting the day before.

'Explain,' said Mrs Lamshed to Kate, nodding at Charles Lakeworth and then at Sir Alfred. Nothing loth, Kate informed the latter how the miscarriage of a note had caused the mistake of the previous day, and introduced Dr Lakeworth as the physician who had taken care of her grandparent for the past twelve months. Sir Alfred was extremely gracious; but Miss Dottleson was a little disappointed to find that he did not at once retire to the window with Charles and earnestly discuss the case in low tones, which was her preconceived idea of a 'consultation.' On the contrary, he only patted Mrs Lamshed's hand kindly and told her to stay where she was for a day or two; said so quite independently, without even asking the younger doctor if he didn't agree with him. It was not much of a consultation, reflected poor Kate, when the great man went out followed by the small one; and she told Mrs Lamshed her opinion of Sir Alfred, which was quite at variance with that usually entertained about him.

'You are intimate with the family, I understand?' he said to Charles Lakeworth as he drew on his gloves in the hall.

'Yes; I have known them well for some time.'

'Well, you may mention to Mr Dottleson that I can do nothing more than you can, and shall not look in again.—Very old woman. Course of nature. I shall be surprised if she sees the light of Sunday.—Good-day; very pleased to have met you.'

The brougham rolled away with Sir Alfred, and Charles Lakeworth returned to Mrs Lamshed's room. He had known before that she was seriously ill, but did not possess the experience which told the older man that her lease of life had so nearly expired. He was charged with the duty of telling Mr Dottleson that the case had been left in his hands as hopeless, and he would have to break the news to Kate also, a task he cared for even less. He would not tell her yet, he decided; she had no idea of Mrs Lamshed's real condition, and it would only prolong her grief to reveal it sooner than was actually necessary. Mr Dottleson must be told, of course, and he waited until that gentleman came home, in order to see him.

'You arrived here soon after noon, you say, Mr Lakeworth,' said Mr Dottleson, when he had been told Sir Alfred's opinion. 'Did you see Mrs Lamshed at once?'

'She was engaged when I came, and I did not see her until her visitor had gone.'

'Mrs Lamshed seemed to me to be a little strange in her manner last night and this morning; do you think her faculties are perfectly clear?'

'Perfectly clear. She is very weak, and is growing weaker almost every hour; but her mind is quite sound.'

Mr Dottleson had conceived the idea that his mother-in-law might if necessary be proved mentally incapable of making a new will, and did not intend to give up the notion yet. He would send a line to Sir Alfred Blodget about it; Dr Lakeworth's opinion was hardly worth having, and might, moreover, be prejudiced. He lost no time in writing to the doctor, and waited until late that evening in keen anxiety for his reply; it

would be a great triumph if he succeeded in getting this codicil legally set aside, for he had firmly persuaded himself that it was in Charles Lakeworth's favour. Whatever its provisions might be, he would be acquainted with them in a few days—by Sunday or Monday, at the latest. It was hard that, after all these years, a slight blunder should throw out his calculations when the end was almost in sight; it was very hard. Still, there was a shred of hope left. If such an authority as Sir Alfred Blodget could certify that he had seen Mrs Lamshed half an hour after she had altered her will, and that she was then incapable of understanding what she had done, he was safe. He could snap his fingers at Dr Lakeworth and kick him out of the house.—Here was the answer from Sir Alfred at last. He snatched the letter from the servant and tore it open in nervous haste:

Sir Alfred Blodget presents his compliments to Mr Dottleson, and has pleasure in assuring him that Mrs Lamshed was perfectly capable of transacting any business such as he refers to at the time he visited her to-day.

Foiled! He crushed the paper into a shapeless lump and threw it into the waste-paper basket. Whatever the old harridan had done, it was done, and would hold good. He swallowed his passion, and went up to see his daughter.

LIQUID IN CRYSTALS.

Like the famed drop in crystal found,
Floating while all was frozen around.

FROM these lines of Moore we learn that liquid inclusions in crystals, which have proved such an instructive and fascinating study for modern geologists, were at least noticed in comparatively early times. For not only does the poet mention the famous drop, but tells us also in a note that he alludes to a certain curious gem upon which Claudian wrote some very elaborate epigrams. This same gem was a piece of crystal, *glacies*, by which we may probably understand crystallised quartz, enclosing within it a drop of liquid. It seems to have exercised a wondrous fascination over the mind of the Roman poet: he has left us no fewer than nine epigrams upon it, seven in Latin, and two in Greek. His poetic fancies, and speculations as to the origin of the curiosities, are full of interest and beauty. Like modern investigators, he considers the liquid as bearing witness to the origin of the crystal: 'Possedit glacies naturæ signa prioris' (The crystal retains marks of its former state). Moore further cites Addison, who had seen a curiosity of the same kind at Milan, and again at Vendôme, in France. And, whether the men of science of those days attempted to account for the phenomenon in accordance with the knowledge they then possessed, or not, the popular mind accepted an explanation embodied in a beautiful legend. It is Addison who relates that at Vendôme it was believed that the liquid drop was a tear shed by our Saviour over Lazarus. An angel gathered

it up, and placing it in a crystal vial, presented it to Mary Magdalene.

The ground thus formerly occupied by the poet and weaver of legends is to-day eagerly explored by the geologist: the study of liquid and other inclusions in crystals is an important branch of his science. Such liquid drops as those above alluded to were relatively of large size, and rare. Claudian's gem is esteemed *raras inter opes*; but those of the geologist are mostly microscopic and exceedingly abundant. Their size varies from one ten-thousandth of an inch up to a few large enough to be seen by the naked eye. That method of petrographical research, first practised by Mr Henry Sorby, which consists in grinding down a slice of rock until thin enough to be viewed under the microscope, has revealed the fact that the crystals of igneous rocks contain innumerable cavities of varied form and contents.

The first rock section thus ground down for the microscope marks an important epoch in the annals of geology; it has opened a door by which numerous investigators have entered to explore new realms of knowledge. It deserves, then, the honour paid to it; and, shrined in morocco case in its owner's pocket, may be said to enjoy a dignified retirement. Microscopic sections are now prepared in great numbers and with much accuracy, especially in Germany, where the taste for minute work of all kinds is more powerfully developed than in England. In some crystals as many as from 1,000,000,000 to 10,000,000,000 cavities are found to exist per cubic inch. By their investigation much light has been thrown on the origin of the rocks in which they occur; while the fascinating veil of mystery still hanging over certain points invites further study. At first, the cavities studied by philosophers were the larger ones visible to the naked eye, and more akin to the imprisoned liquid of the poet than to the minute inclusions of the geologist of to-day. Such were those described by Sir H. Davy in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society for 1822, from which memoir we may date the modern scientific study of liquid inclusions in crystals.

More recently, the subject has been taken up by that diligent experimenter and writer of memoirs, Mr Henry Sorby, who has applied to it his method of grinding down rock-sections for the microscope. In 1857 he read a paper before the Geological Society of London in which he endeavoured to show 'that artificial and natural crystalline substances possess sufficiently characteristic structures to point out whether they were deposited from solution in water or crystallised from a mass in the state of igneous fusion; and also that in some cases an approximation may be made to the rate at, and the temperature and pressure under which they were formed.'

The interpretation of these *natura signa prioris* retained by the crystals involves vast labour and knowledge; the experiments, by reason of the minuteness of the cavities, require excessively delicate manipulation; the necessary calculations are intricate. The results obtained are of great interest and importance; while a careful study of Mr Sorby's paper (*Journal of the Geological Society*, vol. xiv.) shows us further the amount of labour expended in producing a scientific memoir of value.

The cavities occur in igneous rocks—granites, basalts, and lavas—and are of great variety as to their form and contents. Some are entirely filled with liquid; but the majority contain a movable bubble like that of a spirit-level. Others, besides the bubble, contain minute crystals of various substances. Some, again, have two distinct liquids and a bubble. The most interesting and puzzling of these bubbles are those which seem to be endowed with spontaneous motion.

Claudian's liquid inclusion must have had a movable bubble, for he says of it: '*Varias itque reditque vias*' (By various ways it comes and goes). They are found mostly, however, in the smaller cavities, and may be observed traversing their prison-houses from end to end in tortuous courses, as though trying to escape; 'as if,' says Mr Sorby, 'they were minute animalcules swimming about and exploring every part of the cavities.' To the poet they were veritable prisoners; the frozen waters forming the crystal hold the liquid in bondage: '*Nymphæ, quæ tegitis cognato carcere Nymphas*' (O waters, who in kindred prison guard the waters).

Starting from one end of the cavity, the bubble describes a curvilinear course from side to side to the other end; in returning, a similar course cuts the other in many points. The wonderful thing is that this complicated double path thus traced out is always followed by the moving bubble. Here is a mystery which has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Why should the bubble thus oscillate from side to side and from end to end of its cavity? Above all, why should it always travel on the same line? It is no regular geometrical curve which is traced out, and the forward and return paths do not correspond in form. Truly, the more we contemplate these wonders, the more we are inclined to say, as Claudian said, '*Liquidi crescunt miracula saxi*.' Other simpler movements of some of the bubbles may perhaps be explained as the result of alterations of temperature, acting on their sensitive equilibrium.

But what is the nature of these contained liquids? They have been shown to be water, liquid carbonic acid gas, and hydrocarbons: hydrochloric and sulphuric acids also occur. Those examined by Sir H. Davy contained nearly pure water.

Various delicate and beautiful methods of analysis have been devised for the determination of the microscopic quantities of liquid, but these must be passed over here. Let us note briefly some of the theoretical results obtained from the study of these cavities in the rocks. It is to be inferred, then, that the rocks containing them, if they have cooled down from igneous fusion, must have done so under great pressure. This pressure, in fact, must have been great enough to keep the contents of the cavities liquid at a temperature which under atmospheric pressure would have converted them into vapour. Of course this argument could not apply to lavas which have cooled at the surface; but it has been observed that in these the crystals containing cavities bear evidence of being derived. It is supposed that crystals from the granite mass below floated on the molten lava, before it was ejected from the volcano, without being fused. When the lava was poured out, the granite crystals came with it. This seems

to indicate that granite and lava are formed from the same subterranean reservoir; and thus the study of the cavities adds a fresh link to the chain of evidence which now leads geologists to consider granites, basalts, and lavas as produced from the same molten mass by diverse circumstances of cooling. The theory held by the older geologists not so very many years ago, that granite was the original first formed rock of the globe from which all others had been derived, is now exploded. Granites are known to be of all ages. With regard to granites, it is inferred that igneous fusion alone will not account for their formation: water has been present and played its part in the process.

Inferences have also been drawn from the quantity of liquid in the cavities as to the approximate depth at which certain granites have been formed. The expansion of the contained liquid at different temperatures being known, it can be calculated how great a pressure would be required to keep a certain quantity in the liquid state at a given temperature. This involves a careful estimation of the amount of liquid in a cavity. When their minute size is remembered—1,000,000,000 to 10,000,000,000 per cubic inch—the difficulties to be surmounted in obtaining the necessary data may be conceived.

First of all, the size of the cavity must be measured as accurately as possible; then, that of the bubble must be ascertained. The difference of these gives the amount of liquid. If, now, it is known, or can be estimated, at what temperature the rock was fused, it can be calculated what pressure was required to keep the liquid within the limits of the cavity. Such measurements and calculations have actually been made by Mr Sorby. The result thus arrived at is that many granites have been formed at depths of from five and a half to fifteen miles. Since many of the same rocks now appear at the surface, we are here furnished with fresh evidence, showing that strata many miles in thickness have been removed by denudation from the surface of the land.

Applying the tests to the granites of the Highlands and of Cornwall, it has been inferred that the former have originated at a greater depth than the latter. Considering the large possibilities of error in estimating the size of the microscopic cavities and bubbles, we shall probably be inclined to consider the results as but shadowy approximations; yet they may be accepted as pointing at least in the right direction. Professor Judd says: 'The grand conclusion that granite rocks could only have been formed under such great pressures as exist at great depths beneath the surface appears to be one not open to reasonable doubt.'

THE PIANO-ORGAN CASE.

'YES, sir, I like to hear a piano-organ,' said Detective Sergeant Jones, leaning back in his chair, and having a far-off look in his eyes, as though he were gazing at a beautiful picture of the past. The sergeant was a well-set-up man of about fifty years of age, with a military look, and a pair of cavalry moustaches. 'I may say a piano-organ was the making of me,' said the detective, pursuing the thread of his remarks, suggested probably by the strains of one of those melodious

instruments, wafted on the breeze through the open window. He took a sip from his glass, and after a few puffs at his cigar, said: 'It's a long story; but if you would care to hear it, I'll give it to you.'

Receiving a ready response from me, the sergeant cleared his throat and began.

Some few years ago I was sent to examine a burglary job over Hampstead-way. The house, a small detached one, stood a little distance back from the road, and was surrounded with a large garden, enclosed by a low wall with iron railings on top. It was inhabited by a Mr and Miss Somers, quiet well-to-do people, who kept two women-servants. One of the windows on the ground-floor, opening into the garden at the rear, had been forced, and an entrance had been effected by the robbers. Some money and plate had been carried off; but the greatest loss was a valuable diamond necklace, which, apart from its worth, was a great grief to Miss Somers, as it had been her father's gift to her mother on their wedding-day. I had up the servants; but though I cross-questioned them pretty severely, I could tell from their manner that they had nothing to do with the business. They had been in the family for years, and were implicitly trusted by their mistress.

After they had left the room, and I had gathered all the information I could relative to the articles stolen, I was standing in the parlour, looking out of the window, when I heard the sound of wheels outside, and immediately after a piano-organ struck up. Where I stood, I had a good view of the road, but was hidden by a curtain from the notice of any one outside. The organ was being ground by a young Italian, with a great bushy head of black hair. Coming through the gate leading to the house was a young woman with fine dark eyes and a bold, determined, handsome face. She wore a white bodice, and a green velvet skirt, over which was a bright violet apron trimmed with yellow ribbon. A showy silk handkerchief was twisted in her hair; and in her ears were a pair of curious gold earrings of very large size, formed of hoops one within the other, and terminating in an elaborate drop.

On seeing Miss Somers, she smiled, showing a beautiful set of teeth; and holding out her hand, she waited in the garden, evidently expecting some money. Miss Somers shook her head; but as the woman didn't move off, she opened the window, and with more asperity than I should have thought her capable of, ordered the organ away. With a dark frown and a toss of her head, the Italian woman looked at the lady for a moment, then turning on her heel, strode out of the garden, banging the gate behind her. Taking hold of the strap, while the man caught up the handles, she moved away with the organ without a word.

Miss Somers threw herself in a chair, looking very shaken and upset, while her brother came to her side, seeming much concerned. After a little she broke out with: 'I shall have nothing more to say to that woman; she shall never sit to me again. I never saw such impertinence.'

This particular pair of Italians, it turned out,

were in the habit of coming two or three times a week to play; and lately, Miss Somers had made some water-colour sketches of the woman in her picturesque costume.

A few minutes after, I took my leave, promising to leave no stone unturned in the search for the stolen property. But though a large reward was offered for its recovery, no trace could be found, and so in course of time the affair came to be forgotten. This case happened in October.

In April, next year, I was again sent to the same neighbourhood, but more Hendon-way this time, to the house of an old bachelor, a retired civil-service clerk, living on a good pension, who resided in a lane near the green. The robbers in this instance were unsuccessful, having been disturbed before they had broken in. There were marks of a jemmy on one of the doors; but beyond this, no damage had been done.

The gentleman was very testy, being greatly excited by the attempt of the previous night. I tried to soothe him with the assurance that as the thieves had been frightened off, there was little fear of their trying his premises again; but not being able to calm him, I was thinking of going, when I heard the music of a piano-organ suddenly commence. The old gentleman was so highly strung, that the rattling noise was just the last straw. He jumped about like one demented, abused all street musicians in good round terms, and at last, his temper boiling over, he danced out of the house, and going up to the player, shook his fist in his face, and, in a voice hoarse with passion, ordered him off. A policeman coming up at that instant made short work of the matter by giving an unceremonious shove to the instrument and sending it away in double-quick time. After wishing the gentleman good-day, I walked briskly down the lane, and soon came up with the organ, which was being dragged by the identical pair of Italians I had seen the autumn before at Hampstead. It struck me as being a strange coincidence that these people should crop up on both of my professional visits to that part of the suburbs. Making inquiries in London, I discovered that they were man and wife—by name Carlo and Rosa Andreallotti, living near Eyre Street Hill, Hatton Garden. They were reputed to be very respectable, and were rather looked up to in the hive of a house in which they lodged, as they did not pig in with the other people at supper in the kitchen, but kept themselves in select reserve in their own apartment, a back-parlour. Their organ was their own, and was wheeled every night into their room for safety. As they were supposed to entertain dangerous republican notions, they were rather shunned by their fellow-lodgers. Still, nothing of a criminal character could be ascertained about them, so they were left alone by the police.

Another robbery occurring soon after in the same neighbourhood, I was sent on special duty to skulk about the district. You might not guess what disguise I adopted, sir. Well, I was dressed up like a chickweed and groundsel man, in a smock-frock, with a shaggy red wig on my head, and a rough beard to match. My clothes were appropriately ragged and my face dirty, and being furnished with a basket, I flatter myself I looked the part to perfection.

The next morning I started for Hendon, and being acquainted with the place, I got into the fields between there and Edgware, and soon gathered some bunches of primroses, with which I filled my basket, and getting back among the houses, commenced to prowling about and offer my flowers for sale. After a long day's tramp without lighting on anything of consequence, I turned my face homeward and began my weary trudge back to town. When I got into the deep cut North End Road at Hampstead, I saw some people resting on the bank, but the shadow was so dark that I could not tell who they were till close upon them, when I at once recognised the Italians with the piano-organ. The young fellow was sitting in a dejected way, looking weakly at his wife, who seemed to be laying down the law pretty strongly, though, of course, I could not understand what she said. On my approach, she stopped short; and the man, evidently glad of the interruption, wished me good-night in broken English. I tried to get into conversation with him; but the woman appeared very unwilling to have anything to do with me, for she started up, and catching hold of the organ, with the help of her husband, who was quite under her thumb, commenced pulling away towards London at a rapid rate. As it did not fit in with my assumed character of an old flower-seller to be too spry in my motions, I was soon left behind.

A day or two after, as I was plodding along the road, I was passed by the same pair of musicians, and on my wishing the man good-morning, the woman as before went on, not saying anything to me. Several other times I met them either going or returning, and I was struck with their powers of endurance in dragging such a heavy load all those miles and up the long hills on the way.

One morning, coming from the fields with some cowslips, I came upon them outside a large substantial old house. The man was grinding away, and the woman was going in at the garden gate. I was in the act of lighting my short cutty pipe, when the man asked me for a match, though he didn't light up then, as not looking business-like, I suppose. Setting down my basket, I tried to have a little talk with him; but his English was so bad that I couldn't make out much of what he said. While I was at this game, the woman returned, and did not seem pleased to see us together. She looked sulkily at me under her black brows, and gave an impatient stamp with her foot upon the road, making one think what a handsome spitfire she was in her gay costume. Not wishing to be blown up by her, I shouldered my basket and moved away, leaving her rating her companion soundly. I could not imagine what made her take such a dislike to me, as I had always been civil.

For some time after this the district was not visited by burglars, and I was beginning to think of being recalled from my wearisome duty, when one morning before starting I was sent for to the office and instructed to go to Hendon in private clothes, as a house there had been broken into on the previous night.

On arriving, I found it to be the house in front of which I had given the organ-grinder the match and had aroused his wife's anger. A large garden,

shut in with a high wall, separated it from the road, while in the rear the grounds sloped down to the river Brent. The thieves had got into one of the bedrooms by means of a ladder from a neighbouring stackyard; and they had carried off a large booty, principally jewels. The robbery was not discovered till a late hour, when one of the maids going up to light the gas in the room, found the door locked on the inside. She at once gave the alarm; but the thieves had evidently taken their departure some time before, for no trace of them could be discovered, though a strict search was made all round.

I examined the place, and found the job had been done in a thoroughly workman-like manner, and was on the point of leaving with my report, when my eye caught the gleam of something bright under the window-curtain. Stooping down, I picked up a large foreign-looking earring, which I immediately recognised as one of those worn by the Italian woman with the piano-organ. This put me at once on the scent, and explained why my two friends so haunted the district. But the thing was to pounce upon them before they had any suspicion of being wanted; otherwise, there was little chance of recovering the jewels, for I made up my mind that it could be no other than they who had stolen the diamonds from Hampstead. I did not mention my find to the gentleman of the house, as one cannot be too cautious in these matters.

Knowing the Italians would be by this time on their round, I returned to town, and after a consultation with my superior, determined to drop upon my pair the next morning before they began business.

I don't know, sir, if you are acquainted with the Italian quarter near Hatton Garden. It's a queer place, chockful of those black-haired ice-men, *pifferari* bagpipers, organ-grinders, and artists' models. The names on the shops are all foreign; the streets are crowded from morning till night, and the bright dresses of the women are in great contrast to the dingy houses.

When I made my way there early the following morning, accompanied by another officer, also in plain clothes, most of the inhabitants were already stirring, busy preparing for the day's campaign. Some were mixing their ice in tubs, stirring the mixture with great pieces of wood, and some were going off with their cargo complete. On reaching the house where my couple lodged, we were confronted in the doorway by a stout dirty-looking Italian who was the landlord—the *padrone*, I think they call him. We stated as our business that we wished to speak to Carlo Andreolotti. The fat man looked at us suspiciously, as though guessing something was wrong; but seeming not to wish to be uncivil, he tapped at the door of the back-parlour, and getting no answer, he tried the handle, but found the room locked, so told us Carlo must be out already on his round. Leaving another officer to watch the neighbourhood, we started on our search, hoping to overtake the musicians.

Finding, by inquiry of constables on the road, that they were before us on their usual route towards Hampstead, we hailed a cab, and presently saw our quarry jogging along with their organ through Kentish Town. We stopped the cab, and getting out, stepped up to the Italian, whom I

tapped on the shoulder, bringing him to a standstill. The woman at first appeared inclined to run; but on second thoughts, she remained quiet, putting on an air of injured innocence. We had no great difficulty in getting them to a police station, where I charged them with being concerned in the burglary at Hendon two nights before. The woman, who took it much more coolly than her husband, said we should all rue the insult put upon her, speaking in very decent English. I noticed that she wore another pair of earrings, which were much plainer and smaller than those I had always before seen her with. After the two were disposed of for the time, the piano-organ was wheeled into the station yard and locked up in a shed.

Getting a search-warrant, my friend and I went to the lodgings near Hatton Garden. The landlord at first demurred about letting us go into the room; but on showing our authority, he made no further bother. As the parlour was locked, we had to force open the door. The room into which we broke was a large old-fashioned apartment, very dirty, the ceiling black with age. There was little in it beside a deal table, decidedly in want of scrubbing, a couple of broken chairs, and in one corner of the floor a mattress and a blanket or two. We looked eagerly into a cupboard, but found only a few cups and basins, some macaroni in a dish, and a rusty old lamp. Though we examined the place thoroughly, we could find nothing else but dirt; so, terribly disappointed, we at last gave up the search.

On going out of the room, we were met in the passage by a crowd of Italians, who had evidently been looking through the keyhole during our hunt. They made way for us to pass, but kept up a chorus of what seemed to me uncomplimentary remarks.

When we got into the street I felt rather at a loss how to proceed, for I had only the earring and my suspicions to go upon, and was quite at sea as to the whereabouts of the jewels. Taking leave of my companion, as he had another engagement, I walked moodily and out of spirits to the police station where my Italians were locked up.

All at once it struck me that I might as well have a look at the piano-organ, so, getting the key of the shed from the inspector in charge, I proceeded to examine it. It was an ordinary-looking instrument on a low truck, with a box near the handles. This contained nothing of consequence, so I took off the waterproof cover and carefully inspected the case, but could find nothing unusual about it. I was shaking my head over my want of success, when I happened to notice that the green baize which covered the back was rather loose, and that some of the tacks which fastened it to the frame were missing. Something impelled me to look behind it; so, taking hold of one corner of the baize, I gave it a smart pull, and it came away easily from the woodwork for a foot or more from the bottom, exposing a deal panel. I rapped this with my knuckles, on which it gave out a hollow sound; so, going on my knees, to get more readily at it, I pulled out a knife, and commenced prising at the panel. At that moment the inspector came into the shed, and seeing me busy, asked if I had found anything. I succeeded at length in wrenching off the piece of wood on

which I was working, and disclosed a space between it and the real back of the organ. Wheeling the instrument to the light in the doorway, the inspector and I looked inquisitively into the cavity, and discovered a small parcel wrapped in a handkerchief. With trembling hands I unfolded this, and also a piece of cotton-wool inside, and disclosed a number of brooches, rings, and bracelets, evidently of great value, and a diamond necklace, which I knew from description to be the one stolen from Hampstead.

This lucky find did the business for the Italians, who were committed for trial at the next sessions. When the day came and the case began, it was astonishing to note the difference in the bearing of the two prisoners. The woman looked defiantly about her, while her husband appeared quite crushed. At the close of the speech for the prosecution he broke down altogether, and then and there made a full confession, throwing all the blame on his wife. He said they had committed the robberies with which they were charged, but that he acted completely under his wife's direction, as she planned the affairs, and was foremost in carrying them out. They had arranged, as soon as the last business had blown over, to dispose of the jewelry abroad, and afterwards to settle down quietly in Italy. Of course the confession made it no lighter for the man, and both the prisoners were sentenced to a long term of penal servitude.

I came in for a good deal of praise for my share in the matter, and, what was much better for me, got promoted. Though, as a member of the force, I was not entitled to claim the reward offered for the recovery of the diamonds, yet Miss Somers was so delighted to get them back, that she made me a handsome present. Ever since then, I've had a liking for piano-organs.

A SUBMARINE BRIDGE.

A proposal recently brought forward by Herr Rudolf Lilljeqvist, a Swedish engineer, for effecting permanent railway communication between Sweden and Copenhagen, merits some notice, as introducing a new mode—never as yet, however, put to the test of actual experience—of carrying a line beneath the sea.

The distance between Elsinore and Helsingborg is about two and a half miles; and the passage is frequently blocked in winter by ice preventing navigation. The cost of an ordinary bridge, which would of necessity have to be carried sufficiently high above sea-level to offer no impediment to vessels, would be prohibitive in a country but sparsely populated and of limited financial resources; whilst the additional strength requisite in the piers to withstand damage to the structure from the floating blocks of ice would add very materially to the estimates.

The proposal put forward is to construct an ordinary girder-bridge of one hundred feet spans, and sink it to such a depth that ample room is left for vessels of the greatest draught to sail over it; the bridge being encased in cylindrical tubes, which exclude the water; the outer skin of the tube being of iron, that inside of steel, the space between being filled with concrete. The tubes enclosing the bridge are to be carried on ordinary caisson piers filled with concrete and spaced

one hundred feet apart, pontoons similar to those so successfully employed in the construction of the Tay Bridge being adopted for founding.

The bridge, which is to carry a single line of railway, with foundation and encasing tubes, but exclusive of the land approaches, is estimated to cost about three-quarters of a million sterling.

The scheme may be described as an ingenious compromise between an ordinary bridge and a tunnel; and it is claimed that it combines the advantages of each, whilst avoiding the attendant drawbacks to the construction, and heavy outlay involved in the execution of either in this particular case.

The general idea, it may be added, is not altogether novel, and has previously been mooted; indeed, some years back a similar method of passing under the Thames was proposed and commenced, some lengths of the encasing tube being actually put in hand. The project, however, was abandoned, owing, it is understood, to financial difficulties, and has never been resuscitated.

THE DIAL'S SHADOW.

Go, Cupid; say to her I love
That roses fall and time is fleeting.
I watch the dial's shadow move,
And wait—and wait—to give her greeting.
For youth is sunshine on the dial,
And love is but an old, old story;
The years may dance with lute and viol—
The shadow moves—so ends their glory!

Go, Cupid, beckon with your wing,
That sweetest chance may waft her hither;
For we must woo, remembering
How fast the roses fall and wither.
And oft the dial long ago,
The pavement sunk with mossy edges,
Saw Youth and Love meet all aglow,
And whisper by the old yew-hedges.

Go, Cupid, tell the maid I prize
How many in the courtyard wandered,
What laughing lips and witching eyes,
In love's delight their beauty squandered!
The ruffs, brocade, and buckled shoes,
How softly down the paths they pattered
With gallants gay in old-world hues,
When crowns and kingdoms little mattered.

Go, Cupid, sleep; your cheek is pale;
And we can woo among the sages;
Romance is but a weary tale
Monotonous from all the ages.

My heart! She comes from yonder door;
And time and shadows flit for ever;
Why, there was never youth before,
And love like ours, oh, never—never!

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C A S T E.

ANY one who gives attention to the subject of Totemism, about which we recently wrote, must be struck with a certain analogy which exists between that ancient and curious custom and the institution of Caste. We propose, therefore, to say a few words about the latter.

Although the word caste is a comparatively modern one, that is to say, not older than the sixteenth century—for it is taken from the term *casta*, applied by the Portuguese settlers to the classes of Hindus in India—the institution is to be traced back as far as human history extends. Plato gives us a glimpse of it in the dawn of the Athenian commonwealths, and in the five hereditary grades of priests, handicraftsmen, shepherds, ploughmen, and soldiers. Prescott found a similar division in Peru; and there is a suggestion of the same kind of thing in ancient Mexico. In the South Sea islands, at anyrate in Fiji and Tonga, there are hereditary crafts; and the totems of the Indians and the Australian aborigines may be called caste forms.

Caste is believed to have existed among the ancient Persians and among the Assyrians; but in olden times it reached its highest development in Egypt, as in modern times it has reached its highest development in India. All nations have a trace of it more or less marked, whether it be the Patrician and Plebeian of old Rome and mediæval Venice, or the aristocratic 'Wholesales' and 'Retired Retails' of Clapham, who, as Mrs Caudle observes, never visit each other.

The essential characteristic of caste is that it is not a mere arbitrary division into classes, but betokens hereditary rank and social position. Its analogy with totemism rests in the limitation which it places on marriage, as we shall shortly see. In fact, a caste is as clearly defined a clan or community of people as is a totem. There is a system of caste in Madagascar, and also in Ceylon; but we will confine our attention to India, where it exists in the most highly developed and complicated form.

Totemism, as we have seen, is based partly on social, partly on political, and partly on religious foundations. Its marriage system is exogamous,—that is to say, members of a totem may not intermarry, but must seek partners in some other authorised totem. Caste as at present existing in India is partly a religious and partly a social system; but its marriage laws are endogamous—that is to say, a member of a caste must marry within the caste, or be ostracised. Sir Roper Lethbridge says that the Hindu caste can be most accurately described as a social system maintained and enforced by a strong religious sanction. 'A Hindu caste,' he says, 'consists of a number of families—sometimes of an immense number of families—scattered about in various parts of the country, some very poor, and others very rich, but all presumably more or less nearly related to each other, and all governed by the same rules as regards marriage and all other religious and social observances. Caste-fellows alone—with very few insignificant exceptions—can eat together, or enjoy the close social intimacy that in other communities sometimes exists between friendly families. On the other hand, the caste rules are absolutely binding on all members of the caste, and the wretched man who breaks these rules and is expelled from his caste becomes a person without a friend or an associate in the world, a social felon, for no other caste—not even the lowest—will receive him.'

The Hindu caste system is based on the Laws of Manu, the son of Brahma. Those Institutes are said to embrace all that relates to human life, the history of the world and of man, the nature of God and of evil spirits, and a complete system of morals, government, and religion. This comprises, as Sir William Jones has said, a system of despotism and priestcraft, yet distinguished withal by the remarkable rigour and purity of its morals. The close resemblance of many of the maxims to the precepts of Christianity has been noted not merely in the style of thought but also in the actual form of expression.

But what we are concerned with just now is the

feature in the Laws of Manu which bears on the caste system. In these Laws, four distinct castes are defined: (1) The Brahmans, or priest caste, for whom and whose good it came to be thought that all other persons and things were made. (2) The Kshatriya, or military caste. (3) The Vaisya, or industrial caste; and (4), the Sudra, or servile caste. The first three were called also the 'Twice-born,' and all three were distinguished for the contempt and hatred with which they regarded the lowest or Sudra caste. Both the military and the industrial castes are now practically extinct.

What is to be seen in India to-day is a vast confusion of castes, due to the lowering of some, the raising of others, the intermixture of the higher castes, and the creation of innumerable new divisions. The present Hindu custom, however, forbids absolutely marriage between persons of the same *gotra*, or kindred, and technically between persons of different castes.

The Brahmans are now divided into ten great sects; but there are many more distinctions among them. The Rajputs now number five hundred and ninety separate tribes in different parts of India. The descendants of the old industrial caste are no longer confined to husbandry, but are the merchants and bankers of the country. The Sudras alone retain their original position of degradation.

'There is,' Sir William Hunter observes, 'a plasticity as well as a rigidity in caste. Its plasticity has enabled caste to adapt itself to widely separated stages of social progress, and to incorporate the various ethnical elements which make up the Indian people. Its rigidity has given strength and permanence to the corporate body thus formed. Hinduism is internally loosely coherent, but it has great powers of resistance to external pressure. Each caste is to some extent a trade guild, a mutual assurance society, and a religious sect. As a trade-union it insists on the proper training of the youth of its craft, regulates the wages of its members, deals with trade delinquents, and promotes good-fellowship by social gatherings. The famous fabrics of medieval India, and the chief local industries in our own day, were developed under the supervision of caste or trade guilds of this sort. Such guilds may still be found in many parts of India, but not always with the same complete development.'

Still, the trade guilds of the cities and the village communities throughout the country act, with caste, as mutual assurance societies, and virtually take the place of a poor-law system in India, for they allow none of their number to starve if help be within their power.

There are both rewards and punishments in caste. If a man behaves well, he may rise to an honoured post in his order. If he offends its rules, he may be punished in various ways, and for grievous offences may be excommunicated. This last punishment is threefold. It debar the man from eating with the members of his caste; it interdicts him from marriage within the caste, and as he cannot marry in any other, it shuts him up from respectable marriage of any kind: and it cuts him off from the services of the barber, the washerman, and other tradespeople of the community, as well as from those of the priest. He may be taken back again on pay-

ment of a fine and after proper purification; or he may be compelled to remain an outcast all his life.

There is only one thing which all the castes possess alike in common—this is the tuft of hair on the crown of the head, which is the 'index of Hinduism,' and by which the wearer is to be raised to heaven. But the three great castes have also 'the sacred cord' to distinguish them, which is bestowed in the eighth year upon a Brahman, in the eleventh year upon a Kshatriya, and in the twelfth year upon a Vaisya.

All Brahmans are not priests, but all priests are Brahmans. This caste claims the most exalted attributes, and according to the Manu scripture, is superior to law, even to moral law, when it interferes with his interests. A Brahman may not live as a hired servant, but he may take the property of a Sudra. A proper gift to a Brahman on a deathbed, will, it is said, secure heaven to a malefactor; and the Brahman who receives a present from a member of another caste confers a favour on the donor. The exaggerated honours originally allowed to the Brahmans are no longer allowed except among the lowest orders; yet the Brahman still retains a sort of sacred character, and is regarded with admiration, if not with veneration, by the other castes. In theory, at any rate, he retains his supremacy; and there are parts of India still where low-caste people account it an honour to take the dust off the feet of a Brahman and to place it on their heads, and even to drink the water in which the feet of the Twice-born have been washed.

But there are degrees of sanctity and grades of rank even among the select Brahmans, for there are some twenty-five sects of this privileged caste. The Brahmans of Mysore, for instance, look down with contempt upon the Brahmans of Benares. Some of their subdivisions will not eat or intermarry with the members of other subdivisions; and others again, notably in Calcutta, quite openly violate the laws of their order. For instance, they are forbidden in the sacred writings to eat beef, drink wine, wear shoes made of cow-hide, or sit down to table with men of inferior caste, or of no caste at all like Europeans. Yet many eminent Brahman gentlemen in the cities now do all these things without losing, as they would once have done, their place in Hindu society. Then, again, in the old days, young men who went to visit foreign countries and ventured to England had to subject themselves to severe penance before they could be reinstated in their caste; but now, in most of the Brahman sects, a Hindu may do pretty much as he pleases short of receiving Christian baptism. Of course *that* ostracises him at once.

We have said that all Brahmans are not priests, and also that, according to the Laws of Manu, no Brahman can be a hired servant. Yet, as a matter of fact, they are to be found occupying positions as clerks, schoolmasters, physicians, engineers, and shopkeepers, &c. But while the caste-wall has thus far been broken down, there is less intermarriage between the castes than there was in the days of Manu. The reason is that then the punishment fell upon the children, but now it falls upon the offenders themselves.

According to the census of 1881, there were about one hundred different castes in Bengal alone.

In all India there were 10,546,735 Brahmans, 5,788,735 Rajputs (or Kshatriyas), and 128,540,380 of the miscellaneous and mixed castes. To come back to Bengal—we learn from the Census Report that there are thirty castes which are represented in every province and in every village. To run over these will give a sufficient idea of the ramifications of the system.

The Brahman, of course, must be found wherever there is a temple; and the Rajput will be found in secular alliance with the service. Then, wherever there are a few houses clustered together will be found the Banirja, or money-lender. The Teli caste supplies the oilman, and the Barbi the carpenter, without which no village can get along. The cobbler, who also skins the carcasses of the cattle, is a Chamar; the washerman is a Dhobi; the barber is a Nاپit; and the scavenger is a Dom. Besides these castes are represented, Karmakar, the blacksmith; Kumbhar, the potter; Madak and Kandu, the confectioners, who make up the farinaceous food of the people; Sunri, the wine-seller; Barni and Tamoli, who prepare and sell the pan-leaf and betel-nut; Tanti and Jugi, weavers; and Mali, the flower and vegetable dealer. These are the artisans of the community; and the agriculturists are Kaibarthas; the cow-keepers are Gwalla; the boatmen are Mallah; and the fishermen are Tevi. Intercommunication rests with the Kahar, or palkie-bearers. Learning is the province of the Kayastha, who furnish the schoolmaster, the village accountant, and the landlord's secretary or clerk. The day-labourers and field-hands are Bhuinyas and Khawars.

The most respectable families of Calcutta belong to the Pir Ali subdivision of the Brahmans; and the origin of this sub-caste is thus related by Mr Wilkins: 'Years ago, one of their ancestors went to the house of a Mussulman law officer, where a trick was played upon him. The Mussulman had heard it said that "to smell food was half-eating it," and in the wish to convert some of the Brahmans in his neighbourhood, he invited them to his house, and whilst they were seated there, he ordered his dinner to be served. They smelt the food, and their caste was gone—so it was decided. Some of them became Mussulmans; but one, who preferred to remain a Hindu, though his caste was injured, became the founder of another class, called the Pir Ali, after the man who had played the trick upon him.'

That caste is still regarded as a divine institution by the lower orders is, of course, well known; and the strictly orthodox will prefer death to eating forbidden food or doing anything contrary to the tenets of their particular caste. The result is one involving great expense and inconvenience to Europeans, who are obliged to have a great number of servants for the different departments of domestic arrangements. Thus, if a low-caste servant brings a letter or anything, the superior-caste servant will not take it from his hands or touch it simultaneously with him: it must be laid on the ground and taken up thence by the superior one. In fact, the orthodox Hindu will not join in any work whatever in which Sweepers or low-caste men are employed. No doubt, however, caste difficulties are often conveniently interposed when a man doesn't want to do something which is asked of him.

The Caste system is the great obstacle to the

material progress of the country. Until it is broken down, India can never take her rightful place among the nations, for she cannot be a nation in the true sense of the term. Like totemism, in short, Caste is a relic of barbarism, but also an evolution of barbarism struggling towards light. Both systems have had their uses, and both systems have left their marks, even in the most civilised and enlightened communities.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ONE fine afternoon Cecilia had put on her bonnet and was leaving the house by the front door, when her father presented himself at the gate and barred her egress for the moment. They were not on as perfect terms of friendship as they had used to be, and the girl knew that her father watched her outgoings and incomings with a suspicious jealousy. So, when he cocked his eye at her with a marked aspect of inquiry, as careful robins eye the delver's toil, Cecilia blushed faintly, not because she was thinking anything at that moment of the forbidden theme, but because she read the suspicion of her father's look. The farmer thought the blush ominous, understanding very little of woman, and spoke his mind straight-way.

'Where are you going to?' he opened gruffly.

'Mrs Day was here last night,' began Cecilia, rather tremulously.

'I didn't ask you who was here last night,' returned her father, 'nor who wasn't here last night. I asked you where you was going to.'

'I was going to tell you, father,' Cecilia responded meekly. 'Mrs Day was here yesterday, and told me that poor little Lydia has been very unwell, and I promised to go up this afternoon and see her.'

'Ah!' said the farmer; 'and I suppose you're none the slacker in going because 'Zaiah Winter lives close by?—Look here, Cecilia; it's not a bit o' good you letting your mouth water over that young Frenchman. You'll never get him to a husband as long as I'm alive.—Now, don't tell me. I know the meaning of them bits of ribbon and them pretty gloves. Lures to catch geese, they be.'

'Father!' cried Cecilia, on the point of tears, 'you are very cruel. I wonder how you can find the heart to say such things. You used not to be like this.'

'No,' said Shorthouse; 'I *have* been a fool i' my time, to be sure. I used not to be like this, nor anything like it; but I'm like it now, and I'm going to continue like it, and that you may mek up your mind to.'

At this Cecilia began to cry outright and to mop her pretty eyes with her handkerchief.

'My wench,' said papa, a little mollified by this sign of his own victory, as he construed it, 'I've about as much notion of being a cruel father to thee as I have o' cuttin' my own nose off. Thee knowest that as well as I can tell thee. But I'm

a long way off from bein' blind yet, and I've seen the pair on ye makin' eyes at one another—in church, above all places in the world! Now, that's a thing as I'm determined to mek a hend of. Understand me now. I'll have no carryings-on wi' that young foreigner; and to put it in a word, I forbid you to speak to him.'

'If he speaks to me, father,' sobbed Cecilia.

'If he speak to thee,' said Shorthouse, 'thee canst give him a civil good-mornin', or a civil good-hafternoon or hevenin', as the case may be.—Now I've spoke my mind in the matter, and I look to have to say no more about it. Theer's nothin' to cry about, as far as I can see; but afore you go out, I want your promise. Will you do as I tell you?'

'Yes, father,' said the unfortunate Cecilia.

'That's all right,' said the farmer; 'and now, thee canst dry thine eyes and go about thy business.'

He walked into the house secure of victory, and left Cecilia still crying a little on the garden path. Perhaps Cecilia did not take him quite *au grand sérieux*. Perhaps she relied vaguely on time, or firmly on her lover to bring about some change in the aspect of affairs. Perhaps she was even undutiful enough to have a mind of her own in the matter. Anyway, it is certain that in less time than might have been expected she had dried her eyes, and that in a little while she was walking towards Farmer Day's new house with a decidedly resolute step, and an occasional carriage of the figure which betokened at least an inclination towards resistance.

The child's indisposition would have seemed to be anything but serious, for she was already planted in a wicker armchair on the lawn in front of the house. She wore a cottage bonnet, and was shaded from the sun by a high privet hedge. She had been trying to cut out patterns from a sheet of white paper, but now lay back in her chair rather listlessly, with the instruments proper to that undertaking in her lap. Cecilia kissed the child, and kneeling by her, strove for a little while to draw her into conversation; but whether the small patient were languid or perverse, or simply disinclined to talk, as more elderly invalids might have been, the girl had no success with her, and in a while entered the house to make a call of friendly ceremony upon Mrs Day. That good woman had entered into rivalry with the wife of her husband's partner, and would not allow Mrs Isaiah Winter to own anything of which she herself had not a *replica*. She was a person of no originality, and being compelled, therefore, to follow Mrs Isaiah's lead, had contrived to make the two houses so alike that a visitor might well have mistaken one for the other. In each establishment there was the same glacial show of unwrinkled horsehair, the same shiny mahogany legs to the table, the same brass-bound, brass-knobbed mahogany chests of drawers, the same all-pervading odour of French-polish. Mrs Day carried her rivalry further, and dressed after Mrs Winter, with this difference, that what the latter lady wore only on occasions of ceremonial, the former sported always of an afternoon; and at any time after the one o'clock dinner, Mrs Day's black silk was in evidence to prove to the haphazard caller that its wearer had become a lady.

The odour of the French-polish was a little overmastering, in spite of the fact that the windows of the best parlour were open on the little lawn, whence there flowed in a far more agreeable perfume of rose and honeysuckle and wholesome country air. Cecilia sat near the window, almost within hand's-reach of the child on the lawn below, and there talked uninteresting nothings with feminine vivacity with the mistress of the house. Suddenly she heard a click at the outer gate, and then a voice from the garden seemed to send all her blood to her heart.

'Aha!' said Jousserau—for of course his was the only voice which could so have disturbed her—'the leetel Lydia!—the poor leetel Lydia. She has not been well. Oh, that is too plain to see. Where is it, the pretty red that was in the cheeks? We must have it back again, the pretty red. We must have it back quickly.—You will give me a kiss?—No? That is for that I smell of cigarettes.—What do we do here? We cut shapes from paper? Oh, that is where I am clever; that is where I am at my best. Now you shall see what you shall see.'

Cecilia, with a fluttering heart, peeped round the curtain, drawing it aside by a mere fraction of an inch with a gloved finger-tip. Jousserau had seated himself on the dry smooth turf beside the child's chair, and with that bright and charming smile which became him so sweetly to the watcher's eyes, was holding out his hand for the scarred sheets of paper which lay in Lydia's lap. The young patient was interested already, and with parted lips and solemn eyes she handed the sheets to her companion.

'Ah!' said Jousserau, rejecting the scissors the child proffered, 'when one is great artist he must have fine tools. I shall use my own scissors.—There! Saw you ever any like these?' He took from his pocket a pair of folding scissors in a small morocco sheath. These he opened and adjusted before Miss Lydia's wondering eyes, and having brandished them with a preliminary flourish, folded one of the sheets of paper into an intricate form, and began here and there to snip at it with an exaggerated care and delicacy, looking up at the child-patient every now and again with that swift and vivid smile.

Mrs Day, who at the moment of Jousserau's arrival had been entertaining her guest with a discourse on the value of the herb hoarhound, sunk her voice to a confidential whisper at his coming; and Cecilia, who nodded now and again, and now and again raised her eyebrows, seemed to make a most excellent listener, though she heard not a single word with understanding. Through the little crevice between the blind and the window-frame she kept a constant lookout on her sweetheart, who, having cut and snipped away with great industry for a minute or two, now began delicately to unfold the paper. There upon it was a tree and a church spire and a goose or other bird of abnormal proportions, dominating the horizon, and a small boy behind the bird holding his arms in the air. That this wonder might be observed the better, Jousserau took off the black soft felt hat he wore and laid the filigree-work against it. The patient clapped her tiny hands together with a laugh.

'Dear me!' cried the mother withindoors,

'there's our Lydia a-laughin', I declare!' She moved to the window to see what had provoked the child's outbreak of merriment.—'Come here, my dear,' she cried, 'and see what Mr Jousserong's cut out of paper to please the child.'

'Sh!' said Cecilia, raising a finger to her lips and assuming a frown of warning.

Jousserau looked up at Mrs Day, and nodded to her in salutation. 'She wants to be inter-ested,' he said, nodding again towards Lydia.—'Look! She has her roses back already.'

'I've been trying to cut a pig,' said the child poutingly. 'Can you cut a pig? This is nothing like it.' She held up an ill-shaped barrel on two pegs, with a curved spout, probably meant to represent the porker's tail, projecting from one end. Jousserau took his orders gravely, and carved the required object with so much dexterity that the child shrieked applause.

'What is it, my dear?' asked Mrs Day, approaching her visitor and speaking in a covert whisper. 'Don't you want the young man to know you're here?'

'No,' said Cecilia, in great distress at the question. 'He mustn't know. Oh, please, don't ask me anything.'

The hostess's face was full of questions, and Cecilia saw it; but she had misread her woman very much indeed if she supposed that any mere plea for silence would persuade her to stifle her curiosity.

'Why, my darlin',' whispered Mrs Day, who had as good a nose for romance as any of her neighbours, and was ready to scent a love-affair anywhere, 'I thought you'd got quite a kindness for the young man. It's true as he's a foreigner, but that's a thing as he can't help—for none on us can choose wer birthplace, nor yet wer parents, or else we might be kings and queens o' England and Great Britain, the wull lot o' us; which 'ud be clean against the meaning o' Providence, because some must command and some obey. There's 'Zaiah Winter, always in a state o' wonderment about the cleverness in the young Frenchman's fingers. 'Zaiah's always been a truthful man; and seeing as he's now my husband's partner, I should be loth to say a word agen him; but yet there's hardly any believing the tales he tells about the money that young man can earn. For my own part, I don't see no harm in foreigners; if it wasn't proper as there should be foreigners, the Lord wouldn't allow 'em; and theerfor, my darlin', to talk agen 'em is a-flying in the face o' Providence, which is a thing I never could abide.'

'Isn't there a back-way from the house?' Cecilia asked, in growing distress at Mrs Day's open innuendoes. 'Can't I get away without his seeing me?'

'No; that indeed you can't, my dear,' Mrs Day returned. 'Nor yet do I see why you should do so neither. The young man don't bite, I reckon; and a virtuous and right-minded female can always be her own protection. The young man won't stop long a-talking to a infant like our Lydia; though I must say he's got a rare kind heart, and a face like sunshine, though his complexion's swarthy. I'm told as it's the sun as does that, which is a thing as stands to nature; for I've seen our John that burnt after three days in the harvest-field you wouldn't know

him, with the skin on the tip o' his nose wrinkled up like shavings, or like the hend o' a young bit o' celery.'

'I must stay till he goes,' said Cecilia. Then, not because she was an atom more deceptive than her sex commonly is, but in mere maidenly instinct of self-protection: 'You mustn't think there's anything between us, Mrs Day; but my father doesn't like Mr Jousserau, and he has told me not to speak to him.'

'Oh, drat these men!' cried the elder woman; 'they've come to the bottom o' my patience years ago. A man as has got no grown-up experienced woman to manage him, like your father, and to fettle him up as he ought to be fettled, why, his head gets to be like a parlour as is never sweep, as full of spider-webs as it can hold.'

The good woman pumped Cecilia in emphatic inquiry, and Cecilia answered evasively, or answered not at all. All the while Jousserau had been chattering in his simple halting English to the child, and Cecilia had better ears for his good-humoured and amiable nonsense than she had for nonsense of another sort. The artist's very voice had suddenly grown dear to her, and to hear him speak was a pleasure. This was the first result of her father's British wisdom of outspokenness; and if that capable farmer and excellent man had only known as much as his daughter could have told him, he might have adopted a different method with her. The course of true love never did run smooth, and the laughter-loving deity who presides over the affairs of courtship may well take pride in the truth of the adage. The seeming unattainable is always the desirable. Bluntly to say, 'You shall not have,' is with ninety folk in a hundred equivalent to saying, 'You shall desire.' The thing given never looks so worth having as the thing withheld.

'All the paper is gone,' said Jousserau; 'and here, this is quite a garden of hearts. He is a good elephant.—What? See his curled trunk and his one leg in the air. The tail of the pig does curl as nice as his best friend could desire that it should curl.—Ah! you are sad again and tired again. Now you should not be sad or tired. If I had my fiddle, I would play to you, and you should sing a leetle. You sing so very pretty, my nice child.—Not? But my poor fiddle—he is miles and miles away.'

'There is grandfather's fiddle in the house,' said the child with a new eagerness. 'I should like to hear some music.—Do you know new tunes?'

'Yes, yes,' said the kindly little man; 'and old tunes that you do not know. Shall I play to you? That will be pleasure to me. I have not played this long while.—Here is mamma again at the window.—Shall I play, Madame Day, for your leetle girl? She says to me that there is in the house a fiddle.'

'I'll hand it out to you this minute,' said Mrs Day, in spite of Cecilia's beseeching gestures, which she feigned not to see.

Two or three minutes later, Jousserau was playing old Provençal airs, and the little Lydia's bird-like voice was roaring excitedly in repetition of them.

'Mother,' cried the child suddenly, 'make Cecilia come. She likes to hear me sing. I will sing her a new tune. Make Cecilia come.'

The mother frowned, winked, and nodded; and

these signs made Jousserau's mere guess a certainty. 'Mees Shorthouse is here?' he said, rising from his seat upon the turf.

'Yes,' responded Mrs Day; 'but we're busy talkin', and you mustn't interfere with us.—Go on with your music.'

'I must go,' said Cecilia, whispering from behind the blind; 'I must go at once.'

She ran precipitately from the parlour, but hesitated in the hall. Jousserau, by some fine lover's instinct, caught the rustle of her dress, and differentiating it from all other possible rustles of all other possible dresses, handed the bow and the violin to the child, and walked to the flight of well-whitened steps which led to the doorway. There he saw her, shrinking and blushing in the hall.

'Good afternoon, Mees Shorthouse,' he said humbly, raising his hat as he spoke.

She found a sudden courage, and ran nimbly down the steps. 'Good afternoon, Mr Jousserau,' she said. 'I am going home.'

'I have business that way,' Jousserau responded. There was no actual deceit in this, though he made his business on the spur of the moment, and it was neither more nor less than to walk with Cecilia.

'Good afternoon, Mr Jousserau,' she said, stammering and blushing and holding out her hand. 'I must go at once.'

'Pardon!' he said. 'There is something the matter.'

Her flushing cheek, her fluttering bosom, and the humid eyes which for a mere second begged him not to think unkindly of her, seemed suddenly to speak the truth to him.

'Permit,' he said, 'that I go no more than twenty yards with you.'

She, answering nothing, but suddenly turning pale and beginning to tremble, he opened the gate and stood hat in hand for her to pass. Then he followed her into the lane and took a place at her side.

'Am I an impertinent,' he asked, 'if I guess what has arrived?'

'Pray, let me go, Mr Jousserau,' Cecilia pleaded—'let me go alone.' Her eyes spoke differently, if ever eyes spoke in the world. 'Do not think ill of me.'

'I have not very well understood your father,' said the little man, bracing himself at last; 'but from what he has said to me, I have stayed from your house. Has he told you now that I am not to speak to you—that you are not to speak to me?'

'Yes,' said Cecilia, with the same beseeching look. 'I cannot help it.—Pray, come no farther.'

'Mees Shorthouse,' said Jousserau, baring his head once more and speaking slowly, but with a resolute though tremulous voice, 'obedience to a parent is a sacred duty to a child. I will say nothing, not one word to change you. If you say to me, "Go away, and do not seek to change my father's mind," I will go away, and you shall see me never more. But if you do not tell me that—I will—I must—do what I can to change it. May I try?'

Cecilia said not a word, but looked at him half in despair and half in hope, and altogether in a girlish shyness and confusion.

'I will try if you do not tell me no,' he said.

He held out his hand, and she took it in her own for an instant with downcast eyes; then without a word she moved away.

'That is "Yes,"' said Jousserau.

HOW ANIMALS ARE STUFFED.

THE art of taxidermy, since its invention—or perhaps it would be more correct to say its restoration—one hundred and fifty years ago, has made such considerable advance, while its details are so little known to the general public, that perhaps a few particulars concerning it may not be devoid of interest.

We will suppose that a snake has been sent to the taxidermist to be stuffed and mounted. In former times, snakes were commonly skinned by the operator making an incision in the skin of the stomach; but this method is now confined to the treatment of the larger reptiles. In dealing with small snakes, the taxidermist opens the reptile's mouth, and, with a pointed pair of scissors, cuts downwards as far as possible, taking care not to push the scissors through the skin. When the neck is free, the cut portion is forced outwards through the mouth, and the reptile literally 'turned inside out' as far down its body as the tenacity of the flesh will permit. When the end of the tail is reached, an incision becomes necessary, as it is not possible, from the inside, to detach the flesh from this portion of the animal's body. The skin is then restored, after being subjected to a preservative treatment; and the eyes having been removed, the snake-skin is ready for stuffing. This is accomplished by inserting a funnel in the reptile's mouth and pouring in dry sand or plaster of Paris sufficient to bring out the carcass to its normal rotundity. The snake is afterwards adjusted to the required position, and the head properly modelled with clay or plaster. Large snakes such as boas are skinned in the old fashion, and sawdust substituted for sand-stuffing.

In dealing with fish, a more elaborate and tedious process is necessary. The interior of the fish having been removed, a thick piece of looped wire is prepared, and this, with a couple of supplementary wires, forms an excellent substitute for a backbone. The wire having been wrapped round with paper and the framework padded out with tow until it resembles as nearly as possible the shape which it is intended to imitate, the skin of the fish is brought over the wire and the edges sewn neatly together. The shape is afterwards perfected by adding pieces of tow where requisite, and filling out with sawdust or bran. The fish is then arranged neatly on its showboard, and the outside of the skin treated with a carbolic preparation. After remaining for a month or so to dry, the skin is coloured to resemble nature, the eyes are put in, and the 'subject' having been artistically mounted and set off with water-weed, &c., the completed specimen of natural history is ready for inspection.

When large fish, such as sharks, have to be dealt with, the treatment resorted to is entirely different from that applied to piscatorial specimens of a smaller type. With the larger kinds a solidly constructed wood and iron frame is neces-

sary; and with those of medium size—say from three to five hundredweight—an iron bar requires to be fitted into the body to secure the requisite support. The body is afterwards stuffed with hay or clean shavings until it assumes a natural shape.

Lions, tigers, and similar large animals are often mounted in England from the 'flat;' in other words, the practical taxidermist imitates the natural appearance of the animal with only his skin to work upon. There is no skeleton—the skin having probably been sent home from abroad—and the operator is required to construct a lion or tiger with only the skin of the original remaining. To accomplish this difficult task, the skin is placed on the floor, and a tracing made on paper of the necessary proportions of the 'body-board.' On this body-board are fastened a strong rod for the neck and a similar one for the tail. The ribs are imitated in wood, and laths tacked on to make the framework capable of being filled out to the necessary shape. The laths are afterwards covered with straw or plaster, and clay is finally added. The legs are modelled with the assistance of plaster, tow, and clay, the tail properly arranged, the skull, or, in its absence, the plaster head, placed in position, and the skin neatly fastened over all.

In smaller animals, such as the fox, more delicate treatment is required. The fox's skin being remarkable for its thinness, requires very careful management; and though the operation is not so delicate as in the case of a bird, considerable care must be exercised if the 'mount' is not to be spoiled. When the flesh has been detached and the skin treated with a preservative, stuffing begins. First, the head is attended to, and tow is pushed into the cavities from which the flesh has been removed. Looped wires are inserted in the body and legs, and the natural shape filled out with tow. In stuffing such an animal as a fox the limbs require the greatest attention, as there is more 'character' to be obtained from their efficient modelling than from any other portion of the body. The shape fairly completed, the skin is sewn up, artificial eyes inserted, and the necessary finishing touches added to complete the mount.

Birds, which constitute perhaps the most numerous class of stuffed specimens, are not so easily manipulated as the unruffled character of their exterior when mounted in the conventional glass case would seem to suggest. Take a hawk, for instance. The mouth and nostrils of the bird are first filled with cotton, the flesh gradually and carefully removed from the body; and when this has been accomplished—by a method a description of which would only be understood by the initiated—the body is stuffed with cotton or tow, the stuffing being so adjusted that the exact shape of the bird as it appeared when alive is maintained. The eyes are afterwards inserted—the eyelids having been relaxed by the application of warm water—and the bird is ready for appropriate mounting. Taxidermists differ in their choice of an artificial formation for the body of birds. The well-known naturalist, Charles Waterton, discarded wires entirely and used cotton only. Modern taxidermists, however, mount birds with wire and shape with tow. In the case of ostriches and other large birds, peat has been

found a more satisfactory stuffing than anything else.

Pages might be written on the methods resorted to to realise a resemblance to nature in other defunct animals; but the details would probably be found too dry for the non-professional reader. One further illustration of taxidermic skill may, however, be recorded—the stuffing of an elephant. This is a task the magnitude of which is easily recognisable, the enormous size of the animal necessitating hard work as well as taxidermic skill. A good many years ago, the body of an elephant underwent the operation of stuffing in Paris, and from the recorded account, the experiment must have been an exceedingly interesting one. The elephant's corpse having been duly 'laid out,' the necessary measurements were made—the curves of the back, &c., being taken with bars of lead. The animal was then skinned, an operation which occupied several persons for four days. The skin (weighing five hundred and seventy-six pounds) was placed in a large tub and covered with powdered alum; then a fictitious frame—a wooden elephant, in fact—was constructed, and in due time the skin was taken from the tub and placed on the frame. It was then found that the wooden elephant was too big for his clothes, as the skin would not entirely cover the frame. For four days, five persons were employed in thinning the skin; and the shreds which they cut off—from the inside, of course—were found to weigh one hundred and ninety-four pounds. The paring process answered the purpose. This time the 'clothes' fitted, and ere long the hollow elephant looked as natural as the art of taxidermy could make him.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER IV.

'You know what your grandmother did to-day, Kate?' her father said calmly.

'She told me she had altered her will, papa, but didn't say how.'

'Did she say nothing more about it?'

'She only said that you should never complain that she encouraged me in disobedience. I don't know what she meant, but she told us so.'

'Us?' growled Mr Dottleson. 'Who else heard her say so?'

'Dr Lakeworth was there, papa.'

'He knows all about it,' snarled her father.

'I was in granny's room all the time he was there, but she didn't mention it to him at all.'

'I daresay not. But mark my words, Kate: there's a very good understanding between your grandmother and Mr Lakeworth.'

Kate did not feel called upon to make any reply, and Mr Dottleson resumed. 'Since Sir Alfred took upon himself to place Mrs Lamshed in this fellow's hands, I can't prohibit his coming here; but when your grandmother has gone, he will never see the inside of my house again.'

He had not considered that his daughter would not be aware of the old lady's condition, and only sought to impress upon her that she must dismiss Charles Lakeworth from her thoughts.

'I hope there is time enough to think about that, then, papa.'

'A few days, I believe. Sir Alfred gives her until the end of the week. To-day's Wednesday.'

His rage and disappointment had made him utterly callous, and his daughter heard him with a feeling of repulsion she had never known before. He left her before she fully realised the meaning of his words, and when it came home to her, she forgot all else in the blow which had fallen upon her. It would be a terrible loss to her. Mrs Lamshed had done much to replace the mother who had been taken from her in her infancy, and Mr Dottleson, for ever absorbed in the cares of business, had sadly neglected his duty as a father. Now the fiat had gone forth: she was to be deprived of her best friend and her lover in a few days. She could not save the first; but Kate made up her mind there and then about the second: no power on earth should separate them without Charles Lakeworth's consent, and she knew that that was not likely to be given. She would say nothing to her father for the present; it would only increase his troubles; and though she was far from feeling any sympathy with him, she shrank from adding fuel to the fire which blazed so fiercely already.

Thursday morning broke wet and windy. Mrs Lamshed was visibly sinking, and Kate could not hide from herself that even the brief span of life given by Sir Alfred was likely to be too long. Charles Lakeworth came in early, and his first glance at Kate showed him that she knew the truth.

'Who told you?' he asked in a whisper.

'Papa did, last night,' she answered.

The old lady, who had been lying half asleep, was roused by his appearance at the bedside, and made an effort to sit up. Kate understood her movement; and with Lakeworth's assistance made her comfortable with pillows in the position she seemed to desire. She remained silent for a few minutes, as though endeavouring to remember something she wanted to say, and at last spoke: 'Call your father, Kate.'

Mr Dottleson's strident voice was audible in the passage below, demanding the immediate production of his umbrella; he was just on the point of leaving for business, and Kate lost no time in running down to him. 'Papa, wait a minute. Granny has just asked for you.'

'I'll see her this evening; I'm late as it is.'

'But, father, please come now; it may be too late this evening.'

Mr Dottleson threw down his hat, and followed his daughter up-stairs, muttering something about 'morbid nervousness.' He was smarting sorely under the recollection of yesterday, and had not intended to pay more attention to his mother-in-law than common decency demanded of him. His manner softened when he entered the room and took his stand at the foot of the bed, for he saw in her face that she would not detain him long. He spoke as gently as he could; he tried to forget his wrongs for the time, knowing that he was in the presence of Death.

'What can I do for you?' he asked.

Mrs Lamshed did not answer at once; she took Charles Lakeworth's hand in hers and reached with the other for Kate's to place within it as they stood, one on either side of the bed; then laying her own upon them, she raised her eyes to

meet those of her son-in-law. 'Promise,' she said earnestly.

All Mr Dottleson's angry disappointment rushed upon him with uncontrollable power as he grasped her meaning, and the group waited for him to reply. He turned sharply and strode over to the window, whilst the three maintained their position, watching him in silence. He stared steadily out on the dreary square, hardly conscious that he saw anything, engulfed as he was in the storm of conflicting passions which the appeal had roused. What was he to say? He had been taken at a disadvantage, and would not thus be tricked into giving way; he would not make a promise he must regret for the rest of his life to soothe the last hours of one who had treated him so maliciously as Mrs Lamshed. But even in his voiceless rage there awoke within him a feeling of something like envy as he saw the mighty difference between his own narrow-minded sordid nature and that of the dying woman, whose last breath was spent in pleading for the happiness of those she loved. He recalled the time, twenty years ago, when, as a struggling, poverty-stricken clerk, he married Dorothy Lamshed, against the wishes and advice of her parents. Her mother had opposed the union firmly; but when it had taken place in spite of her, she never turned her back upon them in time of need. Then came the days of his success in the world, when Mrs Lamshed had acknowledged her shortsightedness, and made him her heir after Dorothy died. The leading points in his life, in which his wife's mother had borne a part, passed rapidly through his mind, and upon no single act of hers could he lay a reproachful finger, saying, 'This was unjust,' or even 'This was unkind.' Could such a woman have so changed towards him at the eleventh hour? Were his suspicions as to the doings of yesterday wrong, after all? He stole a look round: Charles and Kate still bent across the old lady with hands clasped beneath hers, whilst she looked at him in dumb appealing patience. He would grant this last prayer of hers, almost the only one she had ever made, but under conditions. Obstinate pride, if nothing else, forbade his giving free consent to the marriage after he had declared it to be impossible; he owed it to himself. He came back to his station at the foot of the bed and collected himself to speak, but even while he did so the end came. Mrs Lamshed's hand slid gently from those on which it rested, and the eyes which were watching him so eagerly grew fixed and dull. It was all over—she was dead.

The rain beat fiercely upon the window, and the autumn wind moaned through the leafless branches in the square outside. Within, the three stood mutely round the bed, unwilling to disturb the stillness which had last been broken by the voice they were never to hear again. Presently, Mr Dottleson drew himself up and softly left the room. The real character of the man asserted itself when he was once more alone. 'Just in time,' he murmured in a whisper which had a tinge of awe in it—'just in time.' Had Mrs Lamshed lived only five minutes longer, she would have heard his promise to let his daughter marry Charles Lakeworth as soon as he was satisfied that the income derived from his profession was sufficient to support a wife. Having before him

the dread of Dr Lakeworth inheriting Mrs Lamshed's money, he was determined that his own loss should not be the means of removing his objection. However, fate ordained that he should be unfettered by any such promise, and he assured himself that it would be long before consent was wrung from him, now that he could forbid Charles Lakeworth the house without consulting the feelings of any one else. Kate's did not count—she was barely twenty, and could not be expected to know her own mind yet. At all events, he knew what was best for her, and would exercise his own discretion in a matter so vitally important to her well-being.

'I won't disturb them now,' he reflected cynically; 'they know that the farewell they say to-day will be a long one; and Kate, no doubt, is a good deal upset by her grandmother's death.'

He saw neither his daughter nor her lover again that day, though the latter remained in the house until dark. Had opportunity offered, he would have told the young man what his decision was, and have ordered him to cease all intercourse with Kate from that day forth; but his mind was too full of speculations as to the provisions of Mrs Lamshed's last will, and he was disinclined to go out of his way to add a fresh element of trouble to that which already reigned in the house.

Time dragged slowly by until Monday, when the funeral took place, and Mr Reginald Slimp arrived for the purpose of acquainting Mr Dottleson with the contents of the document he had prepared on the preceding Wednesday, under Mrs Lamshed's instructions. It would be hard to say whether astonishment or delight was predominant in Mr Dottleson's mind when he read the will. His mother-in-law had left her property in trust to himself until the day his daughter Kate should marry with his consent, when it was to be made over to her; the income derived therefrom being set apart for his sole use and behoof until that event should take place. Should Kate marry during her father's lifetime without first obtaining his permission, her wedding day was to be signalled by the transfer of her grandmother's money to the Central Asia Missionary Society, to be devoted to such purposes as the administrators of that institution should see fit. Mr Slimp was the sole executor.

'I see,' said Mr Dottleson, gleefully rubbing his hands. 'The poor old soul thought that I would give way at the very end, and this clause about the missionaries was provided in case I retracted afterwards. Well, well; we needn't say anything more about it, now she's gone; but it will be a long time before a shilling finds its way into Central Asia or anywhere else. She must have been a little touched in the head when she put that in. She might have left me as executor too.'

Foreign Missions were Mr Dottleson's special antipathy, and Mrs Lamshed had borne this in mind when she dictated her will. When in the heat of the moment she ordered the solicitor to be sent for, she contemplated making a far more radical change in its terms than she afterwards thought would be either just or prudent. She had intended to strike out Mr Dottleson's name, and leave all she had unconditionally to Kate; but she reflected that her son-in-law's conduct hardly merited such treatment as this, and that,

moreover, such a step would place him in direct conflict with his only child, by enabling her to defy his authority. Firm in the conviction that her grand-daughter and Charles Lakeworth would remain true to one another, she trusted to Mr Dottleson's better nature to yield to their wishes in time. When he saw that the two were bent upon marriage, it was hardly likely that he would continue his opposition, particularly if the total loss of the estate to the family were made the penalty of discountenance. Her aim was to compel his sanction to a union she had set her heart upon bringing about, and, as we have seen, she was called away in the very act of trying to obtain it.

Mr Dottleson lost little time in placing his veto on Charles Lakeworth's visits after Mrs Lamshed's death. To give him his due, he went about the business with less bluster than might have been expected, for his mother-in-law's will had given him an agreeable surprise, and it made him generous. To use his own expression, he held all the trumps, and could afford to play his hand easily. He took Kate to book first, and with all the delicacy he could command—it was not much—pointed out that as her lover was not just such a man as he could conscientiously approve of, he must request her to give up all communication with him. The attack was a failure. Kate firmly but respectfully declined to throw over the man to whom she had given her promise. Mr Dottleson reminded her that she had no right to make any engagement without obtaining his sanction. Kate admitted that there was truth in this; but called his attention to the fact that he had given Charles Lakeworth permission to come to the house when he declared his attachment, and had never withdrawn it. If that did not justify her action in promising to marry him, she couldn't help it now; she had given her word, and intended to keep it.

Mr Dottleson, very majestically, would be glad to know what she proposed to do. Kate candidly admitted that she proposed to ally herself with Charley as soon as he was in a position to make her his wife, and hoped that her father would not withhold his consent. Mr Dottleson hastened to assure her that he would never permit his child to marry a man who had revealed such a character as Dr Lakeworth in his paltry attempt to impose upon poor Mrs Lamshed. Kate hotly repudiated the insinuation, and any one's right to make it.

Mr Dottleson's knowledge of the world compelled him to adhere to his opinion, and he capped this remark by hinting that when Dr Lakeworth was made acquainted with his objections and the terms of Mrs Lamshed's will, his affection for Kate would probably cool down. Miss Dottleson, who inherited a small share of her father's temper, retorted angrily, that if he thought that, there was no necessity for him to keep them apart.

Mr Dottleson smiled a smile of superior wisdom, and brought the discussion to a close by telling his daughter that he preferred to be on the safe side, and must therefore forbid Dr Lakeworth's visits at Blakewood Square.

To that, Kate had nothing to say; she could not dispute any orders her father pleased to give in his own house, however deeply they affected her. She shrugged her shoulders, and left the

library in silence, to write a long and passionate letter to Charles, telling him the substance of the conversation she had just had with her father, and begging him to name a place where they could meet.

'If I'm not to see him here, I'll see him somewhere else,' thought Kate as she laid down her pen. 'Papa isn't likely to throw away a thousand a year when he sees I'm determined to marry him.'

'She'll soon get over it,' mused papa as he climbed into the City omnibus that morning. 'She isn't likely to throw away a thousand a year in hard cash, when she understands that I have made up my mind.'

Kate was so thoroughly satisfied with the soundness of her reasoning, that she troubled herself much less about her father's prohibition than he anticipated, whilst he felt that it needed little vigilance to protect so strong a position as that which he now held. He therefore decided that he would carefully abstain from referring to the matter at all for the future. He knew that his orders regarding Dr Lakeworth's exclusion from the house would be obeyed, and though he had passing doubts as to whether that would put a stop to the young people's friendship, he thought it best not to draw the reins too tight all at once. Time would complete what he had begun, and harsh treatment might drive Kate into doing something foolish.

So he remained in happy ignorance of the fact that his daughter and Charles Lakeworth made a practice of meeting regularly at the lodgings occupied by a Miss Amelia Mumbole, who was proud to call the young doctor her nephew, and would do anything for him that he chose to ask. When Miss Dottleson's letter telling him that the servants had been directed not to let him in when he called, and asking if he had any relation or friend at whose house they could meet quietly, reached him, he put on his hat and went straight to his aunt Amelia in Barton Terrace. Miss Mumbole gladly welcomed the chance of taking part in anything which would give a little interest to the monotonous humdrum life she led, and her sitting-room was at once placed at her nephew's disposal whenever he might want it. The tryst thus thoughtfully provided was in very frequent requisition; and one afternoon about three weeks after Mr Dottleson had closed his door to Charles Lakeworth, it witnessed a meeting which requires some notice from us. The two were sitting over the fire, and the considerate Miss Mumbole reclined on the sofa as far away as possible, absorbed in the pages of the *Queen*.

'Has your father said nothing about me yet?' asked Charles. It was a question he put as often as he saw Kate Dottleson.

'Not a word. He has never mentioned your name since the day I told you of.'

'What do you think it means?'

'I suppose he imagines that I've forgotten you,' laughed Kate.

'We can't go on like this for ever, you know; my work is gradually increasing, and for your sake I must push on.'

'I don't intend to go on this way any longer, Charles. I'll make one more attempt to get papa's leave, and if that fails, I have thought of a plan to make him give it.'

'How will you manage that?'

'I'll tell you to-morrow. I can't say for certain that it will succeed, but we must try.'

They parted soon afterwards, and Kate went home to Blakewood Square. She had no hope of obtaining Mr Dottleson's sanction by begging, and her mind was full of the scheme by which it was to be wrested from him.

LEANING TOWERS.

AMONG the so-called wonders of the world the Leaning Tower of Pisa is usually included, and there can be no doubt that it is a great curiosity. But it is by no means unique; North Italy can exhibit an extraordinary number of towers staggering in all directions, and all leaning from precisely the same reason.

We have indeed in England few spires of any great altitude that are quite upright. Salisbury sensibly inclines. So, but in less degree, does that of Norwich. Chesterfield spire does not lean, but is twisted, corkscrew fashion, through the warping of the timber that supports the lead-covering. This is quite distinct from the case of the towers, all of which lean through uneven sinkage of the foundations.

The campaniles of Italy have a peculiar character: they run up to a great height, and, unlike Gothic spires and towers generally, have no buttresses. It is probable that the feeling for classic architecture always prevailed in Italy, and the mediæval architects shrank from the introduction of the buttress because there was no warrant for it in antiquity. The ancients did not run up these lofty towers; they did not erect such buildings rising to a vast height as was required for Christian worship. The Italian architects of the Middle Ages had to build lofty churches and high campaniles, and were hampered by their adherence to precedent. They did not venture boldly and sensibly to buttress them, because the old Roman architects had not used the buttress. The consequence was they got into difficulties. In France, in Germany, in England, everywhere else, the church tower was attached to the church; the church even helped to put a shoulder to the tower and keep it up; but this was not done in Italy, for experience proved that the tower, being heavier than the church, cracked its walls and pulled it down; consequently, the bell towers are built detached. Who does not know Giotto's lovely campanile at Florence standing apart from the beautiful *duomo*? At Pisa it was the same. A cathedral was built, and a tower was built detached from it, both of white marble. And well it was that they kept their distance. The cathedral, standing on a broad basis, remains upright; but the campanile has sunk on one side and leans over.

Pisa is built on the rubble brought down by the Arno; the whole of the broad basin is filled to an unknown depth with rolled limestone, pebbles, and sand brought down from the Apennines. The Arno almost dries up in summer, and is only a strong stream when the snows are melting or after storms; then it rolls down vast quantities of pebbles. Now, the very Gospel warns men against building on the sand; and if it be necessary to build thereon, then common-

sense enjoins the broadening of the base, so as to distribute the weight of the superincumbent mass over the widest possible area. This is the principle on which the Gothic architects acted everywhere save in Italy. There, hampered by their absurd prejudice, they attempted the impossible—to build lofty towers on the narrowest possible bases. The result was—a disappointment, an inevitable failure.

Precisely the same conditions exist at Venice and in the basin of the Po. At Venice is mud, and buildings have to be erected on piles driven into the mud bottom of the shallow Adriatic. The vast district between the Apennines and the Alps is a plain composed of nothing whatever but rolled stones brought down from the mountains by the Po and its tributaries, the stones intermingled with sand. The great cities of North Italy—Milan, Bologna, Mantua, Piacenza, &c.—are all planted on this mighty rubble-bed. A few spade-depths below the surface and water is reached.

Common-sense bade the architects here also adapt themselves to the conditions of the country and widen their bases. But with extraordinary perversity, they tried to do the impossible—erect towers of extravagant altitude on absurdly narrow foundations. Bologna is an instance in point, a more striking one even than Pisa, to which we will return presently. Now, Bologna bristles with towers. It became a matter of pride among the noble families in the Middle Ages to have these tall and useless towers; they were useless, mere monuments of human perversity, for they were not designed to hold bells. They were not adapted as strongholds. In a piazza there, stand two of these towers. The Torre degli Asinelli was begun in 1109; it is two hundred and ninety-three feet high and eighteen feet square. It inclines three feet four inches from the centre of gravity. Close to it is another, La Garisenda, built about the same time by the brothers Filippo and Oddo Garisendi; it is only one hundred and thirty feet high, but leans eight feet from the perpendicular to the south, and three feet to the east. Nothing can be more astounding than the first sight of these towers. They are square and windowless, and look like square rulers set up on end, and toppling over. Dante compares the giant Antæus, bending to lift him so as to bear him to the depths of the Inferno, to La Garisenda. Goethe says: 'The leaning tower has a frightful look, and yet it is most probable that it was built thus designedly. This seems to me an explanation of the absurdity. In the troublous times of the city, every large house was a fortress, and every powerful family had a tower. By-and-by the very possession of such a building became a mark of importance and distinction, and as at last a perpendicular tower became a perfectly common and every-day object, a leaning tower was built. Architect and owner attained their end: the mass of upright towers are just glanced at, and all hurry on to examine the leaning one.' This theory is ingenious. It is accepted by Baedeker in his Handbook, for he says: 'This is probably the only one of the many leaning towers in Italy whose obliquity has been intentional, but it was found impossible to complete it.'

It is, however, a mistake to think that the tower was so erected, as Artemus Ward would

say, 'out of pure cussedness.' The extraordinary height of the Asinelli Tower excited the envy of the rival family, and the Garisendi Tower was begun on the same dimensions at the base, eighteen feet, a few paces from it, with the object of overtopping it. However, the fates proved unpropitious; the precarious sand and rubble at the base shifted, and the tower lurched over. It was carried up as far as possible, till the centre of gravity would no longer fall within the base, and then it was reluctantly abandoned.

At a bowshot off, in the Via Arabella, is a third tower, the Torre Guerrmani, which also leans, but not to the same extent; and the lofty campanile of the church of S. Giacomo has also a very sensible inclination. Again, in the grand piazza, now named after Victor Emmanuel, is the fine Palazzo del Podestà, designed to hold bells. This has a street or roadway running under it, so that it rests on arches—a still greater interference with the base; and, as a natural result, this also has a certain inclination, though not so great as that of the towers that stand alone, for it is tied on the south and north side into solid blocks of buildings, and thus the pressure downwards is distributed. Hard by is the noble Palazzo Pubblico, or municipal palace, begun in 1290, and this has a tower, but planted at the angle of the building, which serves thus to broaden its base and carry off the pressure; and although the palace is lofty and of brick tied into the tower, not a sign of settlement is visible in the brickwork or inclination in the tower.

At Lodi is another tower that is not upright; and about two and a half miles to the south stands a stately church, which has a campanile very lofty, which, if the writer's eye did not deceive him as he passed it in the train, is also out of the perpendicular. The campanile of La Ghirlandina at Modena is perhaps the finest in North Italy. It is three hundred and thirty-five feet in height, and was erected between 1224 and 1319. It stands near the *duomo*, with which it is connected by a cloistered walk. The tower derives its name from the sculpture which enwreathes it like a garland. Not only is this tower out of the perpendicular, but the cathedral also is on the incline.

Very few of the campaniles in Venice are perfectly upright.—Now, let us return to Pisa. Here, at all events, some concession was made by the architect to the nature of the ground on which he designed to build. He did not attempt to erect a square ruler and balance it on loose rubble; he designed a circular tower of much greater diameter, but still with the same fatal disregard to the principle of distributing the pressure over a wide surface. If a man desires to support a great weight on his head, he instinctively plants his feet apart. This should have taught the Italian architects what to do when they built towers; however, it did not, and that is why Northern Italy is the land of towers staggering in all directions like tipsy men. The campanile of Pisa is only one hundred and seventy-nine feet high, but then it is thirteen feet out of the perpendicular. Of this tower, Dickens said: 'Sismondi compares the tower to the usual pictorial representations in children's books of the Tower of Babel. It is a happy simile, and conveys a better idea of the building than

chapters of laboured description. Nothing can exceed the grace and lightness of the structure; nothing can be more remarkable than its general appearance. In the course of the ascent to the top—which is by an easy staircase—the inclination is not very apparent; but at the summit it becomes so, and gives one the sensation of being in a ship that has heeled over through the action of an ebb-tide. The effect upon the *low side*, so to speak, looking over the gallery, and seeing the shaft recede to its base, is very startling; and I saw a nervous traveller hold on to the tower involuntarily, after glancing down, as if he had some idea of propping it up. The view within, from the ground—looking up as through a slanting tube—is also very curious. It certainly inclines as much as the most sanguine tourist could desire. The natural impulse of ninety-nine people out of a hundred who were about to recline upon the grass below it, to rest and contemplate the adjacent buildings, would probably be, not to take up their position under the leaning side, it is so very much aslant.

This tower was begun in 1179, and had not been carried up one-third of the meditated height, when, owing to the subsidence of the foundations on one side, it began to incline. The masonry was then strengthened by iron clamps, which preserve the tower from falling.

To return once more to Bologna, where is the largest assortment of leaning towers. On the north side of the city is a domed mound, possibly an old tumulus, now converted into public walks. The view from the summit contains the whole range of reeling shafts—an odd spectacle—to me, not a little inclined to moralise, containing a parable. It seemed to me that this prospect of Bologna was not a little like the lookout on mankind: all men designed to be upright, straight in action, but all more or less deviating from ideal rectitude, some leaning more than others, only those who have not let their centre of gravity fall without their base—standing. The other, the more obvious moral—to make sure of your foundations before you build, especially in the great edifice of life—I leave to the reader.

THE BRAVOES OF MARKET-DRAYTON.

To the north of the Wrekin, amid the rolling pastoral country which forms the borders of the counties of Shropshire and Staffordshire, there lies as fair a stretch of rustic England as could be found in the length and breadth of the land. Away to the south-east lie the great Staffordshire potteries; and farther south still, a long dusky pall marks the region of coal and of iron. On the banks of the Torn, however, there are sprinkled pretty country villages, and sleepy market towns which have altered little during the last hundred years, save that the mosses have grown longer, and the red bricks have faded into a more mellow tint. The traveller who in the days of our grandfathers was whirled through this beautiful region upon the box-seat of the Liverpool and Shrewsbury coach, was deeply impressed by the Arcadian simplicity of the peasants, and congratulated himself that innocence, long pushed out of the great

cities, could still find a refuge amid these peaceful scenes. Most likely he would have smiled incredulously had he been informed that neither in the dens of Whitechapel nor in the slums of Birmingham was morality so lax or human life so cheap as in the fair region which he was admiring.

How such a state of things came about it is difficult now to determine. It may be that the very quiet and beauty of the place caused those precautions and safeguards to be relaxed which may nip crime in the bud. Sir Robert Peel's new police had not yet been established. Even in London the inefficient 'Charley' still reigned supreme, and was only replaced by the more efficient Bow Street 'runner' after the crime had been committed. It may be imagined, therefore, that among the cider orchards and sheep-walks of Shropshire the arm of Justice, however powerful to revenge, could do little to protect. No doubt, small offences undetected had led to larger ones, and those to larger still, until, in the year 1828, a large portion of the peasant population were banded together to defeat the law and to screen each other from the consequence of their misdeeds. This secret society might have succeeded in its object, had it not been for the unparalleled and most unnatural villainy of one of its members, whose absolutely callous and selfish conduct throws into the shade even the cold-blooded cruelty of his companions.

In the year 1827 a fine-looking young peasant named Thomas Ellson, in the prime of his manhood, was arrested at Market-Drayton upon two charges—the one of stealing potatoes, and the other of sheep-lifting, which in those days was still a hanging matter. The case for the prosecution broke down at the last moment on account of the inexplicable absence of an important witness named James Harrison. The crier of the court having three times summoned the absentee without any response, the charge was dismissed, and Thomas Ellson discharged with a caution. A louder crier still would have been needed to arouse James Harrison, for he was lying at that moment foully murdered in a hastily scooped grave within a mile of the court-house.

It appears that the gang which infested the country had, amidst their countless vices, one questionable virtue in their grim fidelity to each other. No red Macgregor attempting to free a clansman from the grasp of the Sassenach could have shown a more staunch and unscrupulous allegiance. The feeling was increased by the fact that the members of the league were generally connected with one another either by birth or marriage. When it became evident that Ellson's deliverance could only be wrought by the silencing of James Harrison, there appears to have been no hesitation as to the course to be followed.

The prime movers in the business were Ann Harris, who was the mother of Ellson by a former husband; and John Cox, his father-in-law. The latter was a fierce and turbulent old man, with two grown-up sons as savage as himself; while Mrs Harris is described as being a ruddy-faced pleasant country woman, remarkable only for the brightness of her eyes. This pair of worthies

having put their heads together, decided that James Harrison should be poisoned and that arsenic should be the drug. They applied, therefore, at several chemists', but without success. It is a remarkable commentary upon the general morality of Market-Drayton at this period that on applying at the local shop and being asked why she wanted the arsenic, Mrs Harris ingeniously answered that it was simply 'to poison that scoundrel, James Harrison.' The drug was refused; but the speech appears to have been passed by as a very ordinary one, for no steps were taken to inform the authorities or to warn the threatened man.

Being unable to effect their purpose in this manner, the mother and the father-in-law determined to resort to violence. Being old and feeble themselves, they resolved to hire assassins for the job, which appears to have been neither a difficult nor an expensive matter in those regions. For five pounds, three stout young men were procured who were prepared to deal in human lives as readily as any Italian bravo who ever handled a stiletto. Two of these were the sons of old Cox, John and Robert. The third was a young fellow named Pugh, who lodged in the same house as the proposed victim. The spectacle of three smock-frocked English yokels selling themselves at thirty-three shillings and fourpence a head to murder a man against whom they had no personal grudge is one which is happily unique in the annals of crime.

The men earned their blood-money. On the next evening, Pugh proposed to the unsuspecting Harrison that they should slip out together and steal bacon, an invitation which appears to have had a fatal seduction to the Draytonian of the period. Harrison accompanied him upon the expedition, and presently, in a lonely corner, they came upon the two Coxes. One of them was digging in the ditch. Harrison expressed some curiosity as to what work he could have on hand at that time of night. He little dreamed that it was his own grave upon which he was looking. Presently, Pugh seized him by the throat, John Cox tripped up his heels, and together they strangled him. They bundled the body into the hole, covered it carefully up, and calmly returned to their beds. Next morning, as already recorded, the court crier cried in vain, and Thomas Ellson became a free man once more.

Upon his liberation, his associates naturally enough explained to him with some exultation the means which they had adopted to silence the witness for the prosecution. The young Coxes, Pugh, and his mother all told him the same story. The unfortunate Mrs Harris had already found occasion to regret the steps which she had taken, for Pugh, who appears to have been a most hardened young scoundrel, had already begun to extort money out of her on the strength of his knowledge. Robert Cox, too, had remarked to her with an oath: 'If thee doesn't give me more money, I will fetch him and rear him up against thy door.' The rustic villains seem to have seen their way to unlimited beer by working upon the feelings of the old country woman.

One would think that the lowest depths of human infamy had been already plumbed in this matter; but it remained for Thomas Ellson, the rescued man, to cap all the iniquities of his com-

panions. About a year after his release, he was apprehended upon a charge of fowl-stealing, and in order to escape the trifling punishment allotted to that offence, he instantly told the whole story of the doing away with James Harrison. Had his confession come from horror at their crime, it might have been laudable; but the whole circumstances of the case showed that it was merely a cold-blooded bid for the remission of a small sentence at the cost of the lives of his own mother and his associates. Deep as their guilt was, it had at least been incurred in order to save this heartless villain from the fate which he had well deserved.

The trial which ensued excited the utmost interest in all parts of England. Ann Harris, John Cox, John Cox the younger, Robert Cox, and James Pugh were all arraigned for the murder of James Harrison. The wretched remnant of mortality had been dug up from the ditch, and could only be recognised by the clothes and by the colour of the hair. The whole case against the accused rested upon the very flimsiest evidence, save for Thomas Ellson's statement, which was delivered with a clearness and precision which no cross-examination could shake. He recounted the various conversations in which the different prisoners, including his mother, had admitted their guilt, as calmly and as imperturbably as though there were nothing at stake upon it. From the time when Pugh 'ticed un out o' feyther's house to steal some bacon,' to the final tragedy, when he 'gripped un by the throat,' every detail came out in its due order. He met his mother's gaze steadily as he swore that she had confided to him that she had contributed fifty shillings towards the removing of the witness. No more repulsive spectacle has ever been witnessed in an English court of justice than this cold-blooded villain calmly swearing away the life of the woman who bore him, whose crime had arisen from her extravagant affection for him, and all to save himself from a temporary inconvenience.

Mr Phillips, the counsel for the defence, did all that he could to shake Ellson's evidence; but though he aroused the loathing of the whole court by the skilful way in which he brought out the scoundrel's motives and character, he was unable to shake him as to his facts. A verdict of guilty was returned against the whole band, and sentence of death duly passed upon them.

On the 4th of July 1828 the awful punishment was actually carried out upon Pugh and the younger Cox, the two who had laid hands upon the deceased. Pugh declared that death was a relief to him, as Harrison was always, night and day, by his side. Cox, on the other hand, died sullenly, without any sign of repentance for the terrible crime for which his life was forfeited. Thomas Ellson was compelled to be present at the execution, as a warning to him to discontinue his evil practices.

Mrs Harris and the elder Cox were carried across the seas, and passed the short remainder of their lives in the dreary convict barracks which stood upon the site of what is now the beautiful town of Sydney. The air of the Shropshire downs was the sweeter for the dispersal of the precious band; and it is on record that this salutary example brought it home to the rustics that the

law was still a power in the land, and that, looking upon it as a mere commercial transaction, the trade of the bravo was not one which could flourish upon English soil.

AMERICAN BOOT-BLACKS.

'SHINE 'em up, sir? Only five cents a shine,' is quite a common salutation on the crooked, crowded streets of Boston, from urchins of all sizes, ages, and colours. It is not of these boys, however, we write, but rather of some of the oddities in Boston who pursue this useful calling.

The boy boot-blacks are under municipal regulation; pay, like the newsboys, a small license fee for their badge of office; and are by law compelled to attend some public school one-half of each day. The licensing is not for revenue, but in order to keep track of the boys in case of their neglecting to attend school. Also, like the newsboys, these 'wielders of the brush' have, through the benevolence of certain charitable ladies and gentlemen, 'homes' where they are made welcome and fed, warmed, and lodged at the very lowest possible cost, their moral welfare being at the same time looked after.

The coloured man has a strong partiality for this 'profession;' and we are fain to allow that blacking boots by a black man seems the most striking instance of the man 'fitting his occupation,' of anything we know of. That other favourite calling of the negro, whitening or white-washing of walls and ceilings, is so directly in contrast to the colour of the workman, that it cannot fail to impress one by its incongruity.

A stroll down town in the region of the post-office, the banks, and the mercantile community, will reveal, if looked for, many little corners and alley-ways occupied by sable boot-blacks. The outfit generally consists of a more or less comfortable chair, a canvas awning stretched over it, and the usual box, brushes, and blacking. The proprietor on fair days—for your boot-black is necessarily a fair-weather biped—solicits patronage from each passer-by, not boisterously, but in a quiet insinuating sort of way; and in addition, has a more or less elaborate sign standing near his workplace; and those signs are marvels in their way in colour, composition, and tone. Perhaps the commonest form reads something like this: 'Professor Jones, Boot-polisher. The boss shine 5 cents.' Or, 'Colonel Jenkin's nonpareil shine only 5 cents.' Five cents is the common rate for these outdoor 'artists.' Some add, 'Oil shine 10 cents;' and one we remember read, 'The shiniest shine in Boston, only 5 cents.' Another was, 'Patent-leather shine.' The most remarkable sign read something like this: 'The man who wears dirty boots is a blot upon the landscape, a hindrance to civilisation, and a disgrace to the commonwealth of Massachusetts.—Have your boots polished in a superior manner—up the alley—for only 5 cents.' Surely this man might have been considered sufficiently polished to have cared for the shoes of a Charles Sumner or a Wendell Phillips!

In all the respectable hotels, the porters of the house have regular stands in the basements where one may be polished with 'Day and Martin's' best at any hour for ten cents (or more). We are told

these porters, generally Irishmen, accumulate large sums of money in a few years, if they prove sober and industrious.

Over toward the old west end of the city, Sambo is frequently found occupying a small cellar or small store on the ground-floor. Here he sets up two or more chairs, boxes, &c., and hires assistants or takes in partners to aid him; often combining with the boot-blackening the sale of brushes, blacking, shoe-strings, cigars, tobacco, and even coal and kindling-wood. He sometimes also adds carpet-beating, whitening, clothes-cleaning, and such work to his list. But these are the aristocrats of the business. The fondness of the negro for big words shows itself here, for no sooner does he have a window large enough to paint a sign upon than he announces his six-by-nine den as a 'Boot-blackening Bazaar,' or a 'Boot-polishing Parlour' or 'Emporium.' This last word is very commonly used, and seems to the darkey proprietor just 'the thing' for the place and occasion. The ever-busy little Chinaman has not invaded this business as yet; but if he does, his industry and frugality are bound to make him a dangerous rival to the negro, who is inclined to be slow, and not too ambitious.

We know of but one German in the business, but he is *sui generis*, and perhaps as odd a little piece of humanity as one would meet anywhere. He occupies, free of rent, a corner of the lavatory in one of the handsomest railway passenger stations in Boston. He has served through the war as a soldier; is not over five feet three inches in height, wears very thick glass spectacles, and is blind of one eye. He is known all about that neighbourhood as 'Billy the boot-black.' He is by all odds the most thorough and best boot-black in the city; but of a very argumentative and querulous disposition. If a customer ventures upon the remark, 'It is a fine day,' Billy instantly fixes him with his sound optic and this reply, 'Well, it won't last long.' Or, if one ventures upon a remark on the current topic of the hour, Billy is always upon the opposite of the question, be it religion, politics, or even science. Billy as a companion would, I should say, be unpleasant, but Billy as a boot-black is unequalled. He has an easy-chair mounted upon two steps, with arrangements for moving it forward or backward as may be needed. He uses only the best English blacking and the finest of brushes, and is so particular, that he will turn up the foot of a customer and polish the inner curve of the shoe from heel to top. He has a mirror fixed beneath the chair, presumably to enable him to see the heel, and on the top of the mirror a small clock; but why the clock, and why *there* a clock, we know not, unless it be to remind Billy's philosophic mind that 'time is money' or 'time flies.'

His income cannot be much under ten dollars a day, as he charges ten cents a shine, and certainly can, if he chooses, polish one hundred pair of shoes a day. We have often been amused at this man's calm indifference to business. He knows, from the thousands and thousands of people passing through the station, he is sure of a living, as he has a monopoly of that business there, and he never asks a patron to 'wait,' or tells an impatient traveller he 'will soon be ready' for him. You may wait for him—and he never hurries—or go. If you wait, well; if

you go, well. Some one else will take your place. Billy should be a happy wight, but he is not, or his words greatly misrepresent him.

On Park Square in Boston is an Emancipation statue, presented to the city by one Moses Kimball, an old abolitionist. It represents Mr Lincoln standing erect reading the Emancipation proclamation, while at his feet is crouching a nearly nude figure of an African slave, from whose wrists are falling slavery's chains. Clothe this figure of the negro and put in his hand a shoe-brush in place of the broken handcuff, and it would be an admirable representation of a coloured boot-black at his trade; and one would think the boot-blacks were of that opinion, for they are plentiful in this neighbourhood, which is also a great thoroughfare. Pleasant Street—a sad misnomer now—leads from this square, and here a large coloured colony reside—waiters, boot-blacks, coal-merchants, and one very swell coloured tailor—all within a few yards of each other.

One Saturday night we were passing through Pleasant Street, and thought we would get our boots polished. We found a well-lighted 'emporium,' bearing this legend, 'Old Arm-chair,' on its windows; and on entering, we found three coloured workmen busily engaged, and were about stepping out; but a man got down from one of the 'old arm-chairs,' and we took his place. On our right was a white man being polished; on our left hand a pretty-dark nigger was having his 'plantation' boots fixed for Sunday; and at the door was a saddle-coloured gentleman, evidently a howling swell in 'culled circles,' who, having been through the boot-polishing process, was drawing on his tan dogskin gloves, buttoning his fawn-coloured covert-coat, and, with a heavy cane under his arm, about leaving. The black fellow on our left, a regular Cuffee, and withal a merry soul, was apparently creating some merriment, which ceased as we entered. The man of the cane—probably a waiter, or possibly valet, or even a head-waiter—remarked, as he gave himself a final look over: 'Well, now I'se got my boots blacked, I guess I'll go an' get a b-a-w-th an' go home.'

To him the dark one said: 'Whar does ye go fur a baff, Mr Johnson?'

'Me!' says the swell. 'I goes mos' generally to Prof. Jones' Bathing Parlours on Fayette Street fur my bawths.'

'Wha' does de Perfessur charge fur a baff?' said our left-hand neighbour.

To which the swell said: 'Him! He charges ten cents fur a bawth wid one towel, an' twelve cents if you wants two towels; an' dat's cheap enuff.'

'I knows whar ye can get a baff fur nuffin', I does, an' whar dey hain't no extra charge fur towels neider, fur dey rub you down fur nuffin' arter de baff,' said Cuffee.

'Wharabout's dat place?' said the saddle-coloured one.

'In de Chawles ribber, Mr Johnson; an' a "cop" [policeman] will rub you down wid his club if he catch you dar; an' don' you forgit it—haw, haw!' said the black fellow; and the swell left amid the laughter of the entire room, muttering something about 'low black trash' as he went out.

As a rule, all boot-blacks, white or black, Celt or African, are of a merry turn, and happy in their humble yet honest calling. They are unlike the uniformed 'London Shoe-black Brigade' or any other people in the same business of whom we have knowledge; but we daresay the student of small things would find interesting matter in boot-blacks anywhere; certainly those of Boston have given us much pleasure, at slight cost, in looking them up.

SORROW'S CROWN OF SORROW.

GREAT Poets are the world's great truth-tellers, and it is rarely indeed that a thoughtful reader dissents from the teaching, or fails to delight in the sympathy of the greater mind. Perhaps there is no arithmetic which can measure what we owe to the poets, who have enriched our language with the

Jewels five-words-long
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever;

and have opened out mental vistas that are for ever expanding. Still the humblest may now and then demur, and differ from a renowned authority, or at anyrate feel that a subject has only been treated from one point of view, when the question has certainly another side to be considered.

Dante, one of the few poets who are in advance of all others, declares that there is no sorrow greater than to remember happy days when we are in misery. Surely, this is not true of all natures and of all sorrows! The misery we bring on ourselves by mistakes and misdeeds has its own peculiar pang of remorse, and there are few things more senseless than to deem a trouble unworthy of commiseration because a man 'has brought it on himself.' That is the very thing which claims our pity; assuredly it is not remembering the happier times which is the anguish, but rather recollecting the fault which ended them.

There are, however, many troubles which come to us either from the faults of others, or apparently directly from the Hand of God for our discipline and chastening; and in such instances there should be solace, not sorrow, in remembering the happier times. Let us suppose the case of suddenly reduced circumstances. Is there no thankfulness in remembering the day when we could help others, were it only in a trifling degree? Is there no satisfaction in knowing that our modest hospitalities were the means of bringing strangers together who were destined to form true friendships, one of the pleasantest privileges of entertaining guests? Is there no pleasure in looking back on the bright days of early travel, in remembering the wonders of nature and art one has beheld, and seeing them again in memory's untarnished mirror? The first view of the Alps, of Venice, of Naples, of Edinburgh—the first realisation of the majesty of art in the marvels of architecture, sculpture, and painting which have been bequeathed to us—surely such 'things of beauty' are indeed 'a joy for ever;' for the joy once imbibed, it remains to solace us when age has dimmed the sight and made the eager footstep halt.

When stricken by illness, ought we to lament over the recollection of the happy days of health and vigour? Of one thing we may be sure—that all adversity has 'its uses,' and that there are very few natures, indeed, to which an unbroken course of prosperity would not be very detrimental. People who bear changes of fortune bravely are often highly praised, and to a certain extent justly; while perhaps too little compassion is shown to those who have never known freedom from cares and sorrows. We are all a little too apt to think, because they have never experienced any better condition they do not feel the pressure of their trials. With a very few undeveloped and unambitious natures, it may be so to a certain extent; but with a vast multitude, so far from growing used to their troubles, they chafe under them more and more every day.

In a very popular novel, a village boy, fond of low amusements, improving his tastes, becomes a finer character, and on one occasion declares he has 'seen to the bottom of rat-catching.' It is a very good thing to have seen to the bottom of many pleasures that are higher in the scale than rat-catching. This is what people generally do in the days of ease and prosperity; whereas, the children of adversity often indulge in exaggerated imaginings of the pleasures and enjoyments beyond their reach, and really need to have had a little taste of prosperity to make them more patient under their trials. Experience of life shows that there is no human being altogether free from disappointments and troubles and temptations of some sort; in fact, circumstances frequently mould character, and perhaps the greater variety of circumstances an individual encounters, the more his character is developed. Therefore is it good for every one to have had a little taste of worldly delights, if only to 'see to the bottom of them,' and not confound pleasure with happiness. One special phase of this truth the present writer has observed over and over again. The girl who for two or three seasons has enjoyed the pleasures of society, more often settles down to a quiet domestic life, cheerfully and contentedly, than the girl married from the school-room or from a very dull home. And the man who has knocked about the world a little in his bachelor days commonly appreciates the happy home that should be an ark of rest to the breadwinner, much more than the stay-at-home youth, who, once emancipated, is eager to taste what is called pleasure—and so 'see to the bottom of it.' The earlier in life people gain their experience, the less dearly do they pay for it.

But we have wandered a little from our argument, that remembering happy days which are past in times of sorrow is not necessarily an aggravation of the trouble. When the happiness has been forfeited by wrong-doing, then it is the remorse which is the sting; but when time, the assuager of grief and repentance, the purifier of the heart, have done their work, surely even under these circumstances the memory of the lost happiness ought not to be a pain.

Old age is famous for its garrulity. Would the old like as well as they do to talk of their early days, their struggles and successes, if these recollections were mournful to them? Even struggles that have led to success become the 'pleasures of memory.' Really, so far from such retrospection

being painful, the happy events of life seem often to have acquired a soft glow that hides the asperities with which they were probably mingled.

Some old writer says: 'Blessings are like birds that hop about us with their wings folded, and we see not the brilliance of their plumage till they fly away.' Too often it is so; but that is no reason that we should not cherish their memory, and let it, like the long beams of sunset, shed around us a far-reaching glory.

COINCIDENCES.

In a recent number of this *Journal* appeared an article on Coincidences, under the heading of 'Good and Bad Luck,' regarding which a correspondent writes as follows:

'One afternoon, a few days ago, I was reading in *Chambers's* the above-named article, which tells how a gentleman bought a copy of Blair's *Sermons* from Mr Larkins, a bookseller; how, after paying for the book, he requested Mr Larkins to keep it for him for a short time, until he should call again to get it; and how, after the lapse of so long a time as six months, he turned up again just in time to find Mr Larkins, who had despaired of ever seeing the buyer again, in the act of selling the copy of Blair's *Sermons* again to another customer. —I had just read this story, when a knock came to the front-door. It was a lady with whom I am slightly acquainted, but whom I had very seldom had the pleasure of meeting or speaking to, who had called to say that as she and her family were leaving the place to reside elsewhere, and had some books that they did not want to take with them, she had brought me Blair's *Lectures*, in three volumes, in the hope that they might be useful to me. I need not say how gladly I accepted the gift; but I thought it quite as remarkable a coincidence as any I had read about in the article mentioned.

'I happened the same day to meet a friend, a clergyman, to whom I related the incident as a remarkable coincidence. I thought it still more remarkable when he said: "Yes, I knew Mrs L—— was going to give you Blair's *Lectures*; and had it not been for the fact that I had not a copy of Blair's *Sermons*, she would have made you the recipient of those too. As it was, I got them."

BROWN AND GOLD.

It is the time when harvest has begun;

The ferny bracken withered brown and slight,
Tinged with a brilliant wealth of glitt'ring light—
A golden flood from the low, blushing sun—
Carpets the sloping hills, whose summits dun
Are kingly crowned with glowing radiance bright;
The brown lark singing in her aureate flight
Sinks earthwards when her closing trill is run.
Among the bracken sits my lady fair,
Sunburnt is her sweet face, and brown her hair,
Except where it has meshed the light of gold
Within its threads; so, too, her eyes are brown,
And on her hand, as dusky as her gown,
Gleams a gemmed circlet—pledge her love I hold.

EDMUND MERCER.

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‘BEAUTIFUL DARTMOUTH.’

A soft southerly breeze is blowing up Channel, and the *Corisande* is slipping along, close-hauled, through the summer seas. The outline of the lovely South Devon coast is shimmering in the heat, and the musical murmur of the waves upon the pebble beaches of many a cove comes like the song of far-off Naiads. Away to the left, Start Point rises in the haze; its white lighthouse tower standing out against the sky, and its jagged sides sloping like a steep-pitched roof. On the right, Berry Head marks the whereabouts of Tor Bay, on whose northern shore Torquay—loveliest queen of watering-places—clusters between and upon her lofty limestone hills. Ahead is a gap in the wall of cliff towards which we are steering, where the river Dart rolls its current to the sea.

‘How is the tide, Elliott?’

‘About slack, sir.—Keep her a bit closer, sir, if you can.’

The burly skipper gets a pull on the mainsheet, and then walks forward to give an order to one of the hands; and we watch the land rapidly nearing as the foam from the cutter’s bows is flung off and left behind. Ten minutes later the blue-jacket comes aft again with: ‘Keep her away now, sir; we can run slap in.’

The boom swings steadily out, the sheets are eased handsomely, and the *Corisande* lifts herself with a steady roll. There are finer and grander pictures, no doubt, but few lovelier ones than that which greets the yachtsman as he stands in from seawards for the Dart. On the headland at the south side of the entrance are the remains of Dartmouth Castle, that ‘stronge and mightie and defensyve new tower,’ which Edward IV. stipulated should be built; and within them the church of St Petrox, of Early English work. High above is a height known as ‘Gallant’s Bower,’ about which are curious old-world entrenchments and earthen ramparts. On the north bank are the villas of Kingswear; and below

Brookhill—a noble mansion, whose dining-room contains a portion of the chimney-piece in whose nook the great Sir Walter Raleigh indulged in the first pipe of tobacco smoked in this country—are the ruins of ‘Gomerock Castle;’ and the groove still exists in the rock where the huge chain was swung across to Dartmouth Castle as part of the defences of the olden time.

Gliding steadily onwards, we pass Warfleet Creek and its singing stream, and then suddenly ‘Beautiful Dartmouth’—as Her Majesty Queen Victoria termed it when the royal yacht was driven hither by stress of weather—lies before us in all its picturesqueness, with its noble harbour at its feet, so land-locked you can almost fancy it a lake. But no lake ever saw such a fleet of vessels as are lying here to-day. Crack yachts are legion—cutters, yawls, and schooners—roomy cruisers and lean racers, stout five-tonners and flying-fifties; from whose forest of masts flutter the burgees of every club of worthiness and note; grim collier steamers are alongside the Kingswear quays; puffing steam-launches dart hither and thither; a smart cruiser rides majestically in mid-stream fully conscious that the white ensign that streams above her is the symbol of the mistress of the sea, and that she is there the monarch of all she surveys. In sharp contrast to her low-lying hull with its stumpy funnel and raking masts are the lofty, old, three-decker line-of-battle ships the *Britannia* and *Hindoostan*, whose ports glisten in the sun, and within whose wooden walls are trained some three hundred naval cadets, the future officers of England’s navy. Steep hills clothed with thick oak-woods form a fine background to the whole; and behind them the Dart winds away with many a curve and sinuous turn up to Totnes and its weir, to become thenceforward a brawling silvan streamlet haunted by fisherman and artist.

Of all old-fashioned places, Dartmouth is one of the quaintest; and as soon as the *Corisande* is at her moorings, we lower away the gig, and tumbling in, scull over to the landing-stairs to explore it. Few towns of the brave West-country

are more ancient, though its neighbour opposite boasts that

Kingswear was a market town
When Dartmouth was a furzy down.

In the days of the Norman kings it was a flourishing place, and William Rufus is said to have embarked here when he went to raise the siege of the castles of Le-Mans. It was evidently a port of note in Chaucer's time, for he tells how, amongst his Canterbury pilgrims,

A Shipman was ther, woned fer by West;
For ought I wote, he was of Dertemouth.

In 1190 it was the rallying-point for crusaders who followed the 'Lion-heart' to Palestine; and suffered severely by the departure of that monarch overseas, for during his absence the French stormed and sacked the town. In 1338 the Dartmouth mariners had their revenge, for they captured five French vessels and put their crews to death; and then, nine years later, they fitted out 'thirty-one shippes' to take part in Edward III.'s expedition against Calais. In 1377 the Frenchmen paid off these scores by taking and burning the town; an insult wiped out when, in 1403, a fleet of Dartmouth vessels sailed across the Channel, captured forty-one sail in the Seine, and returned laden with rich booty. But the crowning triumph came in the following year, when Du Chastel made another descent upon the Dart, and was ignominiously beaten off by the Devon sea-dogs, and their no less gallant wives, who helped, by hurling flints and missiles, to complete the rout, in which 'three lords and twenty knights of note' were taken and sent up to London.

Thus ended the duel between Dartmouth and France, much to the glory and renown of the staunch little town. That it was well to the fore when Spain's Armada threatened England's liberties is only to be expected, and it right loyally supported good Queen Bess with men and ships and money. When Charles I. and the Commons fell out, it again saw hard fighting and the horrors of war, for it was taken and retaken several times by the rival forces. It had also the questionable honour of giving the title Baron Dartmouth to one of Charles II.'s sons, and, moreover, entertained that monarch for a week when he kept his court here in 1671.

There is a tradition that King John granted the privilege of 'Mairalte' to Dartmouth; but the first charter extant is that of Edward III., dated 1341, which gives the town the right of self-government under a mayor and corporation on condition that it provided the king with two ships of one hundred and twenty tons whenever he needed them. One of the ancient rights of the place was that of coinage, and some of its halfpence are still in existence, having on one side the words, 'A Dartmouth halfpenny,' and on the other the town's arms, the figure of Edward III. standing in a ship supported by two lions.

The Dartmouth of to-day is a curious blending of old and new—its shops and older quarter cluster down by the water-side, where the hills bend back in a shallow curve, and its villas and newer part stretch along the wooded heights on each hand. Narrow streets, tortuous alleys, and steep stairways add to the picturesqueness

of the whole, and remind one somewhat of the old town of Edinburgh.

The two most interesting bits are the 'Butter Walk' and the church of St Saviour's. The Butter Walk runs at right angles up from the quay-side, and though modern 'improvements' have swept away most of its grandeur, it has yet a few of the fine old houses, with their richly-carved pillars, timbered gables and overhanging stories, in which once dwelt its merchant princes; and the royal arms in the black oak mantel-piece of one of them recalls the days when the Merry Monarch held his court here and walked up and down the piazza with his spaniels and fair ladies. But though these weathered fronts tell of the wealth and magnificence of their once owners, the interior of St Saviour's Church speaks yet more eloquently of the piety and liberality of these old Dartmouth traders. Its noble rood-screen and gloriously sculptured stone pulpit, rich in colour and rare in workmanship, once seen will never be forgotten; and the carved seats, and the front of the west gallery emblazoned with the arms of many a noble Devonshire family, recall the worshippers of long ago, who are sleeping under the stones beneath, but whose spirit still lives in every deed of English enterprise and daring. To the memory of one of them—worthy of all reverence—stout John Hawley, a brass yet remains in the chancel floor, dated 1408, and represents him in armour, between his two wives. The lady on his right is holding his hand; whilst she on the left has hers folded in prayer. Was she a pious devotee?—or less loved than the other? or is it merely a variation of artistic treatment? The old knight was so famed for his vast and lucky ventures in even those days of bold enterprises, that there arose a local saying:

Blow the wind high, or blow it low,
It bloweth fair to Hawley's Hoe.

But though a merchant, he was no mere money-grubber; for when the Dartmouth men 'manned forth a few ships at their own peril and charge,' and captured a French fleet in its own waters, he was in command, and took his full share of the fighting. Nor was he a mere selfish trader; for when Richard II., out of admiration for his bold deed, asked him to choose the favour he should receive, he would have no personal honour, but some bounty for his native place. It was thus that Dartmouth obtained the royal 'leopards' as supporters in its arms.

The south doorway of the church has a beautiful and curious design in metal-work representing the spreading branches of a tree, whereon two leopards or lions are mounted, with the figures 1631. The date is said to be of later work than the design, which some hold to have been wrought in celebration of the granting of the royal 'supporters.'

But the evening is drawing on apace, and the gig is waiting to take us back to the *Corisande*, and dinner. There she lies, our floating home, in mid-stream, with every spar and rope mirrored in the still water, looking a veritable picture yacht for sunshine and smooth tides; and not the staunch cutter which, with canvas snugged down, has driven through tearing squalls and staggering seas.

Lounging upon the graceful counter, under the calm evening skies, listening to the tide swirling

softly beneath, and watching the after-glow kiss the hill-tops around, we recall some of the famous men who are associated with the Dart: Newcomen, one of the fathers of the steam-engine; Flavel, the divine; John Davis, the bold navigator; Sir Humphrey Gilbert, fearless adventurer and pious commander; and not least, Sir Walter Raleigh, dauntless soldier, intrepid seaman, courtly scholar, and gallant gentleman.

And we realise, too, the changes which time has brought, for round the point which saw the pin-naces and 'carraks' and fighting ships of bygone days drop down with the tide to plunder the Frenchman and harry the Spaniard, there glides majestically one of the stately steamships of the Clan line on her way to the Cape with her peaceful company of colonists and emigrants. And yet even in the midst of this scene of peace and happiness, there drifts the shadow of death, for over yonder a dripping form has just been lifted into a boat, out of the ebbing stream:

O river of Dart, O river of Dart,
Every year thou claimest a heart.

Suddenly, a gun wakes the echoes of the hills, and from our truck and from scores of other taut masts burgees come fluttering down, for the Royal Dart Yacht Club has given 'gunfire' to all the pleasure craft on its station; and the yachtsman's day is over, for nautical etiquette is punctilious in the extreme, and rigidly observed.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

'You do your business pretty smart, gaffer,' said Isaiah, meeting Snelling a day or two after the encounter between them last recorded. 'You don't let the grass grow under your feet, you don't.'

'No,' returned Snelling, with a self-satisfied drawl and smile. 'When I know what I want, I pretty generally take it. I told you, you and me would have a laugh.'

'Let's have it now,' said Isaiah, with immovable solidity of countenance. 'Deadly funny, ain't it?'

'I closed my bargain,' Snelling said, 'the very day you spoke to me.'

'Closed it?' Isaiah echoed. 'Yes, and opened it too. I've been there, gaffer. It's no use drawing the wool over my eyes. I reckon you've got your knife into Mr Jousserau.'

'If Mr Jousserau wants the place,' said Snelling coolly, 'he can have it by paying for it. I shall want to make a bit out of my bargain. If he don't want it, I can find a use for it. The country-side's opening up, and I can let the new house directly it's finished. I've been to Tallymount and looked over it, and I can make eight or nine rooms habitable for fifty pounds. I can go and live there, if so be your friend ain't willing to pay my price.'

In effect, it proved—Isaiah being entrusted with the negotiations—that Jousserau was by no means willing to pay the increased price Snelling set upon the property. He had been attracted by the picturesque look of the ruined house and the wild luxuriance of the neglected garden, and

almost as much as by these, by the extreme cheapness of the place. He laughed a little to think that in striving to do him an ill turn, his overreaching rival had pinched his own fingers, and so dismissed the whole matter from his thoughts.

Snelling, finding the place thus left upon his hands, set to work to make its remaining chambers habitable; and when the glaziers and masons had done with it, he furnished half-a-dozen rooms, and taking young John from Isaiah's tutelage, established himself in his new home. The main road from Heydon Hey to Castle-Barfield ran by the rusty gates of iron scrollwork which afforded the only visible indication of the residence to the wayfarer. The house itself stood far retired at the limit of its own grounds. There were legends respecting it which might have deterred a nervous or imaginative man from making a home within the remnant of its shattered walls. The last Tenant who had lived there was currently reported to have led a life of unexampled wickedness, and had been killed in his own bed by lightning fifty years ago. The house had taken fire and had burned itself out. For half a century no effort had been made to rebuild or repair it; and the ghost of the wicked Squire, naturally and properly, was supposed to haunt the scene of his dreadful death and no less dreadful life.

The whole demesne was surrounded by a lofty wall of the local stone, a coarse and splintery granite, whose harsh outlines the years had softened with mosses, grasses, wild-flowers, and trailing plants, until its original barren ugliness was altogether lost and hidden under the luxuriant touch of nature. Overlooking this wall on the western side there stood the fire-scarred relics of a turret, with one chamber intact, and above that tons of picturesque masonry, which seemed to hang together by a miracle. At the bottom of the turret was an arch of solid brickwork, which had formed the main entrance to the rear of the Hall, and still as bravely propped up its burden as on the day when its coping-stone was laid. A flight of stone stairs ran with a broad sweeping curve to the one tenable room which this old arch supported. Its lower steps were tangled with blackberry vines; and wherever Nature's minutest finger could plant a seed in a crack, flourished some wild-flower or grass-knot, until the solid slabs were forced by the soft insidious pressure of sprouting seed and swelling root from their original lines.

This turret, with its supporting arch, stood full thirty yards away from that remnant of the Hall in which Snelling had set up his new abiding-place; and in the interval between the two, where the main part of the building had once reared its splendid bulk, dogrose, bramble, and thistle and poppy, foxglove, fern, and quaker-grasses, climbed or clung about the low walls of the ruin.

From the first, young John took a boyish fancy to the turret chamber, and there Will Gregg and he, as became two adventurous youthful spirits, enjoyed the long-drawn pleasures of many days' starvation upon rafts at sea, sustained protracted sieges from invisible foes, took the scalps of imaginary Indians by the bushel, and alternated the parts of Crusoe and Friday on a desert island

of their own fancy's making. When the midsummer holidays came round in their season, the two boys almost lived there; and Snelling, in some hope the place might prove to be dangerous and come tumbling one of these fine days about their ears, left them in undisturbed enjoyment of it.

The man in these days seemed living on a whirlpool. His own thoughts bore him round and round one dreadful centre, and his mind fixed itself always on the gulf that opened there, with a crazy longing to be hurled into it. His own projects were foiled on every hand; and he had upon him a constant sense of injury, which exasperated him madly. Everywhere his ward was responsible for his ill fortune; and the boy seemed to prosper in direct inverse ratio with his own hungry evil wishes for him. Proctor brought the most favourable intelligence about the discovered wealth on John's estate. Unthinking friendly neighbours congratulated him upon the find, solidly and heartily, meaning him no evil. Suspicious neighbours congratulated him with an under-meaning in face and voice, and he was prone to read that under-meaning everywhere. Avarice, hate, revenge, swelled and seethed about the keel of that devil's craft he had embarked on, and though to his own eye he seemed no nearer to its centre, every circle brought him nearer to it. His soul plumbed its depths at last, and he had no fear of them. From the zenith to the horizon of the firmament under which his dark soul rode towards its dreadful aim, there shone no star, whether of pity or foreboding.

Every man is two men at the least, and sometimes in us the better creature stands aghast at the incredible promptings of the baser. In him the two had made insensible approaches, and as it were without his knowledge, and now at last they were of one accord.

It was by no act of his that John had chosen the lamp which might have put an end to his life by its explosion at a fitting time. It was by no act of his, again, that the boy had made his playroom of a chamber which a thoughtful man would have looked at twice before he ventured to enter it. These were things for which he had no responsibility; but might he help Providence ever so little, and by doing so make himself rich beyond old dreams, and put that hated object out of sight without incurring so much as a breath of censure or suspicion?

The house had been built two hundred years ago, in days when the work of men's hands was meant to last. The mortar seemed to have grown to be an actual part of the brickwork and masonry it held together; but the chamber John had chosen overhung its supporting arch a little, and seemed to be held in its place by a mere cohesion of parts and half in defiance of gravitation. The two boys ramped and rushed about there and never shook it; and Snelling, watching their gambols sometimes from a distance, cursed the old builder's too honest workmanship.

Could he help Providence a little? Ever so little? A mere line of bricks taken out from the interior of the arch, for example? Taken out one by one in the night-time, and replaced, until some night the whole thickness of the arch, one

brick deep, should be easily swept away, and the chamber, with its superincumbent tons, should only wait the pressure of a foot to hurl it down? Surely, Fate tempted him. He knew, in his own dull uninventive mind, that if he had set all his wits to plot a scheme, he could have discovered or invented nothing so simple, so safe, so sure. Fate, fortune, luck, whatever name he chose to give it, had put this power within his hands.

He went to bed with the thought clear in his mind. The whole house lay asleep while he tossed and tumbled with that hideous fancy for his sole companion. The house had been furnished hastily, and the blind of his bedroom window fell some six inches short of the sash, so that on moonlit nights a gap of light was there, breaking the gray dimness of the window's oblong. He lay and stared at it, and if in his uneasy plunges, as some blunt spur of conscience pricked him, he turned his back upon it for a moment, an instant fear took hold of him, and made him look once more in that direction. A pointed, glittering, ghostly something reared itself like a crooked forefinger over the edge of the window-sash; like the peak of a ghost's head-dress, with phosphoric fires upon it; like an inexorable forefinger that moved one way without remorse or pause; like the point of a sword wielded by some righteous spirit conscious of his purpose, and threatening from afar to shear his soul in twain. No duller man, no man less fanciful, no man less conscious of the hell and heaven he carried in his bosom, laid his head upon pillow within twenty miles that night, and yet each and all of these strange fancies crossed his mind. He knew the while that the glittering point was no more than the horns of the crescent moon traversing the little space of exposed sky before him.

He would have it for a forefinger that beckoned—he would have it so. It should mean that, and neither less nor more. It beckoned towards the ruins. He chose that it should be inexorable, and having chosen so, he needs must follow it. Such tricks can fancy play the dullest embodiment of hate and avarice when the thoughts rise to murder. He rose, and moved about his own chamber noiselessly, like a midnight thief. He dressed himself roughly, and carrying his boots in hand, stole down the stairs. There he listened, with the darkness vast about him, and a whole blank black universe leaping at every heart-beat with murder at his ears. His own purpose appalled him; but that was nothing. Some insistent inward voice seemed to whisper that the thing was as good as done already. Some foolish perverted proverb of his youth was in his mind—'As well do it as think it'—a scrap of wisdom wrenched to folly's uses.

He found matches, a lantern, and a stump of candle. The harsh lock and harsher bolt shrieked warning as he opened the door with a laborious caution. He pulled his boots on outside, and trod with a thievish step upon the grass, not daring to let the loose and scattered gravel of the pathway prate of his whereabouts. Half-way he paused and turned, remembering that his bare hands were useless against the solid masonry. There was a lean-to shed which held garden-tools built out from the house, and here

he found the broken prong of a pitchfork, as likely a thing to suit his purpose as he could have expected. The door of the tool-house hung upon a single hinge, and grated on the ground as he reclosed it. He trembled at the noise, and stood sweating and shaking for a full minute, when he bethought him to have every right to be abroad, and that the excuse of any fancied noise about the grounds would easily explain his presence there. Even now he was resolute and collected enough to know, however, that the work of more than one night lay before him, and that his being observed once only might cast suspicion on him. No surcease of caution then. Step lightly. Listen with throbbing ears that detect a tracking footstep in the echo of your own. Find your own harsh breathing suddenly cast afar and changed to the breathing of an unseen watcher. Dread every rustle of the slumbering night.

He was underneath the arch, and safer, half sheltered from the bright night. The thing was not yet done, and for one moment he hung upon the edge of his abyss. It was altogether vain and foolish to question now whether he should plunge over or go back again, and yet he did it. A man in the maelstrom might as well have questioned—Shall I sink? Shall I swim? The steep looked dizzy, and whilst he hung above it, he was down.

He chose his place, and began to work. The first brick came out more easily than he had fancied possible. The mortar had crumbled somewhat with two hundred years of changeable weather. The next bit hard. His forehead was damp, and his unaccustomed plump hands were hot with labour before he had detached it from its place. The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, succeeded. Then the whole vast chapter of life's accidents seemed opened. He saw himself ruined for a thousand reasons, sought for, called.

Enough for one night. He set the bricks back in their places, painfully picked up the larger fragments of mortar, dropped them in a corner crevice of the ground, and noticed with a disproportioned terror that the turf upon which he had stood looked trampled. He bent and brushed it with his fingers, and then stole back again. His fears stung him at every pore, but he reached his room in safety; and crawling noiselessly into bed again, fell to horrible dreams, in which the ruins tumbled upon him as he worked, crushing him with terror and with torture, and yet without effect on life or limb. Over and over and over again he broke the arch, and over and over and over again the ruins tumbled and overwhelmed him. Vaguely, in his dreams, he thought the way to peace and riches hard.

If the mingling of the forces of human nature were less grotesque and extravagant than it really is, the intrusion of the sordid comedy of Tobias Orme into the sordid tragedy of Robert Snelling might seem altogether wild. But Tobias served his purpose here, and might, for all one can tell to the contrary, have been born for no other end. The sovereign which Isaiah had bestowed upon that disreputable old person had not long staved off the attacks of thirst and hunger. He had fallen desperately ill by the wayside, had been found helpless and almost insensible with cold and pri-

vation, and carried to the workhouse infirmary. There the vital spark bade fair to quit its tenement; but after two or three months of flickering, now up, now down, grew feebly steady once more. The workhouse authorities, of course, were in favour of shipping him off to his own parish, and but for the doctor's energetic protest that he could not possibly survive the journey, would, at a dozen of their weekly meetings, have voted for his transport.

The knowledge of his narrow escape from death frightened Tobias terribly and set him thinking. Rum-and-water had brought him to that dreadful pass, and the frightened wretch made tearful profession of his fault to the chaplain, and signed a pledge of total abstinence with eager trembling fingers.

The chaplain became interested in him; and discovering him to be a person of some education, and now that he was no longer bemused in drink, of some intelligence, would sometimes sit and listen to Mr Orme's reminiscences, which were not always perhaps so truthful as they might have been. Tobias had read a good deal of imaginative fiction in his day, and it was as easy to say that his father had been a dissenting clergyman as it would have been to describe him as a small greengrocer and retail coal-vendor in Whitechapel. Perhaps it came as easy to Tobias to lie as to tell the truth. Perhaps no faculty can be cultivated to excess without danger to its opposite. A vocalist can elect to cultivate his voice upwards or downwards; but when once he has fixed his register, he will find it hard to change it.

It was not in the least likely that the slowly convalescing invalid should omit from the confidences with which he furnished the chaplain the one fact in his career which made him important in his own eyes.

'Humble as I am, sir,' said Tobias oftentimes in speaking of the newly opened coal-fields, 'I am the Columbus of that America. I think I may fairly say, sir, that my present condition is a monument of human ingratitude. Thousands upon thousands of pounds are being drawn every week from the bowels of the earth, and not one penny would ever have been touched if it had not been—I say it respectfully, sir, but whether I say it myself or whether I leave it for other people to say makes no difference, sir, to its veracity—not an atom of the money which has made poor men rich and rich men richer, would ever have gone into a human pocket if it had not been for my perspicacity and intelligence.'

This rather appealed to the chaplain; and the good man made inquiries of Isaiah Winter, who confirmed the story willingly enough, but shocked his questioner by an open avowal of his opinion with regard to Mr Orme's character at large. The chaplain urged that it was hardly fitting that the man should starve whilst other people profited so enormously by his discovery.

'I'll talk it over with my partner,' said Isaiah, 'and we'll see what we can do.'

As a result of the chaplain's intercession, Tobias came out of the workhouse infirmary to the receipt of a weekly income of eighteen shillings, provided in equal portions by Messieurs Day and Winter. The spring was well advanced at the time of his discharge, and though he was still

very feeble, and went quavering about on a pair of walking-sticks, the genial weather and movement in the open air soon set him up again. Wonderful to relate, he stuck to his promise of reform. The dread of death in a ditch became a monomania with him, and he grew miserly in his ways, depriving himself of all manner of creature-comforts, that he might save up something for the remnant of his days.

(To be continued.)

EARLY TELEGRAPHS.

HAPPENING the other day to make some casual remark with regard to the state of telegraphy in the latter part of the last century, the writer was promptly brought to book for his presumed ignorance of the fact, that at that time the effects produced by electrical machines when propagated in insulated conducting wires were unknown. It was not, however, to the electric telegraph that reference had been made; and as it subsequently transpired that the corrector was really ignorant of the fact that telegraphy flourished centuries ago, and that he was not even acquainted with the etymology of the word, the laugh was in the end turned against him. Though it is not likely that many educated persons are equally ignorant of this fact, yet a description of some of the rude shifts and expedients of bygone days for communicating at a distance may carry with them a certain amount of interest. Such aids as carrier-pigeons, speaking-tubes, and the like are outside the category of signal-making machines, adapted to express at a distance letters or words which at close quarters might be either spoken or written; as are also the various means employed to communicate a certain piece of intelligence, such as the result of any particular event, by signals previously agreed upon, as by lanterns, flags, fires, smoke, rockets, guns, drums, or trumpets.

The ancient Greeks and Romans practised telegraphy with the help of pots filled with straw and twigs saturated in oil, which, being placed in rows, expressed certain letters according to the order in which they were lighted; but the only one of their contrivances that merits a detailed description was that invented by a Grecian general named Æneas, who flourished in the time of Aristotle, intended for communication between the generals of an army. It consisted of two exactly similar earthen vessels, filled with water, each provided with a cock that would discharge an equal quantity of water in a given time, so that the whole or any part of the contents would escape in precisely the same period from both vessels. On the surface of each floated a piece of cork supporting an upright, marked off into divisions, each division having a certain sentence inscribed upon it. One of the vessels was placed at each station; and when either party desired to communicate, he lighted a torch, which he held aloft until the other did the same, as a sign that he was all attention. On the sender of the

message lowering or extinguishing his torch, each party immediately opened the cock of his vessel, and so left it until the sender relighted his torch, when it was at once closed. The receiver then read the sentence on the division of the upright that was level with the mouth of the vessel, and which, if everything had been executed with exactness, corresponded with that of the sender, and so conveyed the desired intimation.

We must here pause a moment to point out one great advantage that this contrivance, simple as it undoubtedly was, will be seen to possess over the more scientific ones that follow, and that was, its equal efficacy in any sort of country and in any position, whether on a plain, on the summit of a hill, or in a sequestered valley.

To descend to more modern times. Kessler in his *Concealed Arts* advised the cutting out of characters in the bottom of casks, which would appear luminous when a light was placed inside. In the *Spectator* of December 6, 1711, there is an extract from Strada, an Italian historian, who published his *Prolusiones Academicæ* in 1617. In the passage referred to, the modern system of telegraphy is curiously indicated. It is as follows: 'Strada, in one of his Prolusions, gives an account of a chimerical correspondence between two friends by the help of a certain loadstone, which had such virtue in it, that if it touched two several needles, when one of the needles so touched began to move, the other, though at never so great a distance, moved at the same time and in the same manner. He tells us that the two friends, being each of them possessed of one of these needles, made a kind of a dial-plate, inscribing it with the four-and-twenty letters, in the same manner as the hours of the day are marked upon the ordinary dial-plate. They then fixed one of the needles on each of these plates in such a manner that it could move round without impediment so as to touch any of the four-and-twenty letters. Upon their separating from one another into distant countries, they agreed to withdraw themselves punctually into their closets at a certain hour of the day, and to converse with one another by means of this their invention. Accordingly, when they were some hundred miles asunder, each of them shut himself up in his closet at the time appointed, and immediately cast his eye upon his dial-plate. If he had a mind to write anything to his friend, he directed his needle to every letter that formed the words which he had occasion for, making a little pause at the end of every word or sentence, to avoid confusion. The friend, in the meanwhile, saw his own sympathetic needle moving of itself to every letter which that of his correspondent pointed at. By this means they talked together across a whole continent, and conveyed their thoughts to one another in an instant over cities or mountains, seas or deserts.'

It was not till near the close of the seventeenth century that a really practical system of visual signalling from hill to hill was introduced

by Dr Hooke, whose attention had been turned to the subject at the siege of Vienna by the Turks. He erected on the top of several hills having a sky-line background three high poles or masts, connected at their upper ends by a cross-piece. The space between two of these poles was filled in with timbers to form a screen, behind which the various letters were hung in order on lines, and, by means of pulleys, run out into the clear space between the other two, when they stood out clear against the sky-line. The letters were thus run out and back again in the required order of spelling, and were divided into day and night letters—the former being made of deals, the latter with the addition of links or lights; besides which there were certain conventional characters to represent such sentences as, ‘I am ready to communicate,’ ‘I am ready to receive.’ In his description of the device, read before the Royal Society on the 21st of May 1684, Dr Hooke, after claiming for it the power of transmitting messages to a station thirty or forty miles distant, said: ‘For the performance of this we must be beholden to a late invention, which we do not find any of the ancients knew; that is, the eye must be assisted with telescopes, that whatever characters are exposed at one station may be made plain and distinguishable at the other.’ A cipher code was subsequently added by an ingenious Frenchman named Amontons.

In 1767 we find Mr Richard L. Edgeworth, the father of Maria Edgeworth, employing the sails of a common windmill for communicating intelligence, by an arranged system of signals according to the different positions of the arms. The signals were made to denote numbers, the corresponding parties being each provided with a dictionary in which the words were numbered—the system in vogue for our army-signalling till 1871, when the Morse alphabet was substituted for it.

And here we would make another short digression to state one undoubted advantage that the numeral has over the letter system; by way of illustrating which, let us suppose the case of an allied army. With the aid of a vocabulary in which words of the same meaning in the different languages of the nations comprising the force had the same number attached to them, intercourse could be carried on from one language into another which, though perhaps not strictly grammatical, would be sufficiently intelligible.

A great stride was made in 1793 by M. Chappe, a citizen of Paris, when the French Revolution directed all the energies of that nation to the improvement of the art of war; reporting on whose machine to the French Convention in August of the following year, Barère remarked: ‘By this invention, remoteness and distance almost disappear, and all the communications of correspondence are effected with the rapidity of the twinkling of an eye.’ It consisted of a strong wooden mast some twenty-five feet high, with a cross-beam twelve feet by nine inches jointed on to its top, so as to be movable about its centre like a scale-beam, and could thus be placed horizontally, vertically, or anyhow inclined by means of cords. To each end of this cross-beam was affixed a short vertical indicator about four feet long, which likewise turned on pivots by means of cords, and to the end of each was attached a counterweight, almost invisible at a

distance, to balance the weight of it. This machine could be made to assume certain positions which represented or were symbolical of letters of the alphabet. In working, nothing depended on the operator's manual skill, as the movements were regulated mechanically. The time taken up for each movement was twenty seconds, of which the actual motion occupied four; during the other sixteen, the telegraph was kept stationary, to allow of its being distinctly observed and the letter written down by those at the next station. All the parts were painted dark brown, that they might stand out well against the sky; and three persons were required at each station, one to manipulate the machine, another to read the messages through a telescope, and the third to transfer them to paper, or repeat them to No. 1 to send on. The first machine of this kind was erected on the roof of the Paris Louvre, to communicate with the army which was then stationed near Lille, between which places intermediate ones from nine to twelve miles apart were erected, the second being at Montmartre. The different limbs were furnished with argand lamps for night-work.

Shortly after this, our own government set up lines of communication from the Admiralty to Deal, Portsmouth, and other points on the coast, which we find thus reported in the *Annual Register* for 1796:

March 28th. ‘A telegraph was this day erected over the Admiralty, which is to be the point of communication with all the different sea-ports in the kingdom. The nearest telegraph to London has hitherto been in St George's Fields; and to such perfection has this ingenious and useful contrivance been already brought, that one day last week information was conveyed from Dover to London in the space of only seven minutes. The plan proposed to be adopted in respect to telegraphs is yet only carried into effect between London and Dover; but it is intended to extend all over the kingdom. The importance of this speedy communication must be evident to every one; and it has this advantage, that the information conveyed is known only to the person who sends and to him who receives it. The intermediate posts have only to answer and convey the signals.’

The machines used consisted of three masts connected by a top-piece. The spaces between the masts were divided into three horizontally, and in each partition a large wooden octagon was fixed, poised upon a horizontal axis across its centre, so that it could be made to present either its surface or its edge to the observer. The octagons were turned by means of cranks upon the ends of the axles, from which cords descended into a cabin below. By the changes in the position of these six octagonal boards, thirty-six changes were easily exhibited, and the signal to represent any letter or number made: thus, one board being turned into a horizontal position so as to expose its edge, while the other five remained shut or in a vertical position, might stand for A, two of them only in a horizontal position for B, three for C, and so on. It was, however, found that the octagons were less evident to the eye at a distance than the indicators of Chappe's machine, requiring the stations to be closer together; nor could this telegraph be made to change its direction, so that it could only be

seen from one particular point, which necessitated having a separate machine at the Admiralty for each line, as well as an additional one at every branch-point. It was, moreover, too bulky and of a form unsuitable for illumination at night.

Here we may notice that in 1801 Mr John Boaz of Glasgow obtained a patent for a telegraph which effected the signal by means of twenty-five lamps arranged in five rows of five each, so as to form a square. Each lamp was provided with a blind, with which its light could be obscured, so that they could be made to exhibit letters and figures by leaving such lamps only visible as were necessary to form the character.

The next improvement again came from France, in 1806, when an entirely new set of telegraphs on the following principle was established along the whole extent of the coast of the French empire. A single upright pole was provided with three arms, each movable about an axis at one end—one near the head, the other two at points lower down, all painted black, with their counterpoises white, so as to be invisible a short way off. Each arm could assume six different positions—one straight out on either side of the pole, two at an angle of forty-five degrees above this line, and two at forty-five degrees below it. The arm near the head could be made to exhibit seven positions, the seventh being the vertical; but as this might have been mistaken for part of the pole, it was not employed. The number of combinations or different signals that could be rendered by this machine, employing only three objects, was consequently three hundred and forty-two against sixty-three by that of our Admiralty just described, and which employed six objects.

It was not long, however, before we copied the advancement of our neighbours across the Channel, and in some respects improved upon it, the main differences being that only two arms were employed—one at the top, the other half-way down, and that the mast was made to revolve on a vertical axis, so that the arms could be rendered visible from any desired quarter. Its mechanism, the invention of Sir Home Popham, enabled the arms to be moved by means of endless screws worked by iron spindles from below, a vast improvement on the old cords, the more so as they worked inside the mast, which was hollow, hexagonal in section, and framed of six boards bound together by iron hoops, and were thus protected from the weather. Inside the cabin he erected two dials, one for each arm, each having an index finger that worked simultaneously with its corresponding arm above, on the same principle as the little semaphore models to be seen nowadays in our railway signal cabins.

We have now described the most prominent of the numerous contrivances which, prior to the application of electricity to that end, were devised and made use of for telegraphic communication, all of which, unlike that subtle power that is not afraid of the dark and can travel in all weathers, possessed a common weakness in their liability to failure through atmospheric causes, fog, mist, haze, &c. To us who live in this age of electrical marvels, when that particular science more than all others progresses by leaps and bounds, it appears passing strange and almost incredible that so many years were allowed to elapse before the parents of the electric telegraph, the electrical

machine and magnetic compass, were joined in wedlock to produce their amazing progeny, which now enables all mankind however distant to hold rapid, soft, and easy converse.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

THE interview which Kate had with her father that evening was not a very long one, nor was it remarkable for any display of feeling on either side. He had, as he said, made up his mind, and nothing Kate could say had the least effect upon him. She did her best; but when he rose from his chair and told her to leave him, she was no nearer gaining her end than when she broached the subject.

'Will you think about it again when he has got a good practice, father?'

'You have had my answer, Kate. It is finally and absolutely No. I will not think about it now or at any other time, and the sooner you forget the man the better.'

Clearly, there was no hope of doing things in an orthodox fashion; and before Kate went to sleep that night, she had thought out her project in detail, to lay before Charles Lakeworth next day.

'I sincerely hope I have settled that for good and all,' said Mr Dottleson to the mirror after Kate had gone. 'If there's any more bother about it, I'll send her away into the country for a few months, and see what that will do.'

He was not destined to hear anything more from Kate; they met at breakfast as usual, and the hated name was not mentioned. His daughter's manner towards him was unchanged, and he told himself that she had accepted the inevitable at last, and would not trouble him again.

Miss Mumbole might have learnt the particulars of Kate's device and told them to us, had she been less interested in a speech which a great politician had delivered at a garden-party the day before; but the lovers conversed in such low tones that only a most attentive listener could have heard what they said. Their last few words were audible, and we are able to place them on record.

'Now just tell me exactly what you want me to do?' said Charles when Kate had unfolded her plan.

'All you have to do is to go to your lodgings and pack up at once; take away everything, and say you are not coming back. Don't forget to drop a hint to your landlady that you are going abroad.'

'Where am I to go, and what's to become of my patients?'

'Go anywhere you like, but don't show yourself on any account. You'd better ask some other doctor to look after your patients; it will give colour to the idea that you have left England.'

'If I took lodgings out at Highgate, it would do?'

'Yes; it would do very well. Send your address to Miss Mumbole, so that I can write to you.'

Charles reflected for a few minutes before he spoke again; the plan proposed seemed quite feasible, and promised success. He had everything to win, and little to lose; for if it prospered, Kate would be his with her father's sanction; and if it failed, he would be much where he was before. 'All right, Kate, I'll do it. Don't forget to write.'

'Very well; it's settled. You'd better go at once, and be sure you don't leave your lodgings later than four this afternoon.'

By three o'clock Dr Lakeworth was driving away from his old quarters with all his baggage, having asked a friend to take his practice for a day or two, paid off his landlady, and carefully imbued that worthy woman with the notion that he was bound for the Continent.

When Mr Dottleson came home that evening, and casually asked for his daughter, he was informed that she had gone away in a cab, taking a quantity of luggage with her, about an hour before. She had not told any of the servants where she was going, and the only clue to her destination was the order she had been heard to give the cabman, 'To Victoria.'

'Did she leave no message for me?' asked the astounded parent.

'No, sir.'

'Did she say when she was coming back?'

'No, sir.'

Every domestic in the house was examined in turn; but not a scrap of information could be gleaned which would throw a ray of light upon this extraordinary proceeding of Kate's. There was only one thing to be done, and Mr Dottleson did it. He sent for a hansom, and drove as fast as he could go to Victoria Station. There he made inquiries of the booking-office clerks; and his heart bounded with excitement when one of the men looked round from his desk and said that he recollected serving a young lady answering the description, with tickets for Dover.

'With tickets!' ejaculated Mr Dottleson. 'How many did she take?'

'Two first-class singles,' replied the man promptly.

That looked ugly; the faint suspicions he had dismissed as ridiculous, returned and took a very definite shape.

'When does the next train leave for Dover?'

'Express at 7.30, sir.'

Mr Dottleson looked at his watch: it was nearly six now, so he had an hour and a half to wait. He would employ the time profitably by going to Dr Lakeworth's lodgings and making inquiries there.

'Is Dr Lakeworth in?' he asked the woman who opened the door.

'No, sir; but Dr Lakeworth he sez as Dr Wilmot'—

'I don't want Dr Wilmot. When is Dr Lakeworth expected home?'

'He *ain't* expected; but Dr Wilmot'—

Time was too precious to be frittered away like this: he pushed past the woman into the passage and told her to call the landlady. The landlady took some time to answer the summons, and when she did, she proved to be but one degree more intelligent than the servant. Mr Dottleson speedily discovered this, and took her in hand with a firm patience which would have done credit to a Queen's Counsel.

Was Dr Lakeworth at home? No, but— Never mind that. When did he go away? Go away? It might have been three o'clock, or half-past, or even four; the clocks was— Never mind about the clocks. Was Dr Lakeworth coming back? He said as how he wasn't; but them medical gentlemen— Never mind medical gentlemen just now. Did he say where he was going? The landlady's countenance lit up with intelligence, and she fairly beamed with superior knowledge. She knowed *exactly* where Dr Lakeworth had gone. Mr Dottleson almost jumped off the table upon which he was seated, but choked down his eagerness, and repeated the question. The doctor was gone to furrin parts; to the Continong, he said. There was a certain amount of latitude in the address, but it was quite enough to harden suspicion into certainty. It was as clear as daylight. The two were off to the Continent *via* Dover. Kate and her lover had left their respective homes at the same time; the former had taken their tickets, and the latter had disclosed the direction they intended to take.

Mr Dottleson did not stand on ceremony; he was out of the house and back in his hansom before the landlady could turn round. Kate had eloped with Charles Lakeworth! A thousand pounds sterling per annum was trembling in the balance! O the wickedness, the deceit of the human heart! O the shortsighted, unfathomable folly of old ladies who made wills like that!

'Double fare if I catch the 7.30 from Victoria!'

They *must* be stopped. He would search every hotel in Dover. He would put on detectives to watch the Calais boat. A thousand pounds a year! Central Asia— Good heavens! was there ever such a snail in harness before? Were the London streets ever so crowded as they were now? This was all the outcome of that call for Smuggles's partner; the words were ringing in his ears when he got out at the station and paid off his cab. He was in time for the train, and lay back in his seat panting and breathless; he was tired, but as unswerving as ever in his purpose.

Dover at last. He walked out of the station and hailed a cab; he had had no dinner, but hunger was forgotten.

'Take me to all the hotels in the town one after the other,' he said to the dumfounded jehu.

'It will take the whole night, sir.'

'I'll make it worth your while.'

Whatever remuneration that cab-driver received he fairly earned it. He took his fare from one hotel to another, until his horse broke down, and he passed Mr Dottleson on to a belated 'growler' who was crawling home. At four o'clock in the

morning he drove up to the Station Hotel and dragged himself to bed; he had examined the visitors' book in every hotel in the place, and had questioned the hall porters besides; but not a trace had he found of the fugitives.

He slept until nine o'clock from sheer fatigue; but as soon as he awoke, he rose, swallowed his breakfast, and went to the police office, where he succeeded in obtaining the services of men to watch the boats, who were to telegraph to him if the pair were seen. Then he took the train back to town, and went direct to Starbone and Smuggles's office to see Mr Slimp, whom he found in his room looking as gaunt and sorrowful as ever.

'You made a most exhaustive search at Dover, Mr Dottleson?' he said when he had heard the whole story and the manner in which his client had passed the preceding night.

'Most thorough. I cannot think they are there, though they were too late to catch the afternoon boat.'

'It may be that taking the tickets was a mere blind. Why should Miss Dottleson not have booked through to Paris or wherenot, if she actually intended going?'

Mr Dottleson had not thought of that; it was a little strange. Kate had often been across the Channel with him, and knew the saving of trouble booking 'through' implied.

'What course would you suggest, Mr Slimp? The consequences of such a marriage would be ruinous—simply ruinous.'

Mr Slimp stroked his hair up the wrong way and thought hard. 'We must advertise, Mr Dottleson, and at once.'

Blazon the wretched scandal to the world through the Agony Columns of the penny papers! That it should come to this! He laid his head upon his arm and groaned. 'Couldn't detectives do it?'

'They're too slow, Mr Dottleson; and the parties haven't committed any crime.'

Hadn't committed any crime! And they were throwing away Twenty Thousand Pounds. No crime! How could any reasonable man sit there and talk like that?

'I leave the matter in your hands, Mr Slimp; I feel myself unequal to the task of dealing with it. My daughter must be brought back, and Mrs Lamshed's money must be saved to us. Do whatever you think most advisable.'

'I will do my best,' said the melancholy man with a sigh, 'but it's a difficult case.'

Mr Slimp had not a reassuring way with him; but he was an energetic man enough. He put the business in hand at once, and did what he thought was most efficacious. Mr Dottleson saw the result next morning in the *Times*; here it is: 'Mr M. D. of Blakewood Square, Kensington, earnestly requests his daughter to communicate with him immediately. He hereby undertakes to consider her wish if she at once returns to his care. Mr C. L. is also invited to return.'

He had hardly realised the situation until this caught his eye in the paper. He said nothing to any one, but crammed the *Times* into his pocket and drove to Lincoln's Inn. He could not put the thought which oppressed his brain into words. Mr Slimp was engaged when he reached the office; but on hearing who the visitor was, sent to request

him to come in. He went in, and found a middle-aged clergyman in earnest conversation with the solicitor. He bowed slightly to our friend, who returned the salutation with an idle glance. He had no inclination to meet strangers just now, and was a good deal surprised at the lawyer receiving himself when he had another client in his room.

'Sit down, Mr Dottleson,' said the solicitor. 'Allow me to introduce the Rev. William Wiskin, Secretary to the Central Asia Missionary Society.'

Mr Dottleson turned pale and trembled; he was face to face with the enemy.

'I had called upon Mr Slimp in consequence of the advertisement in this morning's paper, Mr Dottleson,' explained the clergyman. 'Being of course aware of the Society's reversionary interest in the late Mrs Lamshed's property, it appeared that inquiries made in its behalf might not be out of place.'

'I have advised Mr Wiskin that he has as yet no shadow of a claim on the property,' said Mr Slimp. 'We have no proof of Miss Dottleson's marriage to Mr Lakeworth or any one else, so far.'

'I trust that Mr Dottleson will not consider my call hasty and precipitate; but, as I have pointed out, the young lady *may* be already wedded to the gentleman named in the advertisement; in which case, since her father's consent has obviously not'—

His smoothly flowing speech was interrupted by a suppressed scream of rage from Mr Dottleson, as that gentleman sprang from his chair, grabbed wildly at the stationery case on the table, tore a sheet of paper therefrom and seized a pen. Not another instant should be lost; and without pausing to reseal himself, he dashed off three lines of writing and signed his full name at the bottom; he added the date and, after a look at the clock, the exact time.

'My consent,' he gasped, forcing the document into Mr Slimp's hands. He had fired his last shot, and sank back into his chair, whence he fixed Mr Wiskin with a stare of impotent ferocity. That gentleman was not slow to understand the footing upon which matters had now been placed, and rose to take his leave, telling the lawyer that he should no doubt hear from him if necessary. He attempted to address a few words of condolence to Mr Dottleson; but when he looked at him, they died upon his lips, and he fled from the office, looking back more than once, half expecting to see the outraged parent in pursuit.

Mr Dottleson, however, was too much occupied with his own side of the affair to move; his anxiety lest the paper he had given Mr Slimp should prove too late, overcame every other sentiment; he hardly knew that he was consenting to Dr Lakeworth's union with Kate and endowing the latter with her grandmother's money. The Missionary Society had been nothing more to him than a name until Mr Wiskin appeared on the scene, and then its reality burst upon him with such threatening clearness that his only thought was to defeat its claim.

'If they have been married by now,' said the solicitor slowly, 'no advertisement will induce them to come back; but it's very unlikely that they would be in such a violent hurry; and

with your leave, I'll issue a new advertisement which may do more than this one.'

'Do what you think best; but for mercy's sake, let me know the very moment you hear whether that permission I gave you is in time.'

Mr Slimp promised compliance, and saw his client to the door; then he went back into his room and set himself to draw up another advertisement, which we may as well show the reader at once:

'If Miss K. D. of No. 21 Blakewood Square, South Kensington, will apply to Messrs Starbone and Smuggles, Lincoln's Inn, she will receive the written permission she requires. She must apply personally.'

The London dailies gave due publicity to this announcement the following morning, with singularly prompt results. Mr Dottleson called at Lincoln's Inn about eleven o'clock to ask for news, and was informed that Miss Dottleson had come to the office half an hour previously, and having inspected the document her father had signed, and received assurance that it was legally what it purported to be, had gone away in the direction of the West End—probably to Blakewood Square.

Mr Dottleson rushed out of the office and called a cab; his excitement was rising again, for in half an hour he was to know where Mrs Lamshed's money was to go. Kate was standing at the dining-room window when he drove up and came to open the door.

'When were you married?' he demanded excitedly the instant he was inside the house.

'Married?' echoed his daughter. 'I'm not married. Who said I was?'

Mr Dottleson sank limply into a chair, and gaped at her for three minutes before he found speech. Then he pulled himself together to perform his duty.

'Explain where you have been ever since Tuesday. What have you been doing? Where is that scoundrel Lakeworth?'

The extreme simplicity of Miss Dottleson's explanation goaded her father almost to madness. She had been staying with her old governess, Miss Simcox, at Dover, for a day or two. It was very slow indeed down there; she did absolutely nothing. She wasn't quite sure where Dr Lakeworth was; but he said on Tuesday that he was going to Highgate for a short time; no doubt he would write when he saw the advertisement.

And this was what he had magnified into an elopement! We will not dwell upon Mr Montague Dottleson's wrath: we will not relate how he tried to get that paper back from Mr Slimp, and how the melancholy man, as executor, would not give it up. We say that we will not speak of these things; we leave them to the reader's imagination. It was a long time before our friend recognised that he was beaten, and might as well give in gracefully; but he did so at last, and Charles Lakeworth married Kate Dottleson with her father's blessing.

Dr Lakeworth has now a large practice at the West End, and Kate sometimes complains that he devotes more attention to his work than to her. Nevertheless, they are a very happy couple;

and old Mr Dottleson frankly admits that his daughter's choice was a wise one, though he looks grave when you ask him about her little visit to Dover.

MACKEREL-FISHING IN SPAIN.

THE Fisheries Exhibition in London (1883) proved at least one thing—that skill in the art of fishing was not confined to the British Isles. Opportunities were afforded us of learning new and valuable methods of taking the finny treasures of the deep. These methods in some cases might be adopted *in toto*, or modified to suit the difference of climate, seaboard, and habits of the fish. We purpose in this paper to give some account of the method of taking mackerel on the south-west coast of Spain.

We had once the great privilege of sojourning for several months (March to August) in that rather warm quarter of the world. The town of Huelva was our headquarters. It is some four miles inland from the Atlantic, on the river Odiel, and is washed at every tide by the health-giving brine of the sea. It is somewhat widely known as the port from which the copper ore from the Rio Tinto and Tharsis mines is shipped. Of more interest to us—unless we are shareholders in either or both of these Companies—is the fine old Roman aqueduct of which it can boast. From Huelva, some two miles down the river, can be seen the famous Convent de la Rabida, where Columbus and the Abbot Marchena discussed the probabilities of a land beyond the western horizon; and a little farther south, the tiny port of Palos, from which the memorable expedition set out. The convent occupies the finest site of the whole region. On its western side it commands a magnificent view of the Atlantic; and doubtless here, on a lofty covered balcony, Columbus and the monks often gathered and gazed on the tempting sea. In the chapel of the convent you may have the pleasure of standing in an ancient wicker pulpit from which the renowned discoverer addressed the fisher-folk of Palos. In a somewhat small room you have fairly good representations in oil of the appearance of Colon's fleet as it was ready to start on the ever-memorable voyage.

Descending from the bluff headland, with its background of Spanish pines, on which the old convent stands, we make our way to the *lancha* that is to take us out to our summer quarters by the 'shore of the sea.' We are struck at once with the similarity of our boat to the ships in Colon's fleet. It is lateen-rigged, the mast leaning toward the bow of the boat, and having a long supple yard dipping at the bow attached to it. When you want to run before the wind, you loose the bow-line and haul the sail round square. It is a grand sight to see a fleet of fishing-boats thus running before the wind, coming towards you as you stand, near the river's entrance, on the shore. They look like so many balloons careering along the waves. The constant winds make it safe to carry a crowd of canvas, and as the boats are well ballasted, a great speed may be obtained with perfect safety. Our hand was on the tiller—we had just graduated in steersmanship—and there was a new and unguessed joy in the feeling of power guiding the throbbing thing of life through the yielding waves. To guide the gliding *lancha*

through the old channel by which Colon's small fleet sailed out to the ocean was a thing to be remembered, a 'joy for ever.'

The evening sun was dipping in the west when a Spanish friend invited us to the mackerel-fishing on the morrow. We had heard a new street-cry in Huelva ('Cavalla'), and had heard the mackerel-seller praise his fish not as 'caller,' but as 'sons of rascals,' 'capital with tomatoes.' Therefore, no second invitation was required, and the hour was fixed for the start. Before daylight (three A.M.) the Spaniard shook himself out of his blanket on the veranda outside our door, where he had been sleeping, and we were soon at the boat. There another Spanish friend—you must always call a Spaniard *amigo* (friend) and *cavallero* (gentleman)—was 'sorting' the fishing-tackle. We observed him in the semi-darkness of the morning putting several articles into the boat. First, there was a box of sand, which we thought might be intended for ballast; next, a hatchet, a large bottle of olive oil, a board eighteen inches long by twelve inches broad, some stale mackerel, and a few rods and lines. And now we were away, but only to flounder on a sandbank over which the waves were breaking. Getting off, we hoisted sail, cleared the shore, and made straight for the fishing-ground, which was some six miles nearer the New World. The wind was light, so the time was beguiled by taking an oar, singing a Spanish song, or gazing in rapture at the rising sun.

Shortly after daybreak we came to the fishing-ground, and found there some fifty boats anchored, and having a grand time with the mackerel. Our first impulse was to indulge in a hearty Scotch laugh. There, a few yards away, was a Spanish boat somewhat larger than ours, with four men sitting on the gunwale, their feet dangling to the water. They had each a short cane-rod about four feet long, with a yard and a half of stout line finished off with a couple of hooks. Picturesque fellows they were, with their brown *sombreros* (broad-brimmed hats), dark-blue pantaloons, short pale-blue jerkins, bare feet, and the universal *faja* (a long strip of cloth, generally red) encircling their waists. When one caught a fish, he made it spin into the air right above his head, so that in its descent it passed his left shoulder. As it came down, he struck the line sharply above the fish with the forefinger of his left hand, thus instantly freeing the hook, and the next moment dashed hooks and line again into the sea. And so deft were they in the art, that a fish was always in the air!—sometimes two, for they often caught two at a time. After our face had contracted a bit and had regained its natural and customary expression, out went the anchor, and the rods were in hasty requisition.

On our way out, whilst we had been singing, semi-gazing, or occasionally pulling an oar, one of our friends had been chopping into mince-meat the stale mackerel we had brought, mixing it with sand and olive oil. A handful of this mixture was now scattered on the water, and we all looked eagerly for signs of fish. There they are! In go the lines with a dash, and up comes the first fish to our line. 'Ave Maria!' says Manuel quietly, and waits his turn, whilst we clumsily cleared our hook. It was well for us that Manuel was a bundle of good-humour, for during the

first five minutes our fish were alighting everywhere—on his head, neck, shoulders, and, for a change, sometimes in the sea on the other side of the boat. Once, too, we fared badly. A fish was in the air right above our head, which noble member, scornful to be bespattered, went smartly on one side, but only to make a nice space between our neck and collar, into which the glittering sprawler swiftly dashed.

A handful of lurement thrown out occasionally soon gathered a fine shoal of fish about the boat. We could see them in dozens darting at the chopped fragments of their relatives. Our lines and hooks were unceremoniously dashed in among them; and so well did we do, that even at our boat a fish was almost always in the air. We did not always put on bait; the bright hooks were enough. The noise in the boat became tremendous, so many tails pattering in concert on the bottom. It certainly was novel sport, just exciting enough to rub away for a time the effects of the early summer heat. By eight o'clock the sun was uncomfortably hot, so we furled up and stood for the shore with seven hundred and seventy fish, and were in time for late breakfast. The odd seventy were distributed among the families; the seven hundred our Spanish friends sold, and in the evening handed us a magnificent 'basket of summer fruit'—figs, apricots, mulberries, &c.—as our share of reward for the morning's toils.

That was our best day's fishing. Diminished in numbers, the mackerel were steering northward, mayhap to visit the cooler waters of the British Isles. But our best take was far behind the other boats. We could count a great part of their catch from the shore; for the Spanish fishermen strung the fish in fifties and hung them over the side of the boat. To keep them fresh, one man on each side kept drawing bucketfuls of sea-water and pouring it on the fish. Some of the boats were covered from stem to stern with strings of fish, and these were all taken with rod and line in the manner we have described.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WERE it not for the wonders which are achieved constantly by modern engineering, it would be thought that there is one difficulty at least in the way of completing the Manchester Ship Canal which can hardly be surmounted: this is represented by the necessary removal and reconstruction of the aqueduct, made by Brindley, which carries the famous Bridgewater Canal across the river Irwell at Barton. As the level of this old canal must be left undisturbed, and as at the same time it must be removable at times, to permit the passing of masted vessels on the new waterway below it, it is intended to make a swivel aqueduct of it, so that, when required, it can be bodily thrust aside. It is also contemplated to transfer vessels from one canal to the other by means of an hydraulic lift.

In the course of recent excavations among the minor pyramids and burial-places of Egypt, Mr Petrie has made a curious discovery, which promises to be most useful to students, as pointing out a fresh source of papyrus records. A large

number of mummies are decorated with head-pieces made of a material which is technically known as 'cartonnage,' and which generally consists of layers of coarse linen glued and pressed together and coated with stucco. But in the mummies of a certain period Mr Petrie has found that this cartonnage, instead of a foundation of linen, is made up of layers of papyrus, waste documents which have found their way to the undertaker. These layers can easily be separated by soaking in water, and are in a perfectly legible condition.

At last there is a near probability of the Metropolis being lighted by electricity, and as a matter of fact, the huge city has been divided for this purpose into districts, each district having been allocated to an electric lighting company, in order that the necessary works may be proceeded with. The gas companies are doing their best to stem the tide which threatens their interests, and in order that they may have a stronger hold upon their customers, are offering to supply them with heat as well as light upon liberal terms. In a circular which we have perused, issued by one great company, the offer is made to supply cooking-stoves almost at cost price, to lay on the necessary pipes for them, and to fix connections free of expense to the consumer. Whatever electricity can do for us, there is certainly no immediate prospect of its being able to cook our dinners, whereas gas we know will do it well and cheaply. The companies are therefore wise in endeavouring to open up this new source of revenue; but they would have been wiser if, a few years ago, instead of opposing 'the light of the future,' they had taken it up and made arrangements for its distribution among their clients.

It will be remembered that four or five years back one of the numerous lightships which protect shipping from the rocks and treacherous sandbanks that dot our coasts was connected with the shore by a telegraph cable, so that signals for help—invisible to those on shore—could be quickly advertised to the lifeboat crews and others concerned. A Committee was appointed to report upon the advantages of the system, and their Report has just appeared as a parliamentary paper. After five years' experience gained in the manner described, the Committee have come to the conclusion that the expenditure involved is not commensurate with the advantages gained, and they not only, therefore, recommend that the electrical communication should be discontinued with regard to lightships, but that it should not be extended to lighthouses. At the same time the Report is not unanimous, for one dissentient, in the person of Sir Edward Birkbeck, M.P., is of opinion that a much more extended trial of the system should be carried out before a decision is arrived at.

In an interesting Report on Brazilian trade, the Secretary to the British Legation at Rio de Janeiro gives some information as to the best means of cultivating trade with Brazil, which British manufacturers would do well to study. The writer of this Report complains that our manufacturers do not meet the requirements of the markets with which they deal, but stick obstinately to their own ideas, losing trade, and giving opportunities to other nations to take their places. As a case in point, cheap cutlery is

mentioned; and it is stated that Sheffield cutlery having so far met the demand for cheapness with refusal and disdain, another manufacturing country has taken their place. It is further stated that in dealing with Brazil even the commonest article should bear some kind of ornament. This addition, although quite a superfluity, as we should think, has a great attraction in the eyes of the natives, who will not buy unless the article is showy. The same feeling applies to packages of laces and all textiles, the outsides of which should be adorned with showy labels, &c. If, therefore, our manufacturers wish to do trade with Brazil they must set aside their ordinary ways of dealing with fellow-countrymen, and make their wares more attractive to the eye.

Dr G. F. Brush, of New York, has collected a large number of statistics, by which he seeks to prove that tuberculous disease in man is closely connected with the same disease in cattle. This theory is contrary to the view generally held, it being supposed that, owing to difference in normal temperature, transmission of phthisis between man and beast would be next to impossible. But Dr Brush's statistics show that where cattle are common, and dairy produce necessarily forms a regular part of the daily food of the people, there may be found the victims of consumption. In other districts where the dairy cow is absent, there is also an absence of phthisis. Statistics are notoriously uncertain in the evidence which they afford, and further inquiry is needed before the theory enunciated by Dr Brush can be accepted.

Putting aside all theories with regard to the infection by impure milk of any particular disease, it would seem that the condition of the household milk-supply is a far more important subject than that of water-supply. In our present ignorance of the way in which disease-germs affect us, and with the certain knowledge that they are mostly rendered inert by being submitted to a high temperature, all householders should make it the rule to have the daily supply of milk scalded before it is used. Some persons, especially children, will turn against milk which has been so treated, and complain that it is disagreeable and insipid. It does certainly acquire a peculiar taste; but this can be corrected if, when the milk is heated, it has added to it either a little salt or a few lumps of sugar.

We are very glad to see in a contemporary, *The Sanitary World*, allusion made to that unaccountable dread of night-air which has done and is doing so much mischief. 'What can we breathe at night,' it is asked, 'but night-air?'—the choice being between the contaminated air within the house and the free pure air without. It is always a difficult matter to trace back the origin of a popular delusion, and how this wonderful prejudice against night-air arose it is impossible to say; but we may safely relegate it to those ages when darkness was a synonym for all kinds of imaginary fears. In a city, it is quite certain that the air at night is in a far purer state than it is by day. It is also certain that if we all made a rule of sleeping with open windows, we should be far freer from disease than we now are. But the prejudice is not confined to night-air, for we have all had experience of the horrible atmosphere of a closed tramcar or other public vehicle, owing to

the fear that the majority possess of breathing the fresh air.

The proposal to gild the outer surface of the dome of St Paul's is one of those things which seem to be revived at stated times, to be as often put aside and forgotten. The suggestion is not one that is likely to commend itself to a practical people, for it could only be carried out at the expenditure of about fifteen thousand pounds, nor would artists be inclined to agree that the beauty of the cathedral would be enhanced by the change. The metropolitan church has a beauty which is distinctive, and it seems a pity that it should be interfered with. Moreover, the worship of mammon is prominent enough already, without being typified in the way suggested. The proposal has been made that the ribs of the dome only should be gilded, after the manner of the cupola of the Invalides in Paris, and that in order to judge of the effect, a few of these ribs should, as a preliminary step, be covered with imitation gold (Dutch metal), so that artists might judge of the effect.

At a recent meeting of a Medical Society in New York, a few unusual cases of lead-poisoning were discussed by members under whose personal notice they had been brought. In the first case, a man who had been employed as a florist had shown marked symptoms of lead-poisoning after having been in the habit of biting off the ends of the tinfoil used as wrappers for bouquets. (So-called 'tinfoil,' it may be mentioned, contains far more of the metal lead than it does of tin.) Another man was afflicted with the same symptoms owing to having been in the habit of drinking beer from bottles which had been cleaned with lead-shot. Other cases were cited where the mischief had occurred through chewing tobacco which had been wrapped in tin or lead foil, or from drinking beverages from bottles having patent stoppers in which lead formed the main constituent. A case lately came under our own notice of a lady who was lead-poisoned through the use of the spoons and forks at a seaside lodging.

Those who are acquainted with the past history of London will remember that there existed at one time a number of tributaries to the Thames which flowed through the city. The position of some of these may be traced by the names which they have conferred upon the thoroughfares near which they once ran; thus we have the 'Wallbrook,' the 'Eyebourne,' the 'Fleet,' &c. It is interesting to note that the outlet of the spring which fed the last-named stream has recently been rediscovered while certain building operations were in progress near the famous Coldbath Fields Prison, which is now turned over to the service of the Post-office. A portion of one of the wharfs which lined the stream has also been uncovered, and the timbers, although black with age, are in a fair state of preservation. From their size and solidity, it is inferred that vessels of quite a large tonnage found their way to this spot, a mile north of the river Thames.

It seems almost hopeless to attempt to grapple with the great question of disposing of the sewage with which the noble river Thames is so choked that in some places below London Bridge it is little better than an open drain. Many systems have been proposed, and much money has been spent, but without any apparent result. We are

of opinion that the work is too vast to be successfully undertaken as a whole, and that the problem must be attacked in detail and before it begins to assume such monstrous proportions. For some time past a method of dealing with sewage has been in successful operation at Kingston-on-Thames, which from its simplicity is called the ABC method. By this system the liquid sewage is treated by chemicals other than lime, by which it is purified, and solid matter is thrown down to be ultimately dried, and sold for an excellent manure at seventy shillings per ton. The effluent water is afterwards poured out into the Thames in a clear and inoffensive condition. This process is worked by the Native Guano Company of 29 New Bridge Street, Blackfriars, London.

A writer in an American paper gives a description of the manner in which the bison has in a little more than twenty years been almost exterminated. He tells us that in 1866 large firms organised hunting-parties, and paid two and a half dollars for every bison as he lay dead on the plains. The professional hunter used to hunt on horseback, and as he approached closely enough to the bison to almost touch the animal as he rode by its side, he fired the fatal bullet, and the animal fell. He himself has killed more than a hundred bisons in one day, hunting in the manner described so long as the horse he rode could keep up. A few years afterwards, improved rifles were brought forward, and the slaughter was conducted in a different manner. The horse assisted only in finding the herd, after which the huntsmen would take up a position on the leeward side nearly a mile away, and pick off the animals one after another as fast as they could reload. The result of this wholesale slaughter is stated in a pithy manner, which, however, suggests exaggeration, the writer telling us that in one district, at the close of one particular winter a man could travel fifty miles in jumping from one carcase to another. The skin was the part of the animal which was valued.

Seven years ago, a geological map of France was commenced on a scale of 1-500,000, which, according to all accounts, must be the finest work of the kind ever undertaken. It is now finished, and consists of forty-eight sheets. The system of colouring adopted is that which was recommended at the Geological Congress held at Boulogne in 1881. It will now probably become general in all other countries, to the great convenience of students. Using thirteen primitive colours, fifty distinct tints can be obtained by superposition or difference in intensity of tone. The Sedimentary Rocks are coloured according to the tints of the solar spectrum and in their regular order. Thus, the Trias is coloured violet, the Jurassic blue, the Cretaceous green, &c.; and each shade is expressed in deeper shades when it is required to indicate that particular rocks of the system are of more ancient date. The Eruptive rocks appear in different shades of red, which arrangement seems to be appropriate to them; while the Carboniferous group, following an old custom, are expressed in shades of gray and black. This sensible plan of defining differences which can readily be appreciated by the eye will most certainly help on the study of geology generally.

Automatic sprinklers, which are constructed to pour a continuous rain of water upon an incipient

conflagration, and so overcome it at a period before it has become unmanageable, have of late years become common adjuncts to business premises. But they have one disadvantage in continuing their deluge until stopped by hand, so that we can conceive the possibility of an undiscovered alarm leading to more injury from water than from fire. A new form of Fire-check, which meets this difficulty, has recently been brought forward by Mr Dowse of London. In this apparatus the water is a fixed quantity, held in a container of metal, and is charged with soda bicarbonate. Hung in the centre of this vessel is a bottle of strong acid, containing also an electric fuse held in a glass tube. The containing vessel is fixed on or above the ceiling of the room requiring protection, and its lower part terminates with two roses much like those attached to watering-cans. In connection with the apparatus there is also a very sensitive thermometric arrangement which causes the contrivance to act whenever the heat in the room reaches such a temperature as would be caused by actual fire. When this occurs, the fuse explodes, shatters the acid bottle, so that an enormous mass of carbonic acid is generated in the containing vessel, with the result that both water and gas are discharged in all directions. No conflagration would withstand such a deluge for more than a few seconds.

An engineer of Chicago has proposed a system of elevated railways for that city, the lines to be at a height of one hundred and twenty feet above the pavement, so as to clear the roofs of the largest houses. This plan is put forward chiefly on account of its non-obstruction of the light, and also because its noise will not be so troublesome as that of a railway at a lower elevation. The passengers would be raised to the aerial stations by means of lifts. This plan is never likely to be carried out, if for nothing else than that it would quite destroy the architectural features of a city. It is far better to keep metropolitan lines below ground and out of sight as much as possible; and although the unhealthiness of a vitiated atmosphere may be pleaded, every one knows that fresh air can be secured in the tunnels if only the directors of the railway will go to the necessary expense.

The Society of Arts have done well in offering prizes for specimens of wrought-iron grilles, a mode of window decoration which is not only ornamental by day, but which affords far greater protection by night than the usual clumsy shutter system. The blacksmith's art has far too long been represented in this country by articles which, however necessary and efficient for their purpose, exhibit no kind of taste or design. It was not so once, as many old specimens of wrought-iron work bear witness. The revival of this beautiful form of art is much to be desired, and the present offer of prizes has, we learn, brought forward an amount of technical talent of a very high order. That this is no idle statement is proved by the three window grilles which have won the prizes offered, photographs of which are reproduced in the Society of Arts' Journal.

Attention has recently been called to the preservative qualities of soapstone. This material, which is commonly seen in this country merely as a vehicle for rough models, generally brought from China, has great power in withstanding

atmospheric influences; and a preparation of it can be easily applied to metal-work so as to preserve it from rust. In China it is used for protecting buildings in which sandstone and other friable materials have been employed; and it has for years been common to preserve buildings by giving them a superficial coating of the substance. The process might with great advantage be tried on the crumbling stonework of many of our large towns and cities, where fumes of all descriptions, added to the natural action of frost, rain, and sunshine, are gradually disintegrating the masonwork.

AT DAYBREAK IN LONDON.

WE doubt not there are many people in London that have never walked its silent streets at day-break; and many residents out of town that would like to know what aspect the streets of the greatest city in the world present at this early time of day—hence this paper, which was written after a ramble through the streets one Sunday morning. Sleeplessness and a bad headache induced us to turn out of bed, dress, and slip quietly out into the street about half-past three o'clock. Daylight had fairly broken out upon the sleeping city; and inhaling the keen morning air, we went in the direction of the river. As we passed down Southampton Row and Drury Lane, we met about four persons, two cabs, and thirty cats. Cats and waste-paper seemed to have taken possession of the streets; and with what a reproachful look these cats eye you, as if they highly resented your intrusion upon their domains at that early hour. It was a trifle uncanny walking down Drury Lane with only black cats, waste-paper, and a dark form huddled together in its rags here and there up a side-court for company. From Drury Lane we reached the Strand.

What a contrast the Strand presented now to what it was at midnight, when the theatres had poured out their thousands, and the restaurants or bars had disgorged their votaries into this important highway, teeming with human beings, some hurrying homewards on foot, others trying to obtain a seat in an omnibus, or hail a cab, or hurrying off to catch a train, amidst the yelling and shouting of men selling extra-special editions, and the whistling and shouting for carriages and cabs. Now the stillness and the deserted appearance strike one vividly, for you see the curves, elevations, or declines of the roadway, which it is impossible to notice when covered with teeming life and traffic; and no life to be seen excepting a few men busy in carting the Sunday newspapers, and a slouching man or two, the inevitable man in blue, and a very sleepy-looking cab-horse, attached to its vehicle, wherein the driver was fast asleep.

We turned down Wellington Street to Waterloo Bridge, where we stopped at the coffee stall and awoke the old lady there, who was snatching a short period of sleep. How well practised these women must be to be able to sleep, and awake every few minutes on hearing the footsteps of customers! Her helpmeet was there also, and we tried to engage him in cheery conversation; but he would not be wooed that way, for, mumbling an incoherent reply in a grumbling tone, he fell

at once into the arms of Morpheus. Dickens's fat boy should have kept a coffee stall.

We descended the steps of Waterloo Bridge and walked on to the Embankment. There, an interesting scene—at the same time inconsistent with our advanced views of humanity—drew our attention. Reclining on the seats by the river, in all sorts of positions, were men who could not afford to pay for a night's lodging. Some seats were occupied by persons sleeping in a perfectly upright position; others were shared by sleepers more fortunate than their fellow-outcasts in annexing places, for some had half a seat to lay their careworn bodies on, and hugging their rags, endeavoured to close up the air-holes. As we passed by each seat of outdoor sleepers, who preferred, or had to prefer the cool shroud of Nature's covering to the stifling rooms of common lodging-houses, some of them were stretching their arms and legs; and one young man was actually absorbed in the pretty lyrics of the opera *Dorothy*. One seat was occupied by four awakened politicians, engaged in an argument on the amount of German blood in the royal family. Would our Queen feel flattered to know that four of her humblest subjects, with hardly a copper in their pockets, had still interest enough in imperial affairs to criticise her family and court at four A.M. on the Thames Embankment?

Westminster Bridge was now in our immediate vicinity, and stepping on to the bridge, we looked away out to the far east, and watched the rising of the sun behind the great dome of St Paul's. Here was a modern day picture for any artist to paint. A cold gray colouring pervades the whole scene, the gray stonework of the bridges and Embankment, the gray colouring of water touched up with the reflection of the little fleecy golden clouds stretching across the pale-blue sky, which received their delightful tints from the golden rays shot up from behind the sombre dome of St Paul's. The whole scene, was indeed charming in harmony of colour—cold gray, lit up with gold. In this study of early morning tints, the artist who will paint this scene must not forget the human element in it—a scene more impressive than colouring of light, stone, and water; for there, against the end of the stone parapet of the Embankment, on the top of the steps leading down to the river, stood a haggard-looking young man, and at his feet sat his wife and two infants. He looked as if he had stood there on guard the whole night, with contracted brows, and now fiercely staring at the rising of the sun in the east. Perhaps that golden ray of light was the only sign to him of God's presence in the whole world. But it was touching to see how this hard, fierce-looking man, out of work and moneyless, gently propped up his infant child as it showed signs of dropping forward in sleep against the cold and hard buttress.

Should this meet the eye of some thinking philanthropist, we trust he will see what a splendid opening there is here to effect a real and lasting good to the poor outcast humanity of London. A large building might be erected in this city with washing facilities, so that these poor persons might obtain a night's lodging for a penny and a thorough wash in the morning. This healthy arrangement might relieve the work in London hospitals.

Turning our back to the bridge, we passed by the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey, and so emerged into the side-walks of St James's Park, where everything looked beautifully fresh and green; and we passed through Spring Gardens, and issued out into Trafalgar Square. Here, too, had men and women been sleeping, and some were now performing their morning ablutions in the fountains; and some were slouching off in all directions. But where do they slouch to? We must say slouch, for verily they do slouch, dragging one leg wearily after another, with hands embedded in the bottom of their pockets, without seemingly the least idea or care where they go to.

In the Strand, on our homeward way, we saw a pitying sight—an intoxicated woman well advanced in years, with haggard face and bleared eyes, and dressed in black rags and crape. Drunkenness and vice were written in every line of her face and in every curve in the folds of her dress. All the men and women we had met this morning had an appearance of health and strength enough to go on battling with in this world; but on this poor aged creature, hopeless despair in this world was branded.

One pleasing sight we must mention in conclusion, and that was the little birdcages hung outside the windows of the Industrial Buildings in Drury Lane; there the little songsters were welcoming the coming of day with thrilling delight.

K I R K W A L L.

A SONNET.

FAR by the margin of the Northern seas,
All heedless of the pulse of passing feet
Which throbs in sluggish life along her street,
She sits beside her ruined palaces,
A sad gray city crowned with memories,
Hearing her old Cathedral bells repeat
The death-knell of the days, which, clear and
sweet,
Trembles and dies each hour upon the breeze.
Her heart is with her unforgotten dead;
The jarls and vikings who of old went forth
Under the raven-banner of the North
To fill the southern seas with wondering dread—
In dim strange murmurs, faint and far away,
Rise through her dreams the voices of to-day.

D. J. ROBERTSON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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FROM OUR TERRACE ON THE GRAND CANAL.

No better post of vantage could be imagined whence to observe the life and manners of the Venetians than the big terrace of the old *palazzo* on the Grand Canal which we inhabit. It being on the 'wrong side' of the watery street, and just in the middle of its first bend, we command a fine view of the double sweep of water—from the Riva degli Schiavoni, with its orange-coloured awnings, and the gorgeous sails of the Chioggia fishing-boats, to the modern iron bridge that has dared to cross the same Canal that is spanned by the historic arch of the Rialto.

There is a feeling of satisfaction in living in one of the real palaces of which we have read so much, instead of being in a new-fangled, square-built, commonplace lodging. It is true our walls are rent, our marble balustrade is cracked, the delicate outline of our 'dog-tooth' cornice has crumbled away, the cusped arches of our tryptich-like windows have been filled up with bricks, our mosaic floors are all cement and no mosaic, our fine damask and satin hangings are faded and worn, our ancestral portraits have great triangular tears all over them, out of which tumbles the dust of ages each time the wind blows to a door; still, no one can deny that it is a palace—the very ruin of everything within goes to prove it. Then, too, it props up, and is propped up by, one of the loveliest Lombardic buildings in all Venice; so our abode acquires a sort of extra glory from its neighbourhood and from its need of us.

Our apartments are on the first floor, the *piano nobile*, as it is called, from being that specially reserved in all these old palaces for their noble owners; whilst the upper floors were occupied by the household and retainers; and the lower one, the front of which was generally an open arcade, was used as lodging for the gondoliers, for cellars, grain and oil stores, and for the boathouse. Our palace is built thus; and our rooms are reached by three separate staircases, the grand one, and by two others that come out at unexpected places,

and disappear in locked cupboards and dark passages, very suggestive of romantic adventure.

The first sign of life on the Grand Canal in the early morning is the passing by of long barges laden with green vegetables and fruit from the low flat island of Mazzorbo, and destined for the market at the Rialto. One such has passed as we write; its sail is of a rich Indian-red with a dark-blue tip, a fillet-work border running round it, and in its centre a design in orange of St George and the Dragon. The big rudder is gaudily painted in green and white, and has a picture of the Madonna on the part that is above water. The men who are poling the barge along add to the variety of colour by one of them wearing a pink shirt and purple trousers. The whole thing, together with its green load, looks, as the first rays of the sun glint upon it, like a bit of a broken rainbow that has dropped into the Canal and is drifting along on its eddies.

Now comes a barge heaped up with coal; now one with bales of cotton for the factory lately established here. This is followed by another whose cargo of square white deal boxes is guarded by a soldier at each end of the boat, and the red flag that floats over it tells us that it is dynamite that is passing by. Of a more peaceable sort is the next that we notice. A small flat boat, hardly more than a curved board, is propelled by two tall brown-robed figures, two Capuchin friars, who, with bare heads and sandalled feet and with cords girding their waists, are off on a begging expedition, hoping to return with their Franciscan canebasket filled with good things for their monastery's fare.

Presently a *barca* approaches the stone landing-place beside our palace. This *barca* is a plainer sort of gondola, without its graceful, dignified, steel prow. Out of it come, tumbling over each other, about fifty soldiers. An early-astir itinerant seller of an Italian 'Complete Letter-writer,' with a quick eye to business, who happens to come up, seizes the opportunity, and in a moment his bag is open. He pulls out a heap of books,

and with ready wit reads a suitable sample of the contents of his book: 'Letter from a soldier in Abyssinia to his brother in Italy.' In an instant the soldiers are crowding round him, listening with interest; many producing the few coins with which they can become possessors of the little manual, which they scan eagerly for something to fit their own particular case as they are hurried away up the narrow lane.

But our attention is diverted from them by the stately advance of a gigantic stack of fresh green grass, apparently resting on the surface of the water. The flat barge on which the stack is placed is completely hidden by the drooping grass, and only the tip of the tall mast projects through it. On this is fixed a small sail, which looks like a pocket-handkerchief on a walking-stick. From a space at the stern, hollowed away in the stack, rises a column of white smoke—an odd place in which to be roasting coffee for breakfast! This grass comes from Torcello and from the valleys of the Friulian Alps, and is for the sustenance of the cows of Venice. These pass their lives in dark stables, and are almost the only animals in the town. It is true that both dogs and cats are to be found if you know where to look for them. These latter are sometimes to be seen peering through the gratings of the damp cellar-like ground-floor rooms in the narrow lanes, where they look as if they are suffering imprisonment under the Inquisition, so dejected an air have they. The cat is much in favour with the lower classes here for more purposes than one, as we learned from a Venetian friend. He said that in the winter he finds it difficult to keep a cat about his place, for it is sure to be stolen by his poorer neighbours to eke out their stock of food. 'And no wonder,' he added; 'for I can assure you that if kept in snow for two or three days after being killed, cat makes a very palatable dish.' The dogs are almost exclusively to be found on the great lateen-sailed boats that bring cargoes of wood from the Alps of Cadore and charcoal from Istria and Dalmatia. These dogs are taken on shore so rarely that, should one be seen running through the streets of Venice, it would be apt to be thought mad, and treated accordingly.

But we have rather wandered from the Canal. Now we see coming from the direction of San Marco a large flat *barca*, with a square cabin taking the place of the black movable cover of the gondola. Its windows are small, and are strongly grated with iron. This, as well as the presence of four or five big armed *carabinieri*, tells us that the boat has come from the prison near the Doge's Palace. By the exertion of a little imagination, the dark figures behind the iron bars become Silvio Pellico and his friend on their sad journey to the prison in the castle of Spielberg.

Of a very different character is the next barge that comes gliding along, its big sail catching the breeze that has just sprung up, so that the man at the stern with his long lithe oar has only to rest and act rudder. Heaped up in wonderful confusion are beds, tables, chests, bundles of

clothes, piles of plates and dishes, old pictures, and a sort of shrine with rusty sconces and a brass hanging lamp; whilst at the prow are half-a-dozen women and children eating their breakfast of *polenta* as they sail along. It is a family moving bodily to a new abode. As the old and the new door-steps are both washed by the water of canals, no need for packing up or neat arrangement of goods. When the barge came to the door, all that had to be done was to trundle everything into it, lighted charcoal stove and all, and shove off.

As morning advances, life becomes very busy just under our windows. Our abode is at a corner between the Grand Canal and the narrow lane of which I have spoken. This lane ends in three little wooden piers, that jut out fan-like into the water, and here there are moored by night and by day eight or ten gondolas, for at this spot is one of the many ferries by which the wide water-way can be crossed. By night only two sleepy gondoliers are on duty to carry over belated wanderers; but now the bustle of the day begins, and the boatmen, collecting one by one, are soon at work setting their gondolas in trim order. There is much sponging of their shining black surfaces, and beating of their cushions and small square carpets, and great polishing up of the brass knobs and plates that give brightness to the uniform black of the boats. On the opposite shore is another set of piers, where you land in a wide open space called a *campo*, in front of a church. This *campo* in old times having been a green field the term is still given to the stone-paved piazza. A memory of the past greenness remains, however, in the shape of a broad spreading vine supported on poles and trellis-work, which forms a cool bower, in which, shaded from the hot sun, gondolier and passenger alike can rest. Beneath this bower is a small wooden shrine, whose doors stand open, showing a picture of the Virgin and Child.

The doings of these ferry-gondoliers are a constant source of interest and amusement to us. From our terrace we get to know by sight the wives and children, who come twice a day bringing them their meals. The women, with their coloured shawls gracefully draped around their heads and shoulders, remind us of the East; and no doubt this mode of wearing it comes from the veil of those lands with which old Venice had such a close connection. Fifty gondoliers with their boats are appointed by the municipality to this particular ferry, and, while free to serve some of the hotels near by, and get what custom for long and short distances they can, are bound to be always in sufficient numbers at the ferry to carry over without delay all those desiring to cross. The charge is only one *soldo* (a halfpenny), not a heavy fare; but the working classes do not even pay this, the gondoliers being often content to receive from them two-fifths of this small sum—two *lombardi*, as they are called. These tiny coins, which never come within reach of the ordinary traveller, are signs of the poverty of the lower strata of Venice life. We have often been pleased to see how little greedy are these gondoliers, who are apt to get from travellers the reputation of being rapacious. Continually, when we have crossed, our boatman, on the strength of the full fare having been paid by us,

would call in some poorer brethren and carry them over for nothing.

During the day our ferry landing-place is frequented by various itinerant merchants. One girl, with the braids of her hair twisted like cockle-shells on each side of her head, and her wooden shoes tied with red and blue ribbons, comes crying, 'Bestie, O le belle bestie!' (Beasties, O the beautiful beasties!); these 'beasties' being an odd crab, peculiar to Venice, which has a huge bunch of red coral nearly as big as itself. They are sold at from one to three *soldi* each. The men are very fond of them, and sit on the railings of the piers with their heels tucked into the crossbars, nibbling and munching away at the pink claws half their off-time. Then the *aquaiolo* finds them out, and tempts them from their crab-sucking by his cry of 'O la freschezza! O la purità! O la bibita aristocratica!' (O the freshness! O the purity! O the aristocratic beverage!) as he sets down in their midst his covered pail of iced water and his gaily-painted tray on legs with its bottles and glasses. This stand is generally embossed all over with fancy-gilt nails and old coins, and with brass and iron figures and glittering curiosities. The bottles contain sweet sirups and lemonade, and, alas, too often, *graspa*, the worst enemy of the Venetians. This *graspa* is a spirit extracted from the refuse grapes after all the juice has been pressed out. It is of the nature of fusel oil, and is even worse in its effects on the drinker than the French absinthe. We are happy to see, however, that 'our ferry' is pretty abstemious on the whole. At times the men seem on the brink of assaulting each other, so fierce rages the battle of vituperation and gesticulation; but it all means nothing, and five minutes later they will be sitting with their arms round each other's necks.

Once a day at least our ferry is visited by a *barca ristorante*, a broad flat-bottomed boat, in which stands at one end a huge bowl of macaroni, covered with a bit of blanket to keep it hot. Near it is a big pan, standing on a charcoal stove, in which fish of all shapes and kinds are frizzling—from innocent sprats to pulpy Victor-Hugo-like devil-fishes, with their long finger-like flaps and suckers; and the cuttle-fish with its sepia bag and one white bone. Awful creatures these, that nothing but starvation and despair would, you would think, induce any one to touch! Here, however, they are necessities of life, and the *ristorante's* small stock is soon exhausted. A barrel of wine in the prow and a big basket of rolls complete the stock-in-trade—'and all,' says our gondolier Pippo, 'for next to nothing.'

Pippo is a tall spare-built young fellow of twenty-eight, with hair and moustaches of the sunniest hue. The old-established notion of dark-haired Italians is only in part a true one, for here in Venice you meet almost as many golden or red heads as in England. We learned from Pippo that his gondola cost him about fifteen hundred francs when new, and that it will last good for only about ten years, so that if his food is cheap the implements of his industry are dear, all the more that the flat bottom of the gondola gets so clogged with barnacles and sea-weed that the boat has to be shored and scraped every month,

and during certain months every fortnight. The brass ornament which secures the arm-cushions, and which is the chief decoration of the gondola, suggests the origin of the shape of the boat itself—the sea-horse, which abounds in the lagoons of Venice; the upright steel prow, with its dignified bearing, being modified from its head, and the small curl of steel at the stern answering to its tail. That in early times all ships were fashioned after the forms of aquatic birds and beasts is very apparent to any one who sees the small craft in the Greek and Turkish waters; often the prow prolongs itself into the head and long neck of a sea-serpent or of a swan, the great side rudders being like a splay foot or a fin. Then here in Venice even the coal barges have all large eyes sculptured or painted on them, the iris being a hole through which runs the cable. The smaller barges often have but a dab of white paint, but you cannot fail to recognise the rudimentary eye.

But now the boats at the ferry all seem seized with a sudden frenzy. The water swashes up and down over the steps, and the gondolas are sent bumping against the piles that stand in the water round the piers and the *palazzo* door-steps. One of the small canal steamers has passed rather nearer inshore than usual, and has caused by its swell all this confusion. There is a terrific exchange of abuse shouted in stentorian tones, which gradually calms down as the steamer gets beyond shouting distance, and the word-eddies and the water-eddies die out together. Theoretically, for poetry's sake, we are bound to lament the presence of these steamers on the Grand Canal; but, shall we own it? in practical life we are most grateful to them, as, indeed, are all the Venetians. They are trim, well-behaved boats. They consume their own smoke, and go on their way inconveniencing no one and helping many. There is an idea that they must take work from the gondoliers; but this is a mistake, for the class they chiefly carry never enter a gondola at all. In a city where the average worker, whether man or woman, only gets one franc a day, few of the lower classes could afford a boat that costs a franc an hour. Then the visitors, to whom seeing Venice means gliding about its picturesque canals in a gondola, have little occasion or temptation to use the *tram-via*, which is the very odd name given by the Venetians to the steamboats. So they are mostly useful to the very numerous poorer classes. Some old folks who, living in the extreme north and north-west of the city, have actually never been to the centre, are now able at last to make the journey all the way to San Marco?

The next thing that catches our eye, as we sit during afternoon tea on our terrace, is an elegant landau. It has a blue body and red wheels, and is poised between the seats of a wide barge, which bears it, as if in triumph, along its unaccustomed road. Great is the astonishment its appearance creates amongst our gondoliers. Whence it comes and whither it is going in this city of watery ways and staircase bridges is a mystery. Not less odd is it to see, following the landau, two sentry-boxes going up to the quay by the *Dogana del Mare*; and in the distance, gliding lightly over the rippling waters of the Giudecca branch of the canal, three massive new railway carriages.

But in our observation-making and our sketch-

taking the day has slipped by; and as we finally step in from our terrace, the last rays of the sun are setting a burnished crown on the campanile of San Marco, and touching as with fire the golden wings of the angel on its summit.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY,

Author of 'VAL STRANGE,' 'JOSEPH'S COAT,'
'RAINBOW GOLD,' etc.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TOBIAS, being now a gentleman at large, and having reached that blissful lubberland of *dolce far niente* towards which he had all his life long looked with yearning but hopeless eyes, it seemed to him the most natural and befitting thing in the world to settle near the scene of his discovery and to pose there as a personage. The public-house was the readiest place to pose in, but his mind ran away from the thought of its temptations as a whipped dog runs from a shaken stick. He took cheap lodgings in a labourer's cottage, and hoarded up a whole half of his weekly income.

A few months ago he would have spent his last threepence on rum without so much as troubling to ask where the next might come from. Now, with that suddenly developed eye for the future, he began to exercise a thousand mean precautions. The summer was barely beginning, but beyond the summer, winter lay, and he looked with dreadful prophetic eye towards the time of rain and snow and cold.

'I ought to be supplied with coal for nothing,' said Tobias; 'but I am too well acquainted with the heartless ingratitude of men for that. I shall be expected to disburse a pecuniary consideration for it.'

He began betimes, therefore, and was at all hours to be seen prowling about the roads on which the coal-wagons travelled. He carried with him a tattered old carpet-bag, and stooped for any fragment of coal which had fallen, if it were no bigger than a hazel nut. Rotten branches, bits of stick of any sort, found their way into this receptacle, and at night he would sometimes empty out half-a-dozen pounds' weight. From the time of the beginning of this habit, nobody ever saw Tobias without the carpet-bag, which he lugged about with an unflinching industry.

One fine day he found himself by a breach in the hedge beside a great mossgrown wall, and seeing a biggish handful of half-rotted hedge-stakes, dry and ripe for burning, within reach, he took a cautious look about him and scrambled through the breach. The land sank here, and was thick with brush and bramble; and lying there, hidden for who knows how many years, were the remains of an old gate, which had fallen almost to matchwood. Tobias went for this prize exultantly, and filled his bag with fragments. He was in the very act of rising from his knees, when a sudden vista opened up before him. A stone had been removed from the wall, and through the hole thus made he could see into the grounds beyond it. He peered with interest, and could see an archway with a heap of picturesque ruins over it. This was not in itself a

fascinating spectacle, and he had already satisfied a feeble momentary curiosity, when Snelling came in sight, with an aspect so stealthy and a face so pale that Tobias knelt and stared as if rooted to the spot.

The horrors of the night had been too much for the intending criminal, and Snelling had no courage to face them anew. But now, with the housekeeper being away for her marketing, and John by special leave picnicking with Will Gregg and divers others of his companions in the Quarley Woods, he had full three hours clear. He had determined to finish his deadly work that day; but lonely as he knew himself, he was in a fury of fear lest he should be discovered at it. At every step he looked to right and left with a guilty horror which filled Tobias with wonder; and there was a something so stealthy and yet so threatening in his whole motion and aspect, that the amazed watcher could make neither head nor tail of his own surmises.

The first thing Snelling did was to enter the archway, and there, drawing a newspaper from his pocket, he unfolded it and spread it like a carpet on the grass, pushing it closely against the wall and folding its edge upward there. When he had done this, he came out, stepping on tiptoe, with face and gesture so marked with guilty fear, that a child could not have misread him. He looked hither and thither, and listened with bent head. Next, he drew a small pointed implement from his pocket, and returning to the arch, began to pry at the wall. He had not worked a minute, when some fancied noise arrested him, and he came stealing out on tiptoe.

What in the name of wonder could it mean? Like a ray of light the thought came—Buried Treasure!

'I will have a finger in that pie,' said Tobias.

It was all very well for the little Jousserau to resolve valorously on facing Shorthouse with a request for his daughter's hand; it was another thing to storm the breach of British prejudice.

'I shall have to put my self-love in my pocket,' said Jousserau. 'I shall have to put my patriotism in my pocket too. If I am accepted at all, and that is not very likely, I shall be taken *faute de mieux* and with a desperate sorrow.'

He knew something, but not all, of the midland rustic's invincible ignorance of things and people outside immediate ken. He had been told in pretty plain language already that he was an outer barbarian. He knew that his neighbours for the time being regarded him as a sort of innocent, harmless savage; and though he was one of the best-humoured and sweetest-hearted fellows in the world, the self-satisfied ignorance with which the good stupid folk patronised their social and intellectual superior did really sometimes gall him. If it had stood entirely by itself, it would have been pure comedy to him; but it weighed heavily against his best hopes, and so was merely droll no longer.

On the day after his parting with Cecilia, he attired himself as if for a visit of ceremony, and with a heart alternately full of resolute courage and despair, made his way to Shorthouse's residence. Since the achievement of his portrait, Shorthouse had realised a fondness for the crim-

son plush waistcoat and the blue cloth coat with brass buttons such as he had never known before. He had begun to be awake as to their artistic value, and liked to pose in them to himself, and to sit in his own armchair with pot and pipe, looking as like his own picture as possible, and feeling fully conscious of the resemblance. It was a simple kind of vanity to assail a man of his years; but he found a great pleasure in it, and it hurt nobody. The best clothes were not to be worn lightly and without occasion, and so the treat was not one of every day; but on the morning of Jousserau's visit, Shorthouse had a call to pay, and could afford himself the treat.

Cecilia saw her lover's arrival from her own chamber window and was overwhelmed by her emotions. She dreaded to think of what would happen, and she of course admired Jousserau's courage, whilst she despaired of the effect he might produce. Her father's opinions were not easily changeable; and with regard to Jousserau's offer he was likely to be as obdurate as he had ever been about anything in his life. It may be confessed that Jousserau's task was easier than the girl's. It was he, to be sure, who had to face the dragon opposition; but meantime, as always in the best authenticated fairy stories, the maiden waited tremulous, powerless to strike a blow for her knight's life or her own freedom. In the authenticated fairy stories the knight always wins, and the damsel is always delivered; but in real life it is not so. The dragon of British prejudice was very unlikely to yield, she thought, to a French assault of arms.

The servant-girl announced Jousserau's arrival; and the farmer quitted his pose hastily and took up his position on the whitened hearthstone before the kitchen fender.

'Show the young man in, Jane,' he said gruffly; and Jousserau, standing at the door, heard feelingly the unpromising tone in which he spoke. 'Well,' said Shorthouse gruffly, 'what can I do for you this morning?'

'I wish to ask,' said Jousserau, standing uncovered before him, 'if you will give me five minutes of your private time?'

'Jane,' said the farmer, addressing the girl, 'you can find something to do in the dairy, I daresay.—Take a cheer, Mr Jousserong.'

He remained standing, and Jousserau naturally followed his example.

'I should desire,' the artist began, 'in the first place to say to you what are my hopes and expectations, and what is my position in the world.'

The farmer, turning half-way round, deposited his long Brosely on the tall mantel-piece, and ramming his clenched fists into the pockets of his riding breeches, faced his companion anew with a look of dogged waiting.

'Some months ago,' pursued Jousserau, who had taken great trouble with his English, and had all night long rehearsed the scene in his mind—'some months ago I gave up a situation which brought me twelve pounds a week. I had held it for four years, and had saved sixteen hundred pounds. I have now two thousand pounds at the bank of Castle-Barfield. I can make by my work half as much every year. In time it is likely that I make more—perhaps much more. My father, who lives at Arles, in

France, is there landed proprietor, and is worth six hundred pounds in the year. He has no child but me. That, sir, is my position.'

Shorthouse's gaze had grown more and more dogged as the artist spoke, and under his uncompromising stare speech was increasingly difficult. 'Well,' said Shorthouse, 'that being so, you're pretty well to do.—But now, what's all that got to do along with me?'

'If I should marry,' said the artist, 'I should settle upon my wife my whole belongings. I am Protestant. You can inquire of my character of all who know me, and I will give you every ease to do that.'

'Yes,' said Shorthouse; 'I see where you're a-driving. Go along.'

'It is in short, sir,' Jousserau concluded, 'that I present myself as a suitor for your daughter's hand.'

'So I supposed,' said Shorthouse. 'I'll tell you what it is: you can present yourself at home, with "No" for an answer.'

The manner of the speech was as bluffly insulting as its matter, and Jousserau felt it. But it was robbed of half its sting by the fact that he had expected it, and he was too firmly set upon his purpose to allow himself to lose temper or to be beaten finally at the first assault.

'Sir,' he said, therefore, 'I shall ask you to think something of Mees Cecilia's happiness before you decide. I did meet Mees Cecilia yesterday, and she was distressed, and did not speak. I took the liberty to ask of her if it was that you had forbidden her to speak. She told me "Yes." I said then that I must try to change your mind.'

'You did, did you?' said Shorthouse. 'Well, if you'll be advised, you'll save a deal o' trouble. You might just as well get up and tell this house to walk away as ask me to change my mind about that. I'm not a man as changes his mind that easy.'

'Pardon me,' Jousserau went on, desperately but quietly, and with every outward sign of self-possession. 'Mees Cecilia has obeyed your wish. She is dutiful daughter, and will continue to obey your wish. But forgive me, sir; I know you a man of a good heart. You will not wish to make your child unhappy. If Mees Cecilia wishes that I say no more, I will not trouble her again, or you. But it seems to me just that I should ask, "Will you speak to Mees Cecilia?"'

'No,' said Shorthouse bluntly; 'I won't speak to Miss Cecilia; and I won't have you speaking to Miss Cecilia neither. You've mended up your English a bit lately, and it seems by this time as if you could understand what was said to you. Now you tek this from me, plain and straight: If ever my gell says "I will" at the marriage altar, her'll say it to a brother-Englishman. D'ye see me? D'ye understand? I've nothin' agen you, so far as I know. I don't want to put the thing no rougher than it has got to be put; but when I've got to say a thing, I like to say it. I've said what I've got to say this time, and I look to ha' done with it.'

Did ever the fatherly dragon encounter the knightly suitor with more uncompromising defiance? Cecilia listening on the stairs melted into noiseless tears, and stole back to her chamber

despairing. Jousserau stood pale and troubled, and for a little time said nothing. By-and-by, however, he drew himself together, and then he said an unwise and unguarded thing: 'We are both young, and we can wait.'

'Look here, young sir,' cried the farmer; 'you shall do none of your waiting about my doorstep. I warn thee now, mind me, if I catch thee at that it shall be the worse for thee. I'll have no maggoty fancies put i' my gell's head. You'd best go back to your own country and wait there. If I catch you sneaking about my place, you and me will quarrel.'

'Sir,' returned Jousserau, self-possessed again, 'it will take two to quarrel; and I shall not quarrel with Mees Cecilia's father.' He bowed.

The farmer turned round to take his pipe again; and the suitor went his way, naturally depressed by the result of his interview. Not a scale of the dragon's armour had been dented, but the errant knight was wounded sorely, and the imprisoned damsel wept in her turret.

'Cecilia!' her father bellowed up-stairs after a lengthy pause. 'Come down here; I've a word to say to you.'

The girl sponged her eyes with fresh water, and making what hasty pretence she could of being her natural self, ran down-stairs with reddened eyelids and new tears in her eyes.

'What's the matter with you?' Shorthouse demanded firmly.

'Nothing, father—nothing.'

'Ah!' said papa; 'I see. Thee'st been a-listenin'. I can save myself the trouble o' talkin', then. Tell me the truth. Thee know'st what's happened?'

'Yes, father'—in the faintest frightened whisper.

'And that's what thee'st been cryin' for?'—No answer this time, but only a fresh outburst of tears, and a blushing face hastily covered up in a handkerchief.—'All right, my gell.' He walked a pace or two up and down the room, then struck a lucifer match and applied it to the bowl of his pipe, and so sat down puffing stolidly. 'You think it's hard, I dessay,' he went on philosophically. It came easy to him to be philosophical, for he was not the one who suffered. 'In a year or two, Cecilia, you'll be thankful for what I'm a-doin' for you now.'—The girl thought otherwise, but said nothing.—'What d'ye think 'ud happen to you hereafterwards if I was to let you marry a foreigner now?—Anybody, to look at you,' he continued scornfully, 'ud think as you was a-bein' ill done-by. What d'ye think I'm doin' except for your own good, ye baggage? D'ye think it matters to me who you marry? I ain't a-goin' to marry a Frenchman. It's me as is a-savin' you from all manner o' troubles and worries, and here you sit a-cryin' at me as if I was a-hurtin' you.'

Poor Cecilia thought that if she had wanted to be saved from marrying the Frenchman she might have felt differently. But she did not want to be saved from that doom. And to hear Achille spoken of as if he were something beneath the run of common men, in place of being so infinitely above them as her lover was sure to be, was surely hard for any girl to hear. There was something romantic and fine in having a sweetheart who was a foreigner, and the sentiment was none the less real with her because she loved her lover for

better qualities than that, and had a very fair understanding of his general worth. He was an artist—a man of genius—a gentleman—infinately better than the crowd of men she knew. She would no more have dreamed of setting the one solid English pretender to her hand on the same level with Jousserau than she would have dreamed of evening a hind from her father's fields with Snelling. Mr Snelling was all very well in his way, no doubt; and if she had never seen Achille, she might even have married him, in deference to her father's wishes. But then where would have been the tender enthusiasm, the adoring worship, the timid heart-beat, the rapturous silent acknowledgment of a look or word which blessed her now, and made life a constant succession of delightful emotions? The little Jousserau was like a king among men, to her raptured fancy. And quite properly and naturally, the more he was denied to her, the more she cared for him, until the affection, which if left to itself would have flowed on tranquilly and equably, stormed along in a series of cascades as big and noisy as the young lady's nature could find room and voice for.

'I'll tell thee what it is,' said papa, who was just the man for extreme measures. 'Thee'lt never get this nonsense out o' thy head till thou'rt provided with a husband. I'm a-goin' to tek this matter in hand myself, and I shan't be long afore I make a hend of it. I picked out a man for thee months ago, and you kep' him shilly-shally-in' with I wool and I won't, and at last give him a "No" without rhyme or reason.' He set his pipe on the table with so much emphasis as to shiver it in a dozen pieces, took his hat from the peg on which it hung, and walked straight out of the house, bent on heroic measures. He took the way which led to Tallymount Hall, and finding the iron gates there locked against him, began to shake at them and to roar alternately 'House!' and 'Snelling!'

TREASURES AND FORTUNES.

WE never hear in our time of a single steamer carrying the load of gold, silver, plate, and treasure that was heaped in the hold of the butter-box of the last and earlier centuries. On February 28, 1769, there arrived at Lisbon a ship-of-war named the *Mother of God*, from Rio de Janeiro, having made the voyage in one hundred and twenty days. She had on board nine millions of crusades in diamonds, and about a hundred thousand 'crowns tournois' in piastres, making in the whole twenty-nine million and fifty thousand livres tournois. So much for a single ship. In 1774, two Spanish ships from Vera Cruz and the Havana arrived with twenty-two millions of crowns, exclusive of merchandise valued roundly at twenty-seven millions of crowns. Such examples could be multiplied. Of the cargo of an English Indiaman in 1771, one item alone—a diamond in the rough—was valued at one hundred thousand pounds, 'coming to be manufactured in England on account of one of the Asiatic nabobs;' and on the private freight of this vessel the policies of insurance were opened at Lloyd's

Coffee-house at a high premium, so costly were her contents and so doubtful her safe arrival.

In those early days of extraordinary long voyages, clumsy ships, and of a navigation rendered not a little insecure by the blunders or the conjectures of the chart-makers, we should expect to meet with a great number of costly disasters, the more particularly since it was the custom to commit to a single hold the treasure that would in this day be distributed among eight or ten great and powerful steamers. Yet this sort of shipwreck is not nearly so frequently occurring in marine annals as would be supposed. When it happens, it takes an historical significance much more profound than that which attaches to loss of life. As a costly shipwreck, *La Lutine* deserves notice. She was of thirty-two guns, commanded by Captain Skynner, and went ashore on the bank of the Fly Island Passage on the night of October 9, 1799. At first she was reputed to have had six hundred thousand pounds sterling in specie on board. This was afterwards contradicted by a statement that the whole amounted to about one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling.

In the reign of James II., some English adventurers fitted out a vessel to search for and weigh up the cargo of a rich Spanish ship which had been lost on the coast of South America. They succeeded, and brought home three hundred thousand pounds, which had been forty-four years at the bottom of the sea. Captain Phipps, who commanded, had twenty thousand pounds for his share, and the Duke of Albemarle ninety thousand pounds. A medal was struck in honour of this event in 1687. There was a very costly wreck in 1767. She was a Dutch East Indiaman, and foundered in a storm within three leagues of the Texel, taking down all hands but six, and half a million sterling.

In 1871 a Scotchman named Johnson patented a treasure-safe for ships. His proposal was that the safe should be suspended at the ship's davits, ready at an instant's notice to be lowered into the sea. He contrived that the safe should detach itself in the event of a sudden calamity, and float off, to be picked up by some passing ship, or washed ashore. The idea was ingenious: but it is not every captain who would relish the thought of an unsinkable chest full of gold and jewels hanging at his davits ready to the hand of the first daring Jack who should depend upon a black night and the navigable qualities of the chest to come safely off with a few hundreds of thousands of pounds.

There was a curious kind of smuggling practised aboard the old ships, and there is reason to believe that in many instances the actual value of the treasure in foundered vessels was never declared. An example is given of a Spanish register-ship falling into the hands of the British. Certain discoveries determined the captors not to sell her, but to break her up themselves, believing that by so doing they might find valuables artfully concealed. The duty on gold was high, and to evade it, many of the bars of that metal had been thinly coated with pewter, and denominated 'fine pewter' in the invoice, by order of the Spanish merchants. The particulars of the freight are worth giving, as illustrative of the cargoes of that age (1793), and of the great value entrusted to a single ship.

There were 694 cases of silver, each containing 3000 dollars; 33 cases of gold, besides plate and jewels of the value of £500,000; 72 hundred of redwood; 16 cases of silver in bars; 2262 quintals of bark of different weights; 2240 quintals of cocoa; 4887 cases of pepper; a great number of cases of lead, wool, sugar, medical roots, gums of cocoa, together with hides, skins, barrels of honey, and eleven cases of the various productions of Peru. 'This cargo,' says the account, 'has been two years in collecting from different parts of the coast, and is without exception the richest that ever was trusted on board of any single ship. It is impossible to form a just estimate of its value; but it is certainly not overrated when it is stated as twelve or thirteen hundred thousand pounds.' Think of the costly wreck such a vessel as this would have made; and certainly, so far as her freighters were concerned, she was as good as foundered when she was captured.

In more modern times, the costliness of shipwreck is to be found in the destruction of the fabric and her cargo rather than in the treasure on board. Whatever may have been the worth of a galleon as a ship, there need be no scruple in concluding that when brand-new her value would be but that of a toy in comparison with such ocean mail-boats as now convey specie and valuables. The sinking of an Atlantic, Indian, or Australian liner—even with a clean hold—would represent an immense treasure if told in dollars, ducats, or piastres; and when is added the cargo of such a craft along with the passengers' luggage, which would include a quantity of jewelry expressing many thousand pounds alone, some astonishing figures would be the result. As a matter of fact, our later shipwrecks do not point to the same heavy losses in specie and articles manufactured out of the precious metals as were sustained in former times. The destruction or capture of a single ship in the last and preceding centuries would frequently signify the sinking of a million to a million and a half of pounds sterling in chests of pieces-of-eight in ingots and bars and in religious decorations, and this without reference to the cargo, the value of which may be suspected when we hear of tea selling at a guinea a pound.

The *Royal Charter* is the most notable modern instance of the wreck of a 'treasure' ship. She left Australia with £350,000 in her. Of this sum, says Charles Dickens, in his chapter on this dreadful shipwreck in the *Uncommercial Traveller*, £300,000 worth were recovered at the time of the novelist's visit to the spot where she had driven ashore.

Meanwhile, how much gold and silver, minted and otherwise, is annually afloat? How many millions are yearly borne over the deep to and from India, America, Australia, China, and South Africa by English steamers alone? There should be no difficulty in making the calculation, which when arrived at, must surely yield a fine idea of the treasure over which the red flag flies, and an excellent notion of the trust that is reposed in the British shipmaster, and of the high and sterling qualities which go to the fulfilment of it.

Numerous are the instances of persons receiving extraordinary and often unexpected legacies. A railway blacksmith named Allen recently recovered an estate in Hanley worth seventy thou-

sand pounds. The Allen family had held the property from the days of the Conquest, but more than one hundred years ago the title-deeds were lost; and in 1828 the family were dispossessed through being unable to produce them. Subsequently the deeds were found and the family estates recovered.

A few years ago, a pleasant genial old gentleman called at one of the City banks and requested an introduction to one of the junior clerks. The clerk, who had noticed the stranger, and seen him enter the manager's room, was startled by a summons to go inside. Once inside the manager's room the clerk found himself face to face with the stranger. The visitor immediately broke the ice by saying he had the pleasure to announce that by the death of an uncle, and in consequence of the death of several other relatives, this young gentleman was heir to a baronetcy. Hardly believing his ears, the clerk summoned up enough presence of mind to ask if it was an empty title. The visitor immediately and blandly informed him that his income was at least ten thousand pounds a year, with fifty thousand pounds at a bank upon current account. It has since been ascertained that the income is not less than sixteen thousand pounds a year.

The owner of a very valuable pair of trousers was lately advertised for in the French papers by the honest finder of the same, who allowed the individual to whom they belonged fifteen days in which to come forward. After this delay, he stated he would consider himself justified in profiting by this strange windfall, which, as he was in poor circumstances and about to be married, would be very serviceable to him. On the Place de la Concorde he stated that he saw one evening a dark object on the ground, which he first took to be a sleeping dog. On closer inspection, however, he discovered his mistake, and picked up the garment then in his possession. He took the trousers with him on board a boat which he owned, and on passing them in review, noticed that the buttons seemed different from ordinary ones. Prompted by curiosity, he undid the cloth that covered them, and found, instead of wooden moulds, gold pieces. Carrying his investigations further, he came across some bank-notes stitched into the waistband with other papers of value.

Stories of extraordinary windfalls are so frequently due to an effort of the imagination, that we may be excused for receiving them with a considerable amount of reserve. Elizabeth Scott was found by the police in 1875 lying on the floor of her back-kitchen. She had been dead apparently for about a week, portions of her hands having been eaten by rats. It was stated that although deceased—who was seventy-two years of age, and lived in London—was in possession of upwards of ten thousand pounds in consols, producing an income of four hundred pounds a year, she never associated with any one; and a search through the house resulted in sums of eighty-two pounds in gold and forty-seven pounds in silver being found secreted in little bags between the mattresses of the bed. For many years she had been leading a miserly existence. It was stated that she had left no will, and had only two cousins living in Scotland.

In the same year an inquest was held in refer-

ence to the body of James Swift, of Ancoates, aged seventy-four years. The deceased was a man of penurious habits; and as he was of a solitary and retiring disposition, seldom leaving his house, very little was known of him in the neighbourhood where he lived, though it was sometimes whispered that notwithstanding his apparent poverty, he was possessed of great wealth. That there was good foundation for this idea subsequently appeared. He was last seen alive at dinner-time on Tuesday prior to his death, at which time he was brushing the doorstep. Two hours afterwards, the attention of the police was called to the fact that the shutters of his house were fast closed. Not knowing what to make of this, the officer tried to gain an entrance, and was at length obliged to force open the back-door. He found the deceased lying on his back on the kitchen floor, with a chair on the top of him. He appeared to have been sitting in the chair, and to have fallen off, causing it to topple over with him. The body was cold, life being quite extinct, and the deceased's watch had stopped at half-past two o'clock. The house was in a very dirty condition, and there was evidence that its occupant had never slept in bed. In the course of examination which disclosed these things, a safe was found containing deeds and mortgage bonds representing about twelve thousand pounds-worth of property, and the large sum of two thousand pounds in gold.

A woodman named Robinson, at Hexham, Northumberland, succeeded a few years ago in establishing his claim to a quarter of a million of money.

Devonshire has been truly called the garden of England. In a small village in the heart of this beautiful country stands a labourer's cottage. It is a picturesque old place, in the midst of a large garden, such as we still find in some rural districts surrounding the humble homes of our agricultural labourers. The front of the cottage is covered with woodbine, honeysuckle, and roses, through which two little lattice windows peep out upon the passer-by, while one gable end is completely hidden by a large luxuriant grape-vine. Until quite recently, this was the abode of an old labourer and his family, who, though thrifty and industrious, were, and had been all their life, extremely poor. Life to this poor man had been a desperate struggle, and many a time the meal consisted only of vegetables from the garden which he cultivated so carefully. Hard work had been his lot all his life, and it never entered his head that the world contained for him aught beyond the scant wage due to his hard and cheerless toil. All his relations, so far as he knew, had been poor, and there was no one from whom he could expect a single penny. Happening, however, to come across a list of names of persons who had been advertised for to claim money and property in Chancery, he was greatly surprised and very much agitated to find his own name in full; and being a man of more than ordinary intelligence for his class, he at once communicated with the publishers of the list, which has resulted in establishing his claim to an enormous fortune, left nearly one hundred years before.

In 1883, Richard Scurrah, blacksmith of Well, in Yorkshire, died at the age of sixty-eight, and

was found, when his house was broken into by the police, to be dead in bed. On his premises being examined, upwards of three thousand pounds was found upon a beam in the kitchen; and mortgage deeds for several hundreds of pounds were also found in an old chest. The deceased had no relatives.

It was stated in 1882, that, according to a report from Gosport, a man named Geary, who had for the last twenty-five years been employed in a brewery there, had laid claim to an estate which had been locked up for eighty-six years, and amounted to a million and a half sterling. One of the most remarkable incidents in connection with the case was that Geary was led to become a claimant through seeing an inscription on a tombstone in a local churchyard.

The will of the 'old Lady of Stamford Street,' whose death, in a dilapidated house in that street, created some sensation when it was ascertained she had been possessed of considerable wealth, is worthy of notice. She was the owner of other property in London besides that in Stamford Street; but it appeared that other property, which for many years was allowed to run to waste, in Snow Hill, Stoke Newington, and other places, and which was also supposed to belong to her, did not do so. She died worth about one hundred thousand pounds in the funds, had many freehold and leasehold houses; and there was quite an *olla podrida* of curiosities found in her house when search was made for some other will. Amongst other things there was a room full of caps and bonnets, some of the latter nearly half a yard long (pokes of a former generation); and in a canvas bag was found five hundred pounds in sixpenny, fourpenny, and threepenny pieces. She had quarrelled many years ago with all her relations, and her will was as follows: 'I, CORDELIA ANGELINA READ, of Stamford Street, in the County of Surrey, Spinster, do hereby give and bequeath to the Treasurer for the time being of the Hospital for the Cure of Consumption at Brompton, in the County of Middlesex, for the use of the said Institution, all my household furniture, pictures, goods, chattels, trinkets, jewelry, and effects, which may be in my dwelling-house in which I may reside at the time of my decease, and also my ready money at the banker's, and money in the public securities or funds in Great Britain, and also all other of my personal estate and effects which I leave or bequeath to such an Institution.' By this will, one hundred thousand pounds went to the Brompton Hospital.

An Irishman named Moore, a native of Cavan, died at Ramalto, in Buenos Ayres, where, after a residence of forty years, he amassed the large fortune of four hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. By his will, two half-brothers living in his native parish of Cavan were raised from a position of poverty to one of wealth.

A young labourer of Montelimart was recently visited by a singular stroke of good fortune, which had the immediate effect of depriving him of speech. An uncle from whom he expected nothing left him one million eight hundred thousand francs. At first, another will was found, leaving the bulk of the property between two brothers of the deceased, who, on hearing the news, proceeded to embrace each other; but

their happiness quickly evaporated when a testament of more recent date came to light by which the nephew was entitled to the whole fortune.

FOILED BY HIMSELF.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'Who is this letter from, Jenkins?'

'I don't know, sir. The man who brought it is waiting in the front office for an answer. He looks like a working-man dressed up in his Sunday clothes.'

Mr John Barnett, solicitor, cut open the envelope carefully, as was his habit, took out the enclosure, and read:

MOREDUN HOUSE,
ELDERGATE, Friday, 6 A.M.

DEAR SIR—I am in great trouble. Mr Monkton was found dead in the library last night about nine o'clock. The cause of death was heart disease. Could you come down here to-day and remain till after the funeral, and advise me with regard to the funeral arrangements and other things? It is a great deal to ask, I know; but you see I have no right to interfere in these matters, as I am no relative of Mr Monkton's, and I do not know what to do. You were always his chief friend as well as his legal adviser. I am afraid of his brother coming here when he hears of the death. I enclose notices which I will thank you to get inserted in the various newspapers.—I send this letter by our gardener, who will bring back your reply.—Yours truly,

KATHERINE ASHLEY.

Mr Barnett appeared very much affected on reading this letter. 'Mr Monkton is dead, Jenkins,' he said. 'Found dead in his library last night. How very sudden! He was here only two days ago, looking as well as ever I saw him.—This letter is from Miss Ashley. She wishes me to go to Eldergate to-day; but Mr Morgan is coming here in a short time, and I have to go out with him relative to some business which will detain me, I expect, till late in the afternoon. I will not be able to get to Eldergate till the six o'clock train.—I have nothing particularly pressing for the next few days, have I?'

'No, sir; I don't think so.'

'Then I will be able to wait over at Eldergate till after the funeral, as Miss Ashley wishes. I will give you a note for the man. I don't know when I got such a shock.'

The note despatched, Mr Barnett sat down to think over matters. Mr Monkton and he had been friends of many years' duration, and having been often at Moredun House, Mr Barnett was well acquainted with Miss Ashley, who was orphan niece of his friend's late wife. Mr Monkton had no family of his own, and Miss Ashley had lived at Moredun House for the past ten years. Her aunt, Mrs Monkton, had died a few years before. By the terms of Mr Monkton's will, which Mr Barnett himself had drawn, the latter knew that he, along with Sir Andrew Dawson, a wealthy neighbour of Mr Monkton's, was appointed an executor, and a joint guardian of Miss Ashley until she should attain the age of

twenty-one. This she would not reach for nearly three years yet; and in the interval, some arrangement must be come to with reference to her.

'I hope that brother of Monkton's doesn't come upon the scene, for he is a thorough scoundrel, if ever there was one,' he said to himself. 'He will give us some trouble, if he can. However, he need not try to dispute the will; although I believe he would do it in a minute, if he thought he had the ghost of a chance.'

Here Mr Barnett's meditations were interrupted by the entrance of his client Mr Morgan, who had come to keep his appointment; and in a short time both left the office together. It was after five in the afternoon when Mr Barnett returned.

'Confound Morgan!' he said to Jenkins, who was his head-clerk, and who had waited behind the others, in case of anything being required. 'I could not get away earlier. It will be after ten before I get to Mr Monkton's house, for I will have to wait till the eight o'clock train now. I must go home first. I shall not be back at the office till Wednesday; but if there should be anything particularly pressing, I might take a run up.—You can let me know how things go on, Jenkins.'

'All right, sir,' answered Jenkins; and then Mr Barnett departed.

He left Euston Station at eight o'clock *en route* for Eldergate, which was distant from the Metropolis about two hours' journey by rail. Mr Monkton's carriage was in waiting at the station, and he was soon being driven up the avenue to the house.

A footman, who appeared to be the only one awake in the house, opened the door to him. But as he entered, an old lady, whom Mr Barnett recognised as a distant cousin of Mr Monkton's, met him in the hall. She was a sturdy old Scotchwoman, hale and hearty, though upwards of sixty years of age.

'Ye're very late. I was thinking ye mightna be here the night now; and I advised Miss Ashley to gang awa' to her bed, and I would look after ye if ye came. Ye'll be ready for some supper, I'm thinking.—Come this way into the dining-room.'

Mr Barnett followed the loquacious old lady into the room, where supper was immediately brought in. 'I am surprised to see *you*, Mrs Crawford,' he said. 'I did not know you were here. Miss Ashley did not mention you in her letter this morning.'

'Because she didna ken I was coming. I'm staying in London wi' my son Peter now, and I came down here this morning on a visit by chance. I found everything at sixes and sevens, and that pair lassie greeting like to break her heart; so I just stayed on till ye would come.'

'You were quite right. I would have been here earlier, as I told Miss Ashley in my letter, but I was detained.—But I need not keep you out of your bed, Mrs Crawford; I can attend to myself. I know the way to my room. I have been often here before, you know.'

'Oh, I'm in no hurry,' said Mrs Crawford. She had dismissed the servant, and had herself waited to attend to Mr Barnett's wants. He had scarcely begun to do justice to the supper, however, when

she suddenly bent forward and whispered almost into his ear: 'He's here.'

'Who is here? Whom do you mean?' asked the solicitor, almost dropping his knife and fork in his surprise.

'Who should I mean but Henry Monkton, of course? Came here in the middle o' the afternoon, and intends waiting till after the funeral, he says. But he may spare himself the trouble, for onything he'll get, I hope.'

'But how did he come to hear of his brother's death so speedily? It will not be in the newspapers till to-morrow.—Miss Ashley surely did not send him notice?'

'No; she didna. She's ower frichted for him to do the like o' that. She's keepit her room ever since he came, or else she would hae been waiting here to see ye. But ye'll see her in the morning right enough. He met Blake the gardener by accident at the London station this forenoon, and got the news frae him. He has a gude stock o' impudence to come here at the present time, when he kens bravly he daurna hae showed his nose had his brother been living.—Dear, dear! sic a change as his death will mak in this house! —What's to become o' that lassie? Surely he would mind her in his will.'

'Was he supposed to have been long dead before he was found? Who was the first to discover him? Was it Miss Ashley?'

'Ay; she was the first. He had gane into the library at seven; and Miss Ashley, who had been out at her tea at Sir Andrew Dawson's, came home about nine o'clock. When she went into the room, he was sitting dead at his desk.'

'What had he been doing? Reading, or what?'

'He had apparently been looking ower some papers and letters, for there were a lot lying about the desk. The doctor believes he hadna lang been dead when he was discovered.'

'Well, well. I must see after things in the morning. It is a little awkward Henry Monkton being here.—Who has charge of the keys of Mr Monkton's private-drawers? Miss Ashley, I presume?'

'I hae got them just now. She wasna fit to look after anything. I locked up some o' the drawers mysel' since I came.'

'And the papers that were on Mr Monkton's desk, what was done with them?'

'They're just lying as he left them. I was feared to touch them, and I let them lie till ye would see them yersel'. I suppose it will be ower late the nicht now. Ye can put them in the safe, if ye like, for I hae the keys here.'

'If you light the gas in the library, I will have a look at them before I go to bed. They will be better locked up, at anyrate, if there are any deeds amongst them.'

Preceded by Mrs Crawford, Mr Barnett made his way to the library. This had been his dead friend's favourite room, where he spent most of his time. The top of the desk was strewn with letters and documents of various kinds, among which Mr Barnett discerned a small bundle of titles, part of those connected with the purchase of Moredun House. He got a newspaper, and bundled all the papers together.

'We will put them in the safe till to-morrow, when I will look them over,' said he. 'His will

must be in the safe or in one of the drawers of this old cabinet.'

'Dear me, I thocht ye would have had his will,' said Mrs Crawford. 'When I made my will, though gudeness kens I hadna much to leave, my lawyer, Mr Simpson, tell'd me that it was usual for lawyers to keep their clients' wills.'

'So it is; but Mr Monkton liked to keep his own, and his titles and other documents also. But the will won't be difficult to find, for I have an idea where he kept it. I will go off to bed now. I shall see Miss Ashley in the morning, and Mr Henry Monkton too, I suppose. He has not been interfering in the house in any way since he came, has he?'

'No; he has keepit himsel' very quiet. He said ye would look after things when ye came. He didna want to meddle wi' onything.'

'I am glad to hear he is so peaceably inclined. You know the reason of his last quarrel with his brother, I daresay?'

'Deed do I. I ken that Henry Monkton has been a ne'er-do-weel a' his days, and that his brother was aye far ower gude to him. He paid his debts ower and ower again; and to think that after a', he would try to rob his brother o' his ain money behind his back.—I reckon Mr Monkton caught him in the very act o' helping himsel' to his money out o' the safe.'

'Yes; and after that he ordered him out of his house, which he should have done long before. But, as you say, he was far too good to him. They have never spoken since. Were you in the house when Henry Monkton arrived? He did not come till the afternoon, I think you said?'

'No; I was out when he came.'

'How is he looking? Does he seem sorry at hearing of his brother's death?'

'He was looking kind o' strange like, I thocht, and seemed kind o' startled when I came into the room where he was. I don't think he had heard me coming till I opened the door. He was civil enough, though I dinna ken when I saw him behave sae weel. But of course he could scarcely act any other way and his brother lying a corpse i' the house.'

'Where is the body? In Mr Monkton's own room?'

'Yes. Miss Ashley's is next to it. The house-keeper is sleeping wi' her, in case she should feel eerie. Young people are aye feared for death, ye ken. Yer room is a' ready for ye, Mr Barnett.'

'Thank you. I know my way, Mrs Crawford,' he said, taking the bedroom candle from her hand as they stood together in the hall. 'Good-night. I am sorry to have kept you up so late on my account.'

He went slowly up the stairs and along the corridor towards the room he was wont to occupy on the occasions of his visits to Moredun House. As he passed the door of the room where lay the dead body of his friend, so lately instinct with life, a feeling of awe crept over him. A stillness as of the grave seemed to hover in the air. What a strange thing was this which men call death!

Next morning, when the solicitor came downstairs, he found Miss Ashley in the breakfast-room.

She was a slight fair-haired girl with a very pretty face. She wore a dark-blue morning gown. Her eyes looked heavy and bore the traces of recent tears. She greeted Mr Barnett with outstretched hand. 'Oh, it is such a relief to have you here!' she said. 'I did not know what to do; and Mrs Crawford was not here when I wrote you. She would tell you that Henry Monkton came yesterday afternoon?'

'Yes. I expected to see him at breakfast. Is he not going to appear?'

'I do not know. He was up early, and has gone out somewhere, the housekeeper says. But we will not wait for him. Mrs Crawford is having breakfast in her own room.'

'I expected Henry Monkton would have been trying to act the master here,' said Mr Barnett; 'but Mrs Crawford informs me he has shown no disposition to do so—that he has left everything for me to arrange.'

'She told me so too. He seems to have altered for the better. We could scarcely blame him even if he did assume the mastership in the house; he is Mr Monkton's only near relation.'

'Yes; but how did he behave towards him? Not as a brother should, certainly. Had I been in Monkton's place, I would never have borne with him so long.'

'Uncle was very patient with him. I believe he always looked on him as a mere boy, who would grow wiser in time. And he was only eight years younger than uncle, after all. He must be somewhere about forty-six.'

Mr Barnett ate his breakfast in comparative silence. He was debating within himself as to the advisability of imparting to Miss Ashley the terms of Mr Monkton's will at present, or of leaving it till later. She had said nothing on the subject; and, judging by appearances, the thought of the will or of how she herself might be concerned in it did not seem to be troubling her. Had she shown any signs of anxiety with regard to what she should do, or where she should go after the funeral, Mr Barnett would have felt it his duty to tell her she was amply provided for; but as it was, he thought it better she should remain in ignorance in the meantime.

After breakfast, Miss Ashley went up-stairs. Left alone, Mr Barnett decided that he would wait until he had seen Henry Monkton, before beginning his work in the library, and went out into the garden to smoke. He was in the full enjoyment of his cigar when a step coming down the garden path caused him to turn round. The comer was Mr Henry Monkton, who held out his hand with apparent friendliness. He was a tall sallow-complexioned man, not bad-looking, with a restless look in his black eyes. He had a moustache, but no beard. Saving in his complexion and his restless looks, he had a great resemblance to his dead brother.

The solicitor took the offered hand, and bade him good-morning in as friendly a tone as he could muster.

'I have to apologise for not appearing at breakfast,' said Mr Monkton. 'I had a headache, and went out to walk it off. I am going in now.—I believe you came last night?'

'Yes. You were in bed, I think. I saw no one save Mrs Crawford.'

'She would keep you in talk at anyrate. How her tongue does go! I never can make out half she says. Confound these poor relations, always cropping up!—Have you seen Miss Ashley this morning? She was not very well yesterday.'

'I saw her at breakfast. She has gone to her room now.—You would be sorry to hear of your brother's death?'

'I have good reason to be sorry. A better brother man never had. I am afraid I was a sore trouble to him. I am glad, however, that our last quarrel was made up before he died; I should never have forgiven myself otherwise.'

'Then you have seen him lately?' asked Mr Barnett in surprise, which he did not attempt to hide.

'I saw him in the city on Tuesday, and spoke to him. He had been at your office. He was rather stern at first; but he had always a warm side to me, bad as I was.'

Mr Barnett doubted Mr Monkton's statement very much, but did not tell him so. He only remarked: 'It must be a great comfort to you now as things have happened.'

'Yes; it is a comfort, as you say.—Will you be good enough to have a look through my brother's papers and arrange them if they need arranging? You understand such things. He would have liked you to do it, I know.' He spoke as though conscious that by his own wicked conduct in the past he had forfeited all right to interfere in his brother's affairs.

Mr Barnett, although wondering not a little at the position Henry Monkton was taking up, wisely refrained from making any remark. He merely said: 'I was just waiting to see you before I began.—I will go in now,' and left Mr Monkton standing alone.

Before he could begin his work amongst the documents, the arrangements for the funeral required to be seen to, and the afternoon was pretty far advanced also when he at length set himself down to work in earnest. He first of all opened the safe, took out the papers which he had wrapped up in the newspaper the previous night, and placed them on the desk in the middle of the floor.

'I had better find the will in the first place,' thought he. 'I can't understand Henry Monkton's behaviour at all, so different from his usual style. One would think that he already has an idea how the will stands, or he would be acting differently. He must have come down here simply in a fit of bravado, and with the intention, perhaps, of deceiving the people around by a pretence of regret for the brother he has lost. He can't cheat me, however, with his hypocritical talk. I wonder if he knew that the will was in his brother's possession, or if he thought I had it?—Here is a bundle of titles; the will may be amongst them. I have seen Monkton take it out from one of these drawers before, I think. This one is half empty. Some of these papers on the desk probably have been kept in it.'

He sat down and unloosed the piece of pink tape with which the documents were tied together and scrutinised each carefully. 'It is not amongst these at anyrate,' he said, laying them aside and taking out another smaller bundle. 'Nor here either,' he added, after glancing over this

second lot. 'After all, it may be in that old cabinet or in this desk; but I should think he would not keep anything but letters or things of that kind in either of these two places.'

He happened to turn round after closing the drawer, and the bundle lying on the desk attracted his attention. He unwound the newspaper which enveloped its contents and scattered the papers loosely over the desk. A slight scrutiny convinced him that they consisted chiefly of letters and circulars of one kind and another, some of them dated many years back. These he paid little attention to. Then came part of the Moredun House titles, which, together with some leases, formed the remainder of the documents before him. He looked these over and then placed them in the drawer he had already examined. The rest of the safe was mainly taken up with business books used by Mr Monkton before his retirement from business as a merchant. The safe was not a large one, yet it took Mr Barnett some time to examine thoroughly all it contained. He had just made up his mind that the document sought for was not there, when he was summoned to dinner.

Mrs Crawford, Miss Ashley, and Mr Monkton were all present, but none of them had dressed for the occasion. The meal passed very quietly, little conversation being indulged in. Even the usually garrulous Mrs Crawford was silent. When the ladies left the dining-room, Mr Barnett retired with them, and at once went back to the library to resume his search.

He had anticipated no difficulty in finding his late friend's will; but the looking for it promised to be a more tedious business than he had expected, although he had no doubt of finding it ultimately. Hours passed, and still the search went on unsuccessfully. By ten o'clock both cabinet and desk had been thoroughly overhauled, unless there were some secret drawers which he had failed to discover. There was no other place left in the room where Mr Monkton would be likely to keep the will, that he could see. Could it by any chance be in his room up-stairs? If it was not discovered there, the conclusion seemed inevitable—that the will was lost.

NATURE BY NIGHT.

To all inhabitants of great cities, and to many dwellers even in the rural districts, the night sights and sounds by river, wood, and field are quite unknown. For, of course, during the hours when the wild things so hidden by day are at large, and the birds whose notes are not distinguished in the full chorus of the day are at their sweetest, the majority of people are asleep, or at anyrate in bed. Yet the summer nights, brief as they are, are full of life when the darkness is most complete, with a fullness which is vivid in our memory of many of the 'small-hours' passed in meadow or by lonely wood under the starlit sky. And first of all to be mentioned is the amount of bird-music to be heard at night by those who are present to hear it. Nor need one go afield for all—though some of the rarest will only be found in the solitudes—for some of the songsters in the stilly night pour forth their

music in the garden—that one compensation, however dull or commonplace the locality, to all who really ‘live in the country.’

The nightingale, as every one knows, is a night-singer, whose exquisite gush of melody in the ‘ivory moonlight,’ while the air is fragrant with the dewy flowers, is subtly soft enough to touch the dullest hearts with some echoes of romance. But with Philomel, as the eighteenth-century poets loved to call the musician, most people’s knowledge of night-singing birds begins and ends, unless they be of the few who, in the silent summer-night, have wooed Nature instead of sleep. And to those who have, what a different experience!

Beginning nearest home, in the quiet garden, the shrill yet soft and vivacious trilling of the whitethroat meets the ear—a bird not very generally known, but a haunter of the same spot year after year, loving well an evergreen on a lawn as a home, at whose base its well-feathered nest is built. It is a bird of lively song, contrasting in the moonlight with the most musical, most melancholy fluting of the nightingale.

Step forth from the garden, and traverse the more remote ground by sequestered coppice or double hedgerow, where ancient trees entwine, and the rich music of that shy songster the woodlark, which is as little popularly known as its relative the skylark is, generally floats out on the night. Cross the meadows, over which echoes in every direction the harsh cry of the landrail, towards the winding river, rippling through its rushy margin on either side, and shining like silver in the moonlight. Pause, and you will hear the humble but pretty lay of the reed-sparrow, seldom recognised by day; and what is far rarer, and can indeed be said to have been heard but by few, the merry carol of the water-ousel, that snowy-breasted little bird, which has such quaint ways, poising motionless in the day on some rock or stone, and then darting under water, where, on the shallow gravel, for a brief moment it can be seen running. It is a charming songster in its way. To our own thinking, heard on a summer night by some tranquil river-bank, it seems to bring to the mind a picture of Arcadia, when all the world was young. Few people, however, speaking comparatively, have heard the water-ousel’s song.

Here, however, is a fair variety of night-music from the feathered choir to match the summer prime—nightingale, woodlark, reed-sparrow, water-ousel, whitethroat, and we may add, sometimes the skylark, whose exquisite cadences mounting higher and higher under the flood of moonlight make the listener recognise more than ever the appropriateness of Shelley’s lines:

Hail to thee, bright spirit!
Bird thou never wert.

Poets who are not observers usually write, and some novelists too, as if the sounds of night in our British Isles were confined to the lay of the nightingale and the hoot of the moping owl; but when to the list we have given we add the crow of the pheasant—on a moonlight night often the poacher’s guide—the slumberous coo of the stockdove, the varied notes of the waterfowl, and

the occasional whirring note of the night-jar—from which sound this provincial name is derived—it is evident that the poets and novelists are wrong; perhaps, as Fielding says of the would-be painters of society in his day, because they know nothing about it. Thus much of the birds.

He who wanders in a summer night ere dawn has shown its earliest sign by ‘meadow, grove, and stream,’ will see strange things, not to be seen, save by rarest chance, in the hours of day. This is the time when the otter—little known of *feræ naturæ*, yet far more plentiful than supposed; indeed, one high authority says hardly a stream exists now without its otter, albeit he be rarely seen—makes his journey for foraging purposes. Far and away from his ‘holt’ upstream, comes the swift, shadowy, stealthy amphibious creature, nearly always going down-stream, yet leaving that strong scent behind wherever he touches shore, which the hounds, hours afterwards, discover. He makes his journey, feeds, and retires again always before dawn. At certain points he leaves the stream, and traversing the bank, re-enters it farther on, and usually shows a curious preference—just as the hare will in the ‘runs’ in a hedge—for the same precise spots of exit and re-entrance. Here and there he may leave a fine fish with his pet piece bitten out of the shoulder—the ‘otter’s mark.’ Sometimes, but not often, he leaves the water and proceeds a considerable distance by land, far from his usual stream.

Much rarer, but still, especially in the wilder and more solitary parts, to be met with is the badger, a fine young specimen of which was found among the timber-loads deposited some time ago on a timber wharf by the canal at the City Road, London. The badger burrows in the most lonely and isolated recesses of woods and hills; and those who have explored one of the burrows can say what a fine specimen of engineering and sanitation this cleanly and calumniated beast—for ‘dirty as a badger’ is simply another exemplification of popular fallacies—presents to his superior, man. The badger is very little seen, being perhaps the most retiring and conservative of British beasts, pursuing the even tenor of his way much as when Caesar landed in Kent. But it is of his appearance as one of the night-wanderers we would speak. If you are lucky enough to be in his locality in the small-hours, you may see a grayish creature curiously like a little bear waddling and grunting in the moonlight, very uneasy if to your leeward, as its scent is keen. It goes long distances at night, when humanity and most of the animal population with which man is familiar are, as Carlyle puts it, ‘lying in horizontal swathes.’ Eggs, snails, worms, roots—these are part of its fare; and through the night-hours it pursues its quests, though infinitesimally few are the people, in comparison with the millions in these islands, who have ever seen it. He is altogether in his habits a night-hawk, a minion of the moon, nor loves the daylight, preferring the safety of his secluded burrow during that time.

Of the fox as a night-traveller it were trite to speak; everybody, and especially in the case of fowl-keepers or farmyards, knows about him. Weasels are fond of gliding across roads and along ditches, too, during the witching-time, and, like

its tame town relative, the cat, that has taken to field-life, poaching, and evil ways generally, is always a most prominent feature in Nature by Night.

A STRANGE COMPACT.

It was a dreary night in the winter of 17—Outside, a heavy fog filled the narrow unsavoury streets of the Metropolis, and the lungs and eyes of such unfortunates as chanced to be abroad. It even invaded the small wooden sanctums of the night-watchmen, interfering with slumbers to which the inmates were both by age and office entitled. Across the river, in the dingy ill-paved lanes of the Borough, the fog seemed at its worst, a light warmish haze being the only indication of the presence of those shops which still remained open, and round which small ill-clad urchins with the most unmistakable intentions persistently hovered.

'A sweet night for footpads,' muttered young Dr Mostyn, as he disengaged himself from a chance rencontre with a post, and felt his way along by tapping with his stout stick at the house-walls, a proceeding by which he had already severely damaged the legs of three of his suffering fellow-creatures, and poked a large hole in the kitchen window of a fourth. 'And now,' he continued, talking to himself for the sake of company, 'for home and supper and a fire.—Ah, and a patient or two, perhaps. Who knows?'

At this cheering prospect his spirits rose, and he banged mightily at the wall with his stick in consequence, until at length, coming to a small street on his right, he turned smartly down, and having made sure of his own door, knocked briskly at it.

'Who's there?' cried a shrill female voice in response.

'It's I, Bet,' said her master. 'Open the door, my good girl.'

'Not if I knows it,' was the cheering reply. 'You take yourself off, young man, whoever you are. There's two bulldogs and three men with loaded guns standing by me, to say nothing'—

'Open the door, Bet!' roared her master through the keyhole. 'Don't you know me?'

'Is it nine o'clock, or is it eleven?' propounded the damsel; 'because, if it's eleven o'clock, my eyes deceive me; and if it's nine o'clock, your voice deceives me; for the doctor said he'd be home at eleven and not before; and considering the fog, I should say a good deal arter.'

'Open the door!' said the surgeon sharply. 'I'm back already because my patient's dead. Come; open at once!'

There was a creaking and shooting of bolts as he finished speaking; and the door being cautiously opened, discovered an angular woman of some five-and-thirty years, whose nervous face cleared directly she saw her master.

'I'm asking your pardon for keeping you so long, sir,' said she; 'but one never knows who's who; and judging by the noises and runnings,

there's been rare doings round the corner to-night.'

'Anybody been, Bet?' asked the surgeon, as, ten minutes later, he sat down to a carefully grilled chop.

'Not a soul,' replied his handmaiden.

'And a nice person you would be to open the door, if an accident *had* arrived.'

'Oh, I should have opened it at once,' said Bet with decision. 'Directly they used the word "accident," I should have opened it and chanced it.'

Her master, smiling at her devotion, drew his chair to the fire, and having carefully filled a long clay pipe, fell to smoking with an air of great enjoyment and content. Then, thinking it extremely unlikely that he would be disturbed at that late hour, he dismissed his retainer to her quarters in a neighbouring house, and being left to himself, lapsed into a brown-study.

It might have been the fog, or it might have been the unexpected death of his patient; whatever the cause, his thoughts took a very gloomy direction indeed, and he shook his head despondingly as he thought of his future prospects. His mood was not made more cheerful by the room, which was large and dark, and panelled with oak, and ornamented with battered oil-portraits of dead and gone worthies, with whom he claimed some kinship more or less remote, who seemed to stare at him to-night in a particularly ghostly not to say wooden manner. Besides all this, he was in love; and he had no sooner built a magnificent castle—in the air—and placed *her* in it, than an anything but airy landlord called for the rent, and the dream was spoiled.

He had been sitting thus for some time, nursing his woes and sipping a glass of hot cognac which he had prepared, when he was disturbed by a loud imperative knocking at the front door; whereat he snatched up one of the guttering candles and marched down the narrow stairs to open it. The feeble light of the candle, when he had done so, showed him a tall, strongly built man of middle age, whose naturally fine proportions were increased by the fog, which clung to them and exaggerated them. The surgeon noted that he was richly clad, and also that the embossed hilt of a sword protruded from the skirts of his coat, while his face, from some powerful emotion, was pale and drawn.

'Are you the surgeon?' asked the new-comer abruptly.

'At your service,' was the reply.—'Come in.'

The stranger obeyed, and waiting until the surgeon had secured the door, followed him upstairs.

'Examine me!' said he, taking off his laced coat and standing pale and upright before him.

'Unfasten your shirt,' said the other, falling in with his strange humour and commencing a careful examination.

'Well?' inquired the stranger when he had finished.

'Sound as a bell and as hard as oak.'

'Not likely to die suddenly?' suggested his visitor.

'No. I should think that that would be the last thing to happen to you,' replied the puzzled surgeon.—'Why, what is the matter with you? Do you feel ill?'

'No; I feel hale and strong, capable of enjoying life with the best. I've never had an illness in my life. But for all that, I shall die at midnight.'

'Of course,' said the surgeon, somewhat provoked at all this mystery, 'if you are going to kill yourself, you can speak with more authority as to the time than anybody else.'

'I have no intention of committing suicide,' was the stern rejoinder. 'Nevertheless, at midnight my time expires. The manner of my death is unknown to me; but I shall never see the lifting of this dreadful blackness, which on my last night upon earth has fitly interposed itself between me and the heaven I have renounced.'

The surgeon, listening to this strange outburst, turned to the table, and filling a glass with brandy, handed it to his extraordinary patient. 'Twill put heart into you,' said he.

'But not a soul,' said the other; and shuddering convulsively, drank it at a draught; then placing the glass upon the table, he drew a purse from his pocket and looked at the surgeon. 'Your fee?'

'Nothing. I know not what your trouble is; but I wish much that I could help you.'

'I'm past all help,' said the other sadly, moving towards the door; then pausing, as the surgeon took up one of the candles to light him down, he said in irresolute tones: 'As you shall judge, if you care to hear?'

'By all means,' said Mostyn heartily, as, replacing the candle, he poked the fire and drew up a chair for his visitor.

'Twenty years ago,' said the latter, accepting the proffered seat and leaning towards the surgeon, 'my circumstances were very different from what they are now. Young and strong, I had at the death of my parents rejected the bread of dependence offered me by relatives, and full of hope, had come to London to make my fortune. It proved to be harder work than I had anticipated; and in a very short while I was reduced to the verge of starvation. One dreadful night, of which this is the twentieth anniversary, I was half-crazed by poverty and despair. For two days I had not tasted food, nor did I see the slightest prospect of obtaining any. Added to this, I was deeply in love, though unhappily the interference of those who should have been our best friends kept us apart. As I crouched shivering in the garret which served me for a lodging, I think I must have gone a little bit mad.' He broke off suddenly, as though unwilling to continue, and stared gloomily at the fire.

'Well?' said the surgeon, who had been listening with much interest.

'Have you ever heard of compacts with the Evil One?' demanded the stranger.

'I have heard of such things,' replied the surgeon, on whose spirits the occasion and the visitor were beginning to tell.

'I made one,' said the other hoarsely. 'Crouched by the empty grate, which mocked me with its cold bars and white ashes, my thoughts turned, as though directed by some unseen power, to all that I had heard and read of such compacts. As my mind dwelt upon it, the subject lost much of its horror, until a gentle rustling in the neighbourhood of the fire drove me with quaking heart to my feet. My fears, however, were but

momentary, and with fierce determination I called upon my unseen visitor to lend me his awful aid. As I spoke, the sounds suddenly ceased, and a voice seemed to cry in my ear: "Write, write!" I dragged a small table into the moonlight, which struggled through the begrimed panes of the window, and with my own blood and the miserable stump of a pen, wrote out the terms of an agreement with the Prince of Darkness, possessed, as I did so, with the horrible consciousness of something in the room watching me. I vowed that if for twenty years he gave me wealth and the possession of her whom I loved better than my own life, my soul should be the forfeit. If the next morning brought change of fortune, I should take it for a sign that he had accepted my conditions. I signed it, and swooned.—When I awoke from the sleep into which the stupor had merged, the sun was shining brightly into my foul lodging, and below was a messenger who brought me news of a large fortune which had fallen to me through the death of an uncle. God forbid that my rash vow should have had aught to do with it! Since then, everything has prospered with me. I married the woman I loved. We have a large family. I have kept my secret to myself. To-night at twelve, my time expires.'

'The change in your fortunes was a mere coincidence,' said the surgeon uneasily.

'Another coincidence for you, then,' said his visitor, whose face was now livid. 'In the morning, when I awoke, the agreement which I had left on the table had disappeared.'

Mostyn rose and, taking great care not to extinguish the flames, snuffed the candles.

'As I supposed my death would be a strictly natural one,' continued the stranger, 'I thought I would consult a surgeon, in order to see whether my heart was sound, or whether I was to die as I have said, in a perfectly natural manner owing to its disease. A watchman whom I met directed me to your door.'

'Do you live in the neighbourhood?'

'No—at Westminster,' was the reply. 'But having put all my affairs in order, and wishing that my dear ones should be no witnesses of my death, I have been roaming about the streets to meet it there.'

'Alone?' queried the wondering surgeon.

'I—hope so,' said the other, shuddering.

'Be guided by me,' said the surgeon earnestly. 'Return to your home, and forget all about this mysterious compact you fancy you have made.'

His companion shook his head and turned to the door.

'Are you going to roam about in the fog again?' asked Mostyn.

'Unless you will let me stay here,' said the other, glancing at him wistfully. 'You are not nervous?—you do not think I shall die?'

'You will die of fright if you die at all,' said the surgeon sturdily. 'But stay, and welcome, if you will.' And to avoid the thanks of his guest, he poked the fire until the resulting blaze almost caused the candles to snuff themselves out with envy.

For some time they sat silent. The streets were now entirely deserted, and no sound save the flickering of the fire disturbed the silence of the room. Then the surgeon arose and, upon

hospitable thoughts intent, busied himself with the little spirit-case which stood on the sideboard; and after sundry most musical gurglings from the bottle as it confided its contents to the glasses, appeared in his place again with two steaming potatoes and a sugar-bowl. 'Cognac,' said he, 'with all its fiery nature subdued, now in its tranquil old age.'

'Thanks,' said his visitor, taking the proffered glass. 'The last toast I shall drink: Long life to you.' He tossed off the contents, and again lapsed into silence, while the surgeon slowly smoked his long pipe, removing it at intervals in favour of the spirit he had so highly commended.

Half an hour passed, and a neighbouring church clock slowly boomed the hour of eleven. One hour more. The surgeon glancing at his companion to see what effect the sound had upon him, saw that his eyes were closed and that he breathed heavily. Rising cautiously to his feet, he felt the pulse of the strong sinewy wrist which hung over the side of the chair, and then, returning to his seat, sat closely regarding him, not without casting certain uneasy glances into the dark corners of the room. His pipe went out; the fire burnt low, and, seen through the haze of fog and smoke, the motionless figure in the chair seemed suddenly to loom large in front of him and then to be almost obscured by darkness.

For a few seconds it seemed his eyes closed. When he opened them the fire was out, and the figure in front of him still sat in the chair, though its head had now fallen on its breast. Full of a horrible fear, he glanced hurriedly at the clock and saw that it was just upon the stroke of four, then he sprang to the side of his guest and seized the wrist nearest to him. As he did so, he started back with a wild cry of horror, for some slippery thing, darting swiftly between his feet, vanished in the gloom of a neighbouring corner.

Ere he could recover himself, the man in front of him stirred uneasily, and rising unsteadily to his feet, gazed stupidly at him. 'What's the matter?' he asked at length in dazed tones.

'Matter!' shouted the still trembling surgeon. 'Why, it's four hours past midnight, and you are alive and well.'

With a violent start, as he remembered his position, the stranger glanced at the mantel-shelf. 'Four o'clock!' said he—'four o'clock! Thank God, there was no compact!'—Then another fear possessed him: 'Is it—is the clock right?'

'To the minute,' said the surgeon, standing gravely by with averted head, as his visitor, heedless of his presence, fell upon his knees and buried his face in his hands.

As he rose to his feet, the old church clock slowly struck the hour of four, appearing to both the listeners to do so with an emphasis as unusual as it was welcome. As the last stroke sounded, the stranger who could even now hardly realise his position, threw up the window and extended his head. The fog had disappeared, the air was crisp and clear, and the distant rumbling of the early market-carts betokened the beginning of another day.

'How came I to sleep?' he inquired, closing the window and turning to the surgeon.

'I drugged your drink. It was the only thing

I could do. You were in such a strange state of alarm that you would either have died or gone mad if I had not done so.'

The stranger extended his hand and caught the young surgeon's in a mighty grasp. 'You ran a fearful risk! Suppose that I *had* died. My death would have been attributed to the drug, and you would have been accused of my murder.'

'I chanced it,' said Mostyn simply. 'There was no time for consideration.'

'It has been a strange business,' said the other. 'What could it have been that was in my garret that night, and what could have taken the agreement?'

'Rats,' said Mostyn, smiling. 'One of them frightened me terribly just now; but it would not have done so if I had not been in a very excited condition. The same state of mind, perhaps, though in a milder form, that you were in on the night you wrote your agreement.'

'There were rats in the room, I remember,' said the stranger; 'but I never once thought of them.—You have saved my reason, if not my life,' and he again grasped him by the hand. 'You shall not find me ungrateful.'

Nor did he; for, aided by his influence, the young surgeon rose rapidly to fame and fortune, which he shared in the most liberal manner with the girl for whom his poverty had long kept him waiting.

MEMORIES.

ONCE more beneath my yearning eyes
The deep-secluded vale appears;
ONCE more I see the mountains rise
That, in the dimly distant years,
Beheld our bitter parting tears.

The meadow-path by which we walked
In those old days that were so sweet—
The stream that talks as then it talked—
The low-roofed church—the village street
That once was glad beneath her feet—

Each common object seems to say
With me in mute complaining moan,
'The light is parted from our day;
She once was here, but now is gone,
And we are left alone—alone!'

I wander on, yet, as I go,
The joy to view each well-loved scene
Is vanquished by the greater woe,
To think of all that might have been,
Had a hard fate not stepped between.

Farewell, once more, my heart's sad home;
Once more I go; yet, wheresoe'er,
Through length of weary days, I roam,
One memory, heart-enshrined, I bear—
This mountain valley green and fair,
And the sweet flower that blossomed there.

J. S. MILLS.

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OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

BY MRS LYNN LINTON.

A BOY of the period, who understood his own value and knew what was expected of him, when asked what was his duty to his father and mother, answered smartly: 'To take them out for a walk on Sundays, and not let them see how much more I know than they do.' That was a boy evidently destined to go far. For he was not, as we can see, a bad boy. He had a heart, a certain delicacy of conscience, a certain tenderness and pity, the fruit of conscious superiority. He did not wish to humiliate his parents: the honest upright father who could not construe Latin, knew nothing of sociology, and could only do good work faithfully and obey the ten commandments; the careful tender mother, who knew no more of æsthetics than the father did of the classics, and whose highest flights of ambition were to keep her house clean and her family respectable, to say her prayers with dutiful regularity, and when things went wrong, carry her cross to God, and pray for His strength to enable her to bear it. The old folks were worthy enough, and the lad had a decided weakness for them—not touching his intellect. So that he really wished to do well by them; to take them out for a walk on Sundays as a treat after their week's hard work, and to bring his mind down to a level with theirs for the time being; not paining them by his superior knowledge, but, like a young god, veiling his intellectual brightness in consideration of their weak and purblind eyes.

Not all our young folks are so considerate as this kindly-intentioned boy. Some of them delight in nothing so much as snubbing their elders and making them feel the crassitude of their ignorance and the humiliation of their inferiority. Dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, because they see a few inches beyond their bearers they assume a personal supremacy which is but another word for contempt. To them all novelty is truth, all ancient wisdom folly. Those who

know nothing about the archaic third eye know nothing about physiology in any of its branches; and he who has not read Herbert Spencer has no right to speak of morals, education, or the causes of actions. The familiar names and properties of plants, the uses to which they may be put, and the value of those uses, count for mere old wives' maunderings in the estimation of our young folks who have studied botany scientifically and made themselves at home with the microscope. The glory of the starry heavens is nowhere compared with the teachings of the New Astronomy; and a well-educated young person of the present day enjoys looking up into those illumined depths only in proportion to the number of constellations he can see and the accuracy with which he can map them out. To this kind of crammed intellect the older people are flat, flabby, and empty; and all the knowledge of life got by experience—all the sympathy, the understanding, the moral insight, which come by time and sorrow, pass as so many 'rules of thumb' when tested by the scientific accuracy of weights and measures. The technically educated young person in the presence of his unscientific elders is for the most part as it were a Nasmyth's hammer when compared with a New Zealander's hatchet. To be sure, the men working the one and wielding the other do not come into court. The one may be, and probably is, a pale young fellow, the offspring of poverty, disease, grinding labour, restricted intelligence; the other is a fine stalwart granitic man, with all his senses alert, his pride of manhood like a sword of power and buckler of defence, a chieftain in his own right, owning no master and afraid of no enemy. But the one pulls the levers which work the Nasmyth hammer, and the Nasmyth hammer is as powerful as an elemental force; and the other has only his hatchet, which he uses like a hero—but a hero is not the equal of an elemental force in the history of events; and science is greater than the individual. For what they have acquired technically, and for the greater strides made by technical knowledge, the educated young are before the uneducated old; but this technical knowledge is

not everything, and the deepest aspects of human life—its gravest mysteries are not touched by it, any more than a mirror gives the substance it reflects.

Together with the self-complacency quite natural to those young folks who have accumulated a larger number of facts than their elders, is a decided abatement in courtesy of manner, or such respect as age has hitherto been accustomed to receive from youth. You meet the grown-up daughter of an old friend walking with her father. You are glad to see the father; and the daughter is introduced to you. She looks at you and takes your inventory; your hair is gray, your face is puckered, and your attire is unfashionable. You are out of her pale and on the outside of her sphere. She pays you no more attention after that one comprehensive glance, which tabulates, appraises, and despises. Her eyes wander afield, and when you speak to her she does not hear you. If her attention is compelled by the unwritten law of politeness and the usages, she makes you speak to her twice before she answers you with noticeable brevity. If your conversation with your old friend outlasts her patience, you see her plucking at his coat sleeve, not too furtively, and manifesting her desire to escape with more sincerity than tact. If your old friend is disobedient to his filial monitress—if he likes this little talk with the representative of his youth, and has still some inches of the old ground to dig over, she breaks her vial without more ado, and says petulantly, 'Come, father'—which ends the little play. The father has been too well trained in the modern discipline of parents to resist, and the pretty pouter bears off her submissive captive and leaves you marvelling. What a long way we have travelled since those days when the whole assembly of the young rose as a sign of honour when the aged entered the assembly! We have made the entire circle, not yet joined; and any one of us who goes much about among his fellow-creatures can give instances of little children refusing to submit to certain things which are for their good, and resolutely holding on to practices which are evil, while the mother tamely gives in to the superior force of the infantile will, and weakly supposes they know what is best for them.

Another queer manifestation of modern youth is the hopeless pessimism of many among those who pretend to have a definite philosophy. It is odd, to say the least of it, to hear a smooth-faced, cherubic young fellow, with all life before him, softly lisping out his conviction of the illusive nature of happiness, the miserable destinies of the race, the impossibility of discovering truth, the general and final hopelessness of everything. His doubts and questionings sweep the whole chord of life. He denies the existence of vice and virtue, save as arbitrary terms to denote certain convenient social arrangements. Justice is only a generalised form of self-preservation, and when stripped of all its adventitious dignity will be found to be based on the food question only. Love, as imagined by the poets and felt by the ardent young, is a ridiculous little manikin, in no respects a god. His radiant wings are only strips of muslin sewn on to a wire-frame, like the birds in the pantomime, and instead of the glorious heights of Olympus, his birthplace is in the

lowest marshlands of the race. All the manly qualities are brutal, all the feminine are weak. There is no intrinsic grandeur anywhere, and the judgment of private conscience is a superstition created by priests and the like for the better subjugation of the individual. Perhaps our cherubic pessimist confesses to the necessity for these illusions—these straps and stays, these artificial pillars of flame, and thaumaturgic shadows of a diviner light than ever was on sea or land. He is not prepared to see the whole social fabric built up by generations of lawgivers and philosophers scattered to the winds, and man return to pristine savagery, where the right of the strongest was the right divine of nature, and where the destruction of the weak was the rightful consequence of weakness. His brain, which ever receives only elemental truths, as he expresses it, those solid and gigantic bases of life, has been so far warped by heredity and environment as to accept present conditions, being unable to change them. But he sighs as he lisps out his dirges on the delusive character of life; and then in a step aside he criticises the champagne, and pronounces it too sweet and not up to the mark.

Each generation has its special characteristics—that spirit of the age which certain geniuses have before now done their best to seize, examine, understand, and dissect. Party-coloured and multiform, not one nor yet two qualities give the character of the whole, nor can the most clear-sighted see the ultimate tendency of the direction. Where we stand we know, but not where we are going, and what is to be the working result of this curious self-assertion, this general revolt of our young folks, is a secret with the rest. The answer lies on the knees of the hidden writing. In times past the power of parents was excessive and their exercise of authority tyrannous. Lady Jane Grey's letter to Roger Ascham gives a tragic picture of her personal sufferings at the hands of her father and mother; and Jeanne de Navarre was another royal victim of parental despotism. 'Nips and bobs and pinches,' and still more severe castigation, came into the recognised order of things; and the father who had spared the rod would have been held as wanting in the first elements of fatherly duty and consequent kindness to his child. Moral education was a thing of precept and action, and the birch was the commentary for driving home all sorts of valuable texts, which without that commentary would never have taken root. Now our young folks resent even advice, and, as has been shown, hold themselves the superiors of those who are only their progenitors, not their masters, still less their betters. We have let the pendulum swing back just as much too far in the way of independence and self-guidance as it went on that other of subservience and fear. Our own mature experience counts for nothing, and our young folks begin the task of vital knowledge with the proverbial dunce for a schoolmaster. Mothers sit supine and let their daughters conduct their own love affairs at their own best pleasure. Fathers look on and let their boys find their own way about the thorny paths of a young man's temptations and *habilities*. And the young enjoy their freedom and ramble through the unploughed

fields, where they gather all the flowers they see, and have to find by their own experiments which are worts and which are weeds, which good grain and which painted poison. No influence comes up from below; it all filters downwards. This excessive independence, this unchecked 'williness' of our young folks, comes from the relaxed discipline of the parents, not from the great bulk of independence. Naturally, that being unchecked, increases in strength, as all things left to flourish without pruning must do; but the *causa causans* is the indolence of the parents, who have ceased to direct as well as having ceased to govern. Meanwhile we may be thankful when some young first-class boy fresh from a preparatory school—some little shrimp in knickerbockers—uses leniency and generosity towards his homely forebears, and takes humane and considerate care not to let them see how much more he knows than they do.

A DEAD RECKONING.

A STORY IN NINETEEN CHAPTERS.

By T. W. SPEIGHT,

Author of *The Mysteries of Heron Dyke*, *By Devious Ways*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

'AUNTY, dear, do you know what day this is?'

'If the almanac may be believed, it is the 24th of April.'

'Six months ago to-day, Gerald and I were married. I feel as if I had been married for years.'

'How dreadful to feel that you are growing old so quickly! I hope all married people don't feel like that.'

'You misunderstand me, Aunt Jane. I have been so happy since that evening last year when Gerald whispered something to me in the summer-house, that all my life before I knew him seems as unreal as a dream.'

'Such short courtships are positively dreadful. Now, when I was engaged to Captain Singleton'—

A third lady, who had been lounging on a sofa and making-believe to be intent on a novel, gave a loud sneeze and sat bolt upright. She had heard Captain Singleton's name introduced so often of late, that she might be excused for not caring to hear it mentioned again—at least for a little while.

The first speaker, Clara Brooke, was a charming brunette of twenty-two, with sparkling black eyes, a pure olive complexion, and a manner that was at once vivacious and tender. Miss Primby, the second speaker, was a fresh-coloured, well-preserved spinster of—— But no; Miss Primby's age was a secret, which she guarded as a dragon might guard its young, and we have no right to divulge it. She had one of the best hearts in the world, and one of the weakest heads. Everybody smiled at her little foibles, yet everybody liked her. Just now she was busy over

some species of delicate embroidery, in which she was an adept. Lady Fanny Dwyer, the third lady, whose inopportune sneeze had for a moment so disconcerted Miss Primby, was a very pretty, worldly-wise, self-possessed young matron, who in age was some six months older than Mrs Brooke. She and Clara had been bosom friends in their school-days; and notwithstanding the many differences in their characters and dispositions, their liking for each other was still as fresh and unselfish as ever it had been.

The ladies were sitting in a pleasant morning-room at Beechley Towers, Mr Gerald Brooke's country-house, situated about fourteen miles from London. The room opened on to a veranda by means of long windows, which were wide open this balmy April afternoon. Beyond the veranda was a terrace, from which two flights of broad shallow steps led down to a flower-garden. Outside that lay a well-wooded park, with a wide sweep of sunny champaign enfolding the whole.

Clara Brooke had scarcely heard her aunt's last remark. She was seated at a davenport, turning over some old letters. On the wall in front of her hung a portrait of her husband, painted on ivory. "My own darling Clara," she read to herself from one of the letters; "it seems an age since I saw you last, and it will seem like an age till I shall have the happiness of seeing you again." What sweet, sweet letters he used to write to me! What other girl ever had such letters written to her? She pressed the paper she had been reading to her lips, then refolded it, and put it away and took up another.

'Ah, my dear,' remarked Lady Fanny, turning to her friend, 'as you remarked just now, you have only been a wife for six short months, and of course everything with you is still *couleur de rose*. But when you have been married as long as Algy and I have, when the commonplace and the prosaic begin to assert themselves, as they do in everything and everywhere, whether you like it or not, then I am sure you will agree that the scheme of married life my husband and I have planned for ourselves has really a good deal to recommend it to all sensible people.'

Miss Primby pricked up her ears. 'You excite my curiosity, dear Lady Fanny,' she said. 'I hope you won't refuse to gratify it.'

'Why should I?' asked Lady Fan with her merry laugh. 'We want converts, Algy and I; and who knows, my dear Miss Primby, but that some day—eh? Well, this is our *modus vivendi*—I believe that's the correct term, but won't be sure. About eighteen months ago—we had then been married a little over a year—Algy and I came to the conclusion that married people ought not to be too constantly together if they wish to keep on good terms with each other. Algy's contention is that half the quarrels and scandals which come out in the newspapers are simply the result of people seeing so much of each other that at last they are impelled by some feeling they can't resist to have what he calls "a jolly row," just to vary the monotony of existence. And then, as he says, one "row" is sure to lead to another, and so on. When once the match is applied, no one can tell where the conflagration will stop. Now, although ours was a love-match, if ever there was one, we had not

run together in harness very long before we made the discovery that in many things our likes and dislikes were opposed. For instance, next to me, I believe Algy loves his yacht; whereas I detest yachting: it seems to me a most stupid way of passing one's time. On the other hand, I delight in going from one country-house to another and visiting each of my friends in turn; while Algy, dear fellow, is always awfully bored in general society, especially wherever a number of our sex happen to be congregated. Thus, it has come to pass that at the present moment he is somewhere in the Mediterranean, while I—well, *je suis ici*. Algy and I never give ourselves time to grow tired of each other; and when we meet after being apart for a month or two, our meetings are “real nice,” as my friend Miss Peckover from New York would say.

Miss Primby shook her head. ‘I am afraid, dear Lady Fanny, that your opinions on such matters are very heterodox, and I can only say that I hope Clara will never see fit to adopt them.’

‘Not much fear of that, Aunt Jane,’ answered the young wife. ‘Fancy Gerald and me being separated for a month or six weeks at a time! But it is quite out of the question to fancy anything so absurd.’

Lady Fan laughed. ‘Wait, my dear, wait,’ was all she said as she turned again to her novel.

Clara Brooke shook her head; she was in no wise convinced.

‘Gracious goodness! whatever can that be?’ ejaculated Miss Primby with a start.

‘Only Gerald and the Baron Von Rosenberg practising at the pistol-range. It is an amusement both of them are fond of.’

‘An amusement do you call it! I wish they would practise their amusements farther from the house, then.—Heaven preserve us! there they go again. No wonder I have broken my needle.’

‘It’s nothing, Aunt Jane, when you are used to it,’ responded her niece with a smile.

‘Used to it, indeed! I should never get used to it as long as I lived. I have no doubt this is another of the objectionable practices your husband picked up while he was living in foreign parts.’

‘Seeing that Gerald was brought up in Poland, and that he lived in that country and in Russia from the time he was five years old till he was close on twenty (I think I have told you before that his grandmother was a Polish lady of rank), I have no doubt it was while he was living in those foreign parts, as you call them, that he learnt to be so fond of pistol-practice.’

At this moment there came the sound of two pistol-shots in quick succession. Miss Primby started to her feet. ‘My dear Clara,’ she exclaimed, ‘if you don’t want my poor nerves to be shattered for life, you won’t object to my going to my own room. With plenty of cotton wool in my ears, and my Indian shawl wrapped round my head, I may perhaps—Dear, dear! now my thimble’s gone.’

‘Why, there’s your thimble, aunt, on your finger.’

‘So it is—so it is, dear. That shows the state of my poor nerves.’

‘Will you not stay and say good-bye to the Baron?’

‘No, my dear; I would rather not. You must

make my excuses. Of course, you could not fail to notice how the Baron ogled me at luncheon. He puts me so much in mind of poor dear Major Pondicherry. But I never cared greatly for foreigners; besides, he will smell horribly of gunpowder when he comes in.—There again! Not another moment will I stay.’

Clara Brooke’s face rippled over with suppressed laughter as Miss Primby left the room. Then she turned to her letters again, and tied them up with ribbon. ‘I have heard that some people burn their love-letters when they get married,’ she mused. ‘What strange beings they must be! Nothing in the world would induce me to burn mine. Sweet silent messengers of love, what happy secrets lie hidden in your leaves!’ She pressed the letters to her lips, put them away inside the davenport, and locked them up.

Just as she had done this, the pompous tones of Bunce, who filled the joint positions of major-domo and butler at the Towers, became plainly audible. Apparently he was standing outside the side-door and addressing his remarks to some one on the terrace. ‘Now, the sooner you take your hook the better,’ the two ladies heard him say. ‘We don’t want none of your kidney here. This ain’t no place for mountebanks—I should think not indeed!’ Mr Bunce in his ire had evidently forgotten the proximity of his mistress.

Clara crossed to one of the windows, and looking out saw, some little distance away, two strange figures slowly crossing the terrace. One was that of a man whose costume of a street tumbler was partly hidden by the long shabby overcoat he wore over it, which was closely buttoned to the chin. Over one shoulder a drum was slung, and in his left hand he carried a set of Pandean pipes. The second figure was that of a boy some eight or nine years old, who had hold of the man’s right hand. Under one arm he carried a small roll of faded carpet. In point of dress he was a miniature copy of the elder mountebank, minus the overcoat. His throat was swathed in a dingy white muffler, while his profusion of yellow curls were kept from straying by a fillet round his forehead embroidered with silvered beads.

‘Poor creatures,’ said Clara to herself. ‘Bunce had no business to speak to them as he did. How dejected they look, and the child seems quite footsore.’

At this juncture the man happening to turn his head, caught sight of her. She at once beckoned him to approach.

The mountebank’s face lighted up and all signs of dejection vanished in a moment. He had some kind of old cap on his head. This he now removed, and bowed profoundly twice. It was a bow that might have graced a drawing-room. Then he and the boy crossed the terrace towards Mrs Brooke.

‘Fan, I want you; come here,’ said Clara to her friend.

Lady Fanny rose languidly and crossed to the window.

What struck both the ladies first of all, as the vagrants drew near, was the remarkable beauty of the child. His face at the first glance seemed an almost perfect oval; his complexion, naturally fair and transparent, was now somewhat embrowned by exposure to the sun and wind. He had large eyes of the deepest and tenderest blue, shaded by long

golden lashes; while his lips formed a delicate curve such as many a so-called professional beauty might have envied.

'He looks more like a girl than a boy,' whispered Lady Fan.

'He looks more like a cherub than either,' responded Clara, who was somewhat impulsive both in her likes and dislikes. 'It is a face that Millais would love to paint.'

The appearance of the man was a great contrast to that of the child, and a casual observer would have said that there was no single point of resemblance between the two. Apparently the former was about forty to forty-five years of age. He had a sallow complexion and a thin aquiline nose; his black locks were long and tangled; while into his quick-glancing black eyes, which appeared to see half-a-dozen things at once, there would leap at times a strange fierce gleam, which seemed to indicate that although the volcano below might give forth few or no signs, its hidden fires were smouldering still. Only when his eyes rested on the boy they would soften and fill with a sort of wistful tenderness; and at such moments the whole expression of his face would change.

'I am extremely sorry,' said Mrs Brooke, 'that my servant should have spoken to you just now in the way he did. He had no right to do so, and I shall certainly ask my husband to reprimand him.'

'It was nothings, madame, nothings at all,' responded the mountebank with a little bow and a smile and a deprecatory motion of his hands. 'We are often spoken to like that—Henri and I—we think nothings of it.'

'Still, I cannot help feeling greatly annoyed.—Is this pretty boy your son?'

'Oui, madame.'

'His mother?'

'Alas, madame, she is dead. She die six long years ago. She was English, like madame. Henri has the eyes of *ma pauvre* Marie; and his hair, too, is the same colour as hers.'

Although the man spoke with a pronounced foreign accent, his English was fluent, and he rarely seemed at a loss for a word to express his meaning.

'Poor child!' said Mrs Brooke. 'This is a hard life to bring him up to. Surely some other way might be found'—Then she paused.

The mountebank's white teeth showed themselves in a smile. 'Ah no, madame; pardon, but it is not a hard life by no means. Henri likes it, and I like it. In the winter we join some *cirque*, and then Henri has lessons every day. He is *clevare*, very *clevare*—everybody say so. One day Henri will be a great artiste. The world—*tout le monde*—will hear of him. It is I who say it—*moi*.' He touched his chest proudly with the tips of his fingers as he ceased speaking. 'Would mesdames like to behold?'—he said a moment later as he brought his drum into position and raised the pipes to his lips.

'Thank you, monsieur; not to-day,' answered Clara gravely as she stepped back into the room and rang the bell.

Monsieur looked disappointed. Henri, however, looked anything but disappointed when, two minutes later, the beautiful lady, from whose face he could scarcely take his eyes, heaped his little hands with cakes and fruit till they could hold no more.

'Tell me your name, my pretty one,' said Mrs Brooke, as she stooped and helped him to secure his treasures.

'Henri Picot, madame.'

'And have you any pockets, Henri?'

'Oui, madame.'

A pocket was duly indicated, and into its recesses a certain coin of the realm presently found its way.

Before either Picot or the boy had time to give utterance to a word of thanks, a servant entered the room, and addressing Lady Fan, said: 'If you please, my lady, the carriage is waiting; and Miss Primby desires me to tell you that she is ready.'

'Good gracious, Clara,' said Lady Fan, 'I had forgotten all about my promise to accompany your aunt in her call on Mrs Riversdale. I wish to goodness you could go with us. I dread the ordeal.'

'And leave the Baron Von Rosenberg without a word of apology! What would become of my reputation as a hostess? Gerald and he will be here in a few minutes, I don't doubt; and if you like to wait till he is gone'—

'That would never do,' interrupted her friend. 'You know what a fidget your aunt is when she is kept waiting. You had better come and keep her in good-humour while I am getting my things on.—By-the-bye, where can our singular friends have vanished to?'

Clara looked round. Picot and the boy had disappeared. Neither of the ladies had seen the start the mountebank gave at the mention of Von Rosenberg's name, nor how strangely the expression of his face changed. Clutching the boy by one wrist, he whispered: 'It is time to go. Venez, mon p'tit—vite, vite! The ladies want us no more.'

'The man was French, and he seems to have taken the proverbial leave of his countrymen,' said Lady Fan with a laugh.

Mrs Brooke was a little surprised, but said nothing. The two ladies left the room together.

EARLY MARINE INSURANCE.

THE history of marine insurance is interesting. From the early days of Greece and Rome such a system of insurance has been in use. But the first explicit statement in writing regarding marine insurance is found in an edict of Justin Martyr of the year 533 A.D. He decreed twelve per cent. to be the lawful amount of profit for the insurance of goods on land, but granted twenty per cent. to marine insurers on account of the additional risks entailed. The ancient system of insurance was called *Bottomry*—in other words, the ship was mortgaged. If the ship was lost, the lender likewise lost the money advanced on her; but if she arrived safely at her port of destination, he not only got back the loan but also the premium previously agreed upon.

The merchants of the Steelyard were the first marine insurers of Great Britain. They were Germans, and came to this country in the reign of Edward IV. The merchants of the Steelyard settled in London, built houses, and became the representatives of the Hanseatic League. They were a curious company; they lived like monks in a monastery, were not allowed to marry, or even to speak to the fair sex. The gates of their premises were closed at a certain hour at night,

and opened late or early in the morning according to the season of the year. A breach of any one of these rules meant instant expulsion. On New-year's eve the Steelyard men met and elected a chief, who presided over a council of eleven chosen from their ranks; and on New-year's day the chief was installed into his office, which he retained for one year only.

These aliens in time grew wealthy; for not only did they hold a monopoly of marine insurance, but they also had peculiar privileges in the way of trade granted to them by the early kings of England, who for such privileges received large sums of money to carry on their wars. The people of Britain naturally resented such favours shown to foreigners, and again and again this resentment manifested itself in the frequent assaults made by the London populace on the warehouses of the Steelyard men. At length in 1597 public opinion grew so strong against the Germans that an Act was passed ordering all foreigners to leave the country on pain of heavy penalties. By way of reprisals, the cities of the Hanseatic League placed restrictions on British imports. It was of no use; the edict of Queen Elizabeth had to be obeyed. The old houses in which these Steelyard men carried on their business of banking, shipping, and marine insurance stood till the year 1863; but now Cannon Street railway passes over their site. The system of marine insurance followed by these Steelyard men was that which we in a former part of our paper defined as *bottomry*.

When the Jews, towards the end of the thirteenth century, after being persecuted and maltreated in every possible way, fled from England, their place as financiers was taken by the Lombards. These Lombards consisted of merchants from Genoa, Lucca, Florence, and Venice, who, as insurers, money-lenders, and bankers, soon established themselves in England. The name of Lombard Street, in London, is a memorial still left of them; and among other terms which they are believed to have introduced into our language is the immortal *L. s. d.*, which was originally used to represent their *libri, solidi, and denarii*. These Lombards were active and pushing men; they had an agency at Inverness, and one of their projects was to build a 'marine establishment' at Queensferry, now rendered famous by the stupendous Forth Bridge. Like their German friends, they soon possessed themselves of much of the country's trade; but the same edict which drove the Steelyard men from London was also sufficient to make these Italians leave for ever the shores of England.

After these men left, the English people themselves took up the matter of insurance. An Act was passed to render this more easy. A Board of Insurance was formed, composed of merchants and lawyers; this Board had for its aim the settling of all disputes; but its meetings were few, and the whole system fell into disrepute. The chief insurers were notaries of public and brokers. In the year 1602 a man named Candler applied for a patent to enable him to have the sole right of marine insurance; this raised the ire of the men into whose hands all the insurance of the country had fallen, and it was to appease their wrath that the Council of Insurance was formed. The Council was composed chiefly of

the complaining class, and therefore did very little to bring about what Candler and others had petitioned for.

Our chief information regarding these old insurance agencies is derived from a work commonly called *The Guidon*, published at Rouen between the years 1590 and 1600. The author's name is unknown; but in all probability it is the combined efforts of a few men. In this very able work we obtain a good definition of marine insurance, as also the various rules to which all insurers and insurance companies had to submit. Thus, all insurances had to be made in writing; such was not always the case, for merely verbal statements were sufficient to insure a vessel. This last method, however, was liable to cause misunderstandings, disputes, and forgeries; hence it was deemed illegal and non-binding.

When an insurance was agreed upon, it had to be signed in the presence of a registrar and enrolled as a public Act. Without this registrar's sanction all insurance bargains were null and void. The registrar had to be a man of intelligence, of sobriety, and of 'good repute'; he was required to live in a populous part of the town, and have above his door a sign with the words 'Office of Insurance.' For signing this insurance mandate the registrar received the half of a quarter per cent. for every hundred livres, and so on, rising in value according to a fixed scale.

The registrar of insurance was bound to keep in his office a box, into which those who obtained policies were forced to put, over and above the half of a quarter per cent. paid for the insurance policy, a certain fixed sum, according to the extent of their transactions. The money thus collected was partly given to the poor of the district, and partly for the benefit of shipwrecked mariners. This did not, however, end their contributions. Outside the registrar's door there was another box for the reception of 'God's pence,' which money was used for the ransoming of all travellers and seamen captured by pirates.

At the time of the crusades, it was no unusual thing for men to insure their lives against capture; and the insurers had to pay whatever ransom might be demanded for their release. But those who had no insurance policies simply depended on the money put in the boxes for the reception of 'God's pence.'

The end of the sixteenth century saw the establishment of insurance companies all over England. Vessels were insured for five months when their voyage was to Flanders, England, Portugal, and Norway; for twelve months when the ship sailed to the coast of Italy, Azores, Pern, Brazil, or the Indies. Notification of loss was received for the former till the end of three months; but six and even twelve months were permitted for the latter. When these stated times had elapsed, no claim could be admitted, whatever the excuse might be.

Assurance policies were paid in England although the original transaction had at first been settled on the Continent; and of course what was first settled in England could likewise be discharged on the Continent. It is evident, then, that there must have been rapid progress made in the way of insurance companies.

The earliest English policy in the possession of antiquaries dates back to the year 1613. It

was discovered in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. We venture to transcribe a few sentences of the quaint document: 'In the name of God, Amen: Be it knowne unto all men by these presents that Morris, Abbot and Devereux Wogan of London Marchants doe make assurance and cause themselves and everye of them to be assured lost or not lost frome London to Zante Petrasse and Saphalonia or any of them upon woollen and linnen cloth, leade kersies, iron and any other goodes and merchandize heretofore laden aboarde the good ship called the tiger of London (whereof Thomas Crowder is master under God in this present voyedge) of the burthen of 200 touns or thereabouts,' &c.

At the period this policy was taken out, we hear very little of the Court of Insurance. Indeed, in the reign of Charles II. we know that the King's Bench on several occasions was in direct conflict with this insurance court. Gradually the disputes regarding insurance were referred to the ordinary courts of law, which now settle all such matters.

When we reach the eighteenth century, we find that marine insurance is now, more than ever, a good paying concern; but to give any details regarding that period is not our intention, because we know it is on the foundation of that past that the present system of marine insurance is formed. By way, however, of showing to what extent marine and other insurances had taken hold on the British public, we submit the following curious list. The time was that in which the South Sea Bubble was all the cry. The list runs thus: 'An Insurance for insuring and increasing Children's Fortunes;' 'Insurance from Death by drinking Geneva;' 'Assurance from Lying;' 'Insurance from Housebreakers;' 'Rum Insurance;' 'Insurance from Highwaymen.' These are only a few of the senseless and absurd schemes of insurance which were foisted upon the British public at a time when that public seemed capable of believing any amount of nonsense.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE voice of Mr Shorthouse reached Snelling's ears, and those of Tobias Orme also, for it was at this time that the murderous plotter was engaged upon his guilty work. Orme saw him start and stare out of the archway with eyes of terror. Then he saw him huddle up the newspaper he had spread upon the turf to catch the falling fragments of mortar, and cram it away into the centre of a clump of thick gram bushes near at hand. Next he restored to their places the bricks he had removed from the arch, and coming out upon the open sward, stood still for a moment, manifestly endeavouring to remove all signs of emotion from his face. When he thought he had succeeded, he answered Shorthouse's repeated calls with a boisterous 'Hilly ho!' and walked in the direction of the gate, leaving Mr Orme in his hiding-place, full of the wildest conjectures as to the value of the treasure-trove which could so excite a man of Snelling's wealth and solidity of character.

'What bee'st locked in for i' this way?' Shorthouse demanded as Snelling came in sight.

'Anybody as finds the gates open,' Snelling answered, 'thinks he's got a right to come in here and poke his nose anywhew he likes to. There's nobody about the place but myself just now. I'll let thee in, in a minute. This fastening's a bit rusty.'

'Bob, ode lad,' said Shorthouse, 'thee been't looking well.'

'I'm worried,' returned Snelling growlingly, as he tugged at the rusted fastening of the gate—'I'm worried. I don't eat my victuals; I can't sleep o' nights.' He looked, if Shorthouse had had the fancy to think of it, like some wild thing tearing at the bars of his cage.—'Come in,' he said, when he had at length withdrawn the fastening. 'I'm glad to have anybody about; I'm not so good at being lonesome as I used to be.'

'That's a stroke at what I'm here for, Bob,' returned the farmer. 'Let's go into the house. G're me a drop o' beer. Theer's nothin' meks a man so dry as anger.'

Snelling drew a jug of ale from a cask in his housekeeper's room and set it before his visitor. Shorthouse took a lengthy pull at it and returned it noisily to the table. 'Bob,' he said, 'be you i' the same mind as you used to be in about marryin' my Cecilia?'

'Is it any good for me to be o' that mind?' Snelling asked in turn.

'Yes or no?' cried Shorthouse, beating on the table with his clenched hand. 'Be you i' the same mind?'

'I'm not one o' them featherheads as are o' one mind one day and another the next,' said Snelling.

'Very well,' said Shorthouse. 'You can marry the gell in four weeks' time from now.'

Snelling, who had taken a seat on the opposite side of the table to his visitor, rose at this and thrust out his right hand with a fierce gesture towards Shorthouse. The farmer rose also and accepted it, and the two shook hands across the table.

'That's a bargain,' said Shorthouse. 'Theer's blood in it too,' he added, laughing.—'What ha' you been doin' at your knuckles, Bob? You've gashed 'em somehow.'

'It's nothing,' Snelling answered. 'I was a-doin' a bit o' rough work this mornin'—and my hand slipped. I hit my knuckles agen the wall, I reckon. I hardly knowed about it.'

'I'll tell thee what I'm goin' to do,' said Shorthouse. 'That wench o' mine has got her head full o' that young Frenchman. Me an' her's had a bit of a shindy this mornin', and I've told her as I'm goin' to put a finish on all her nonsense. If youn willin' to tek her just as her stands, with her craze about the frog-eater as well as everythin' else her's got, I'll start this hour, and see as the bands is cried in church next Sunday mornin'.—I've got a very pretty penny, Bob, and when I'm gone, yer'll have the lot on it.'

'Never mind that,' said Snelling; 'all that's nothing to me.'

'You've changed, then,' said Shorthouse dryly.

'Yes,' said Snelling, with a suppressed rage in his face and voice; 'I've changed. Time was I wouldn't ha' married her, or dreamed o' marrying her, without her lands. You can send

her now as naked as a robin, if you like.—I can't eat,' he flashed out; 'I can't sleep. I'm a fool about the wench.'

'That's how the cat jumps, is it?' Shorthouse answered, laughing. 'I've allus heard it's pretty hard on the middle-aged uns; but I never remember to ha' seen a case afore.—All right, Bob. Come along wi' me; we'll get that bit o' business o'er at once.'

'Sit there a minute,' said Snelling. 'I'll get a wash and come back directly.'

The unexpected turn of fortune coming on the horrible emotions of the last half-hour had set him shaking like a woman. He would fain have been alone, to realise in his own thoughts the chance that had befallen him, and yet he was so far afraid of himself that he clung to Shorthouse's companionship.

The two went to the parish clerk together and there gave instructions for the calling of the banns of marriage between Robert Snelling, widower, and Cecilia Shorthouse, spinster; and then and there separated to go their several ways. Snelling could not go back to his horrid work again that day; he had no nerve for it; and Tobias waited and pined in vain, until sheer hunger drove him home.

The farmer, re-entering his own house, hung up his hat, searched for a new Broseley, filled and lit it, and sat down contentedly, altogether satisfied with the masterly stroke he had just played. None of your contumelious daughters for Farmer Shorthouse. He knew how to manage 'em. The whole country-side would know what he had done, and he would be cited as a pattern of parental authority whenever foolish girls ran counter to it. As for the girl being unhappy when once she was married and settled, that, of course, was all nonsense. He was in no haste to communicate his news to Cecilia; but he was in no dread of it either; and when the girl, with swollen eyelids and scalded cheeks, came down, in obedience to his call, to the mid-day dinner, he gave her his news with a cheerful unconscious brutality which was at least as easy to endure as any finesse could possibly have been.

'I've been to see Bob Snelling,' he said, as he plunged the carving-fork into the sirloin before him, 'and him and me has been together to put the bands up next Sunday and the two Sundays following for your wedding along with him.' He spoke deliberately, carving the while, and set a plentiful portion before the girl. Then he helped himself and fell-to with a robust appetite.

'Father,' said Cecilia, in a tone so low that at first he scarcely heard her, 'I shall never marry Mr Snelling.' Her face was deathly white, and there was a look in her eyes which her father had never seen there before.

'That, you see, my wench,' he responded, with his mouth full of beef and greens, 'is wheer you and me is of two different opinions.'

'Father,' she said again, 'I shall never marry Mr Snelling.'

'You're mistook, my gell,' he responded with a cheerful indifference. 'You and Bob Snelling'll be married next Monday fortnight. You can begin a-thinking about the wedding dresses as soon as ever you like. Their's all your mother's things up-stairs as you can pick and choose from.

Their's a silk or two up there in the big press as'll stand by 'emselfs, and has got a hundred years o' wear in 'em.'

'You don't know what you're doing, father,' said the girl, rising with her resolute white face and frightened eyes—'you don't know what you're doing.'

'Rubbidge, my wench, rubbidge,' responded the farmer, and went on comfortably with his dinner after Cecilia had left the room.

That afternoon Jousserau, with very little heart for his work, sat at his easel with a typical yokel posed before him. He knew that he was painting badly, and that everything he did would have to come out again; but in spite of that knowledge, he went on with no other object than to hold thought at a distance. Somewhere about three o'clock, Isaiah came tapping at the door, and being admitted, showed a countenance of unusual gravity.

'You can do without this lad a minute,' he said. 'Best send him down into the kitchen. I've got summat important to say to thee.'—The yokel being dismissed, Isaiah sat down with an air of mystery and importance, but almost immediately rising, took a bottle of cognac from a sideboard, poured out a glass from it and set it on the table. 'In case you should be in want o' that,' he remarked, 'it's handy. It might do you no harm if you was to tek it now.'

'What is the matter?' Jousserau asked him in surprise.

'Why,' returned Isaiah, 'I've just happened to pass by the parish clerk's; and him bein' a oldish chum of mine, and me not liking to be 'aughty with the man because I'm a bit better off than I used to be, I dropped in, so to speak, to have a word along wi' him. I meant to pass the time of day with him, and no more; but all of a sudden he up and tells me a thing as knocked me as high as a kite. "Mr Snelling," he says, "and Mr Shortus," he says, "has been here this morning," he says, "to put up the bands o' marriage between Robert Snelling, widderer, and Cecilia Shorthouse, spinster."—You'd better take that drop o' brandy, Mr Jousserong; it'll do you good.'

'I do not understand,' said Jousserau, waving the proffered glass aside. 'What is it, the bands of marriage?'

'Bob Snelling and Miss Shorthouse,' explained Isaiah, 'are going to be cried in church next Sunday. The names'll be called out three Sundays running; and then, in the natural course o' things, the two'll get married.'

'I will not believe it,' cried the artist, rising to his feet.

'You've got to believe it,' Isaiah answered. 'I've seen it in the clerk's own handwriting. It's only possible to believe as the young woman has gien in her consentment; and what you've got to do, Mr Jousserong, is to pluck up a sperrit and think no more about her.'

'No,' said Jousserau staunchly, 'that I shall not believe. She has not consented. They have done it without her will, without her knowledge. She does not care for Mr Snelling.'

'That's like enough,' returned Isaiah. 'But if her's been frightened into it, her ain't the first young woman that has happened to.'

'I will not believe it,' said Jousserau again, and indeed his whole heart rose in revolt against the fancy. 'You know?' he said, tapping at his breast to indicate himself. 'I have never spoken a word about it; but you know, and that is why you bring this news to me.'

'I know?' said Isaiah. 'The parish knows. It's talked about at the town-pump, if that's any comfort to you.'

The two sat silent for a while; and Jousserau, mechanically taking up his palette and brushes, laid an absent-minded touch or two upon the canvas with an air of profound study; then he laid his tools down again and turned to face Isaiah. 'I shall go and find out,' he said; 'I will know the truth.'

'Don't you make a fool of yourself,' Isaiah advised in rough friendship.

'I must know the truth; I will know the truth,' cried Jousserau, rising. He spoke with a fierce gesture, the southern flame flashing out of him for the first time.

'Yes, yes, yes,' returned Isaiah; 'so you may, but you mustn't make a fool of yourself, all the same. I'll tell you how we'll manage. Mrs Winter and Miss Shorthouse has allus been pretty good friends. It was mere hazard as I found out what happened. Old Shorthouse'll never guess as the missis'll know anything about it, and her can mek a call on Cecilia and spy out the land, d'ye see.' Isaiah gouged this idea into Jousserau with elaborate workings of the thumb, and accompanied it with many persuasive winks and nods. Jousserau hailing it eagerly, Isaiah went out upon the landing and shouted to his wife to ascend.

'Cecilia Shorthouse marry Bob Snelling!' cried Mrs Winter shrilly, when Isaiah had communicated his news to her. 'Never i' this world, with her own good-will.—No, no, Isaiah; never you believe it.—Go down and find out for you, Mr Jousserong? To be sure I will. Her shall never marry that hunks, as I suffered and trembled under for 'ears and 'ears, if anything I can say can put a stop to it.—Why, I do assure you, Mr Jousserong, I've knowed that man grumble for five months on end about a button as was off the back of his shirt-collar. He's never twice i' the same mind about his breakfast bacon the wull year round; and as for his heggs, he'll have 'em hard-biled one morning and soft-biled another morning, enough to drive you mad with worry.'

Mrs Winter lost no time in assuming the black silk of ceremony, and even on this occasion dared to wear the wonderful bonnet which Jousserau had brought home from Paris six months before. My lady Barfield had appeared in church in a structure less splendid and imposing; and the county member's wife had worn a bonnet which, as Mrs Winter declared, might have been twin-sister to her own. The flower-stuffed Norman arch was sanctified by fashion; and the good woman put it on and carried it down the lanes with pride.

Shorthouse was away from home when she reached his door; and Miss Cecilia, who was occupied with her tears, had locked herself in her chamber and would at first see nobody. The big ruddy servant-girl told the visitor enough to assure her that the match Shorthouse was forcing on was unwelcome to his daughter. The servant knew nothing about the reason of her mistress's

tears, but said she: 'Miss Cecilia's a-crying like a watering-cart. I've knocked at her door three times and her teks no manner o' notice.'

'I'll have a try,' said Mrs Winter, and so mounted the stairs and knocked at Cecilia's door. The servant-girl pointed it out to her and stood agape with interest.

'Go away!' said a weeping voice from within.

'I don't want anything. Leave me alone.'

'My poor dear darlin',' said Mrs Winter, beginning at these mournful accents to sniffle on the outside of the door. 'It's me as has come to say a comfortin' word to you.—Let me in, there's a love.'

The maid, like the foolish fat scullion in Sterne's immortal story, blubbered into sudden tears and ran away with her apron over her head.

IN A WELSH FARMHOUSE.

It is a little past two o'clock in the afternoon, and as I look out of the window of the farmhouse across to the opposite mountains, the whole valley seems asleep under the burning sun, which pours down upon barren rock and green field, till the cattle forsake the meadows and herd together under the trees, whisking their tails backwards and forwards and chewing the cud with lazy philosophy. It is so still, that the little trout stream which rushes over its pebbly bed seems quite noisy, and sounds as if it were protesting against the great noontide stillness that hangs over the mountains. Suddenly, three petulant ear-piercing screams ring up from the valley below; and seizing a straw hat, I rush out into the garden, for the whistles are the signal that the train is coming with the newspapers. Presently the tiny engine comes snorting up the hill, dragging its three toy carriages and guard's van after it, and passes through the yard behind with a roar as of distant thunder, that makes the old house tremble. The guard is on the lookout, and as he goes by, throws out my paper, watching me catch it day after day with never-failing amusement.

It is a charming place in which to pass the summer, this quaint village hidden away among the Welsh hills; but in winter, when the winds whistle down the valley, and the mountains are blotted out by the rain-clouds, it must be anything but a lively abode. It is so off the ordinary track, and is so fortunate in possessing nothing that has attained to guide-book immortality, and in having only the lovely scenery of wood and forest, vale and stream, common to most of the Welsh districts, that a tourist is rarely seen, and no swarms of cheap-trippers invade our peaceful solitude. And yet we are on the highway between two county towns; but the road seems seldom used, except by the 'road-inspectors'—as the tramps are playfully called—who stop in our village and present relief tickets for a loaf of bread on their march from one centre to the other. The comical little rail-

way with its two-foot gauge is really only a mineral line; but three times a day the sturdy engine with its miniature carriages runs down to the town and returns snorting and puffing up the six miles of hill, very often with only a single traveller. Occasionally, a long train of six or seven carriages is made up, every available inch of space is crowded, and men and boys stand on the platform outside the carriages, before and behind, all in their best black broadcloth coats, and the women in their best black dresses. If it is not the day of the weekly market, or of the half-yearly fair in the town below, we know it can only be one of two things—a prayer meeting or a funeral. These simple people love prayer meetings, but a funeral is their chiefest joy. Even a wedding is as nothing compared with a burying. Every relation goes; and as everybody is connected with everybody else in the valley, no work is done on that afternoon; and men, women, and children, dressed in their best, crowd the carriages of the little railway, and, undeterred by distance, go off to the funeral. After the ceremony, if the family are well enough off, they provide unlimited tea, coffee, and perhaps something stronger, for the guests and relatives; and it is considered a very unneighbourly thing to omit to see a relation or friend to his last resting-place.

It is indeed a land of slate. There is only one industry in the village—that is, slate-quarrying: there is only one material for building and roofing the houses—that is, slate. They mend the roads with slate; they make their pigsties of upright slabs of slate, with other slabs across for the roof; they floor their kitchens with slate; and if they want to fasten a gate—of which the gate-posts are of slate—they put a large piece of slate against it. Slate is everything and everywhere, and its soft gray harmonises well with the green of the grass and the blue of the sky in summer, and lends an additional horror to the sombre masses of rain-clouds and leaden skies of winter. If the farmer wants to make a fence, he sends up to one of the quarries, and for a few pence gets a cartload of ends sawn off the slabs of slate. He picks out pieces about five feet long, and then, having made a row of holes with a crowbar where he wishes his fence to be, he rams in the great pieces with a wooden mallet, and twisting a double strand of wire in and out near the top, in a short time has erected a barricade which it is utterly impossible to climb and very difficult to pull up. Now and then a cow, miscalculating the strength of the slate hedge, and flattering herself that the farmer has erected a magnificent row of scratching posts for her special behoof, comes to grief over it; but a few blows of the mallet soon repair the damage; and the cow having learned wisdom from that hardest of teachers, experience, avoids the fence for the future, as being simply a trap for the unwary.

The farmhouse is a very old building of two stories—so old, indeed, that it is not made of great blocks of waste slate, like nearly every other house in the valley, but of the rock that covers the slate vein, and which has to be removed before the 'stone,' as they call it, can be got

at. In front of the farm is a little flower and vegetable garden; and then at the bottom of a steep slope a green meadow running down to the bush-fringed trout stream that forms the boundary of the county. There are three meadows along the stream in the farmer's occupation, and they with the farmhouse and out-buildings constitute his holding, for which he pays twenty pounds a year. Originally it formed but a part of a large farm which included nearly all the arable and grazing land in the village on our side of the stream; but so scarce is land in the valley and so great was the competition for the farm, that the landlord cut it up into three or four small holdings, in order to satisfy as many people as possible. Across the stream is a field belonging to another owner, for the grazing rights of which the farmer pays as much as he does for the entire farm he holds of his own landlord. It is not much of a farm, according to English notions, for there is only a little patch of oats sown in one corner, and all the rest is left to grass. However, the meadowland produces a splendid crop of hay, and provides pasturage for the half-dozen cows and the few sheep that the farmer keeps through all the year.

The cows are the 'ladies that pay the rent' here. The farmer's wife is a keen and skilful dairywoman, and with the aid of a rough country lass, she manages the whole dairy herself; and every evening at six o'clock her back-door is besieged by children carrying cans and jugs of all shapes and sizes, for her milk has quite a celebrity, as being the best and purest in the valley. In fact, the demand greatly exceeds the supply, and she could sell three or four times as much as her cows produce. Among the purchasers are two girls with babies in their arms; neither of them looks more than a child, and yet they are the mothers of the infants they carry. One of them has married her step-father, and lives with him in a solitary hut far up the mountains. She is a shock-headed, silly-faced girl, who grins stupidly when she is rallied on her step-father husband and baby. Her case is not considered so very extraordinary. When her mother died, she naturally drifted into the wife's place; and the strangest part of the story is perhaps that they took the trouble to come to chapel and go through the ceremony of marriage. The other girl was married at fifteen to a young quarryman only a year or two older than herself and who earns fifteen shillings a week. This adventurous couple began house-keeping in an empty room with an old powder keg as their sole article of furniture; but by the time the fat and stolid baby arrived, they had succeeded in getting together a few necessities. People marry young in this country, and families of eighteen or twenty are by no means rare, many an elder son having children older than his younger brothers and sisters; and as there are only about a dozen names which have to do duty indifferently for Christian and surnames, a stranger gets extremely puzzled as to the relationships, and ceases to wonder that Jones is a common name.

The farmer is a splendid specimen of a man, tall, broad-shouldered, with a handsome and refined face, and speaking English with a soft and musical

Welsh accent. He and his gray horse work the farm between them, though there does not seem much to be done on the little holding except at haymaking time. At the top of one of the meadows and just under the railway is a small patch of allotments, sown with potatoes and other vegetables. Occasionally a woman will come in of an afternoon to hoe one of these patches; or perhaps a man comes in the evening after his day's work in the quarry is done, for these bits of ground are given by the farmer to his neighbours on condition that they help him at haymaking time. Then, if the weather is fine, there is quite a scene of old-fashioned rustic merry-making. The neighbours come whether they have allotments or not, armed with their scythes, and each one anxious to take his turn in the meadow. They set to work with a will, and the grass falls in long swathes before the regular swing of their scythes. Behind them come their wives and daughters with great wooden forks and rakes, tossing the freshly-cut grass and spreading it out over the field; while the children roll on the ground or pelt one another merrily, and drink in the sweet scent of the new-mown hay. Meanwhile, inside the house the goodwife and half a dozen of her gossips make ready a huge bowl of flummery for the harvesters' supper, and supplement it with chunks of bread and cheese and plenty of small-beer. Very little work is done during the day, the hay being left to dry in the sunshine, as nearly all the men are in the quarries; and it is not till after six that the neighbours arrive, and the mowers' scythes flash under the rays of the setting sun.

When the long shadows of the mountains deepen over the valley, and the course of the stream is only marked by the long line of dense white mist that hangs above it, the mowers quit their work, and troop into the low-roofed kitchen with its wide open fireplace, and tall eight-day clock ticking in one corner. Here they crowd round the deal tables; and great basins of flummery are set before them, for they all prefer that somewhat insipid dainty to bread and cheese. The farmer contents himself with overlooking his mowers, and with casting anxious glances at the sky and mountain-tops, to see if there is any possible doubt of the morrow being as fine as to-day. On Sunday he does nothing but wander round the paths of the little garden with his hands in his best trousers' pockets, whistling hymn tunes softly, and scrunching slugs under his broad flat boots. His hair is quite white, though he cannot be more than fifty. He began to get gray very early in life; and when he married, his wife, horrified at seeing how blanched his hair was getting, bought a bottle of Hair Restorer, with which she made him anoint his head before going to bed every night, for, as she said, 'They shan't say that I turned thy head white, my lad!' But as the Hair Restorer dyed her pillow-cases as well as her husband's hair, the careful wife manufactured some cotton nightcaps, in which she made the master envelop his head at night. After ten years, he at last revolted: 'Eh, lass, but I won't be bothered with this nasty stuff any more! If my head's white, let it be white.' And as there was no longer any fear of the neighbours saying that marriage had made him gray, she allowed her

good-natured giant to leave off his penance and to become suddenly white.

The wife is an active bustling body, who has worn herself to skin and bone with the energy with which she flies about the house. She is a very clever and intelligent woman too, and devours a book or newspaper with the greatest eagerness whenever she has a moment free from her manifold household duties. She has no children, and is rather proud of it than otherwise, contrasting her neat well-kept home with the squalid houses of couples who have ten or a dozen worrying children.

Slate quarries have great advantages over coal-mines in that they are clean and have no foul gases to cause explosions and sudden death; but now and then accidents, and even deaths, occur, generally caused by falls of rock from the roof, but sometimes from the carelessness of the men themselves. Only a few days ago a quarryman, in levering a great block of slate out of his bargain, neglected to stand aside in time, and so had his left arm broken. It was a comparatively trifling accident, but every man and boy left off work at once. The injured man was carried out of the tunnel and down to the engine-house, where a door was wrenched off an out-building and used as a stretcher. He was placed upon it, a friend sitting by him to support his head; and then the double burden was raised on the shoulders of a dozen sturdy giants, and borne carefully down the mountain-side, followed by the entire staff of the quarry. When they reached level ground, the bearers asked by which road he would like to be carried home. There should have been no question at all in the matter, for the lower road is three times as long as, and much more difficult than the upper; but as it has the advantage of going all round the village and passing two public-houses, it was chosen. At every step the cortège grew longer and longer, for every woman, child, and idler in the village joined; and by the time the first public-house was reached the sufferer declared that he felt faint. The good-natured landlady insisted on supplying him with some of her best old port; and when the faintness had been overcome, the procession advanced to the second public-house, where the same ceremonies were gone through; and at last, after an almost triumphal progress, the poor man was deposited in the cottage which he shared with two or three other single men, and a married man with an increasing family. Then some one thought of fetching the doctor, who, having observed the procession, was making ready to start. He was very angry when he found his patient in a high state of fever, due to the unnecessary journey that had been taken and to the wine of the generous landladies; and as a result, the arm had to remain unset until the inflammation subsided.

The evenings are generally very fine and clear up in this mountain valley; and when the night-air is not too cold, we sit out in the garden and have our after-dinner coffee under the stars. The farmer's wife has brought out a magnificent plated coffee-pot for our use, and gives us a sketch of its history. It appears it was a wedding present; but being too grand for every-day use, was put aside, and only lent now and then for

the funeral of a great friend or relation; in fact, we are the first people who have ever gone so far as to smile when using it. This is the key-note of the land: they pay more honour to the dead than to the living.

FOILED BY HIMSELF.

CHAP. II.

'HAS Mrs Crawford gone up-stairs to her room yet?' It was Mr Barnett who spoke.

'No, sir.'

'Would you tell her, please, I wish to see her here in the library?'

'Very well, sir.'

The servant departed; and in a short time Mrs Crawford made her appearance. It was now Monday evening, and on the morrow the funeral of Mr Monkton would take place. As yet, the missing will had not been found, although every likely and unlikely place had been searched, with the exception of the bookcases in the library, which Mr Barnett was now engaged in examining. He had not up to this time mentioned to any one the fact of the will having disappeared. But for alarming Miss Ashley, he would have taken her into his confidence.

'Sit down, Mrs Crawford,' he said, addressing that lady. 'Close the door, please; I do not want any one to hear what I am going to say.'

'Dear me; I hope there's nothing wrong,' said she. 'I was just thinking o' going to my bed. Miss Ashley is away up-stairs to hers, and Henry Monkton to his. What was it ye were wanting?'

'I will tell you directly.—Has Miss Ashley said anything to you about Mr Monkton's will?'

'No; and I didna like to speak o' it to her, but ye'll ken all about it?'

'Henry Monkton has not spoken about it either, has he?'

'Not to me; but I couldna hae tell'd him onything about it. I dinna think he has mentioned it to Miss Ashley. He is maybe feared in case he hears that he's no to come in for onything. He'll be wanting to keep on hoping as lang's he can.'

The solicitor could not repress a smile at this last sentence. 'I will tell you why I sent for you, Mrs Crawford.—I suppose you are not particular whether you get to bed for an hour or two yet?'

'Oh, no. If ye're wanting me, I can bide up brawly.'

'I want you to give me a hand in looking through these bookcases. I have had some of the books down already. The fact is, Mrs Crawford, I can't find Mr Monkton's will; and I have searched every place that I can think of. I know he used to keep it in this room.'

'Mercy on us! The idea o' that! canna find the will! Where can it hae gane, think ye?'

'I only wish I knew. It should be produced and read at the funeral to-morrow. If I don't find it, I will have to read from the draft; but Henry Monkton will probably demand production of the principal. It will be a fortunate thing for him if it cannot be got.'

'Ay, I daresay; but we maunna let that happen. Miss Ashley is left something in it, I hope?'

'She is left everything, with the exception of some small legacies to the servants, and an annuity to his brother sufficient to keep him above want. You are remembered in it also. But if the will is not found, Henry Monkton will take everything, as his brother's sole heir.'

'Will he, the vagabond! I wad be vexed to see't. Tell me what to do and we'll begin at aince.'

'Well, we will take down these books one by one, and see if the will is not by accident between the leaves of one of them, or it may even be at the back of the bookcase.'

There was silence in the room for a considerable time while the search went on. Eleven o'clock struck. They were the only two awake in that large house. Mr Barnett was the first to speak.

'Did Henry Monkton tell you that his brother and he were on friendly terms before the death happened?' he inquired. 'He says he met him last Tuesday in town, and that they spoke to each other; but I can't believe it.'

'This is the first time I've heard o' that; but I've spoken to Henry Monkton as little as I could.'

'I asked Miss Ashley if Mr Monkton had mentioned it to her, and she said he had not. He would surely have told her if it had been the case.'

'It's as likely to be a lie as no. I wadna trust that Henry Monkton nae farer than I could see him.—But what's this inside o' this big book? It's the will, I do believe!'

Mr Barnett dropped the book he held and crossed the room to the side of Mrs Crawford. 'It is the will,' he cried joyfully.—'Thank Providence! I was afraid it was lost altogether. I ought to have had you to help me sooner, I see. You have been more fortunate than I.'

'Last Will and Testament of George Monkton, dated 5th April 1881,' read Mr Barnett from the back of the document. 'It must have got in there just as I supposed.' He opened out the will and glanced hurriedly over it, and as he did so, the expression of his face changed. 'There is some mistake here. This is not the will I meant. This one was revoked by another, executed some months later; in August, instead of April, now that I remember, but in the same year. This should have been destroyed long ago. I thought Mr Monkton had burnt it.'

'And what's the difference between that one and the other one?' asked Mrs Crawford, not a little disappointed at hearing the will found was not the one sought for.

'The legacies to you and to the servants are the same. The difference is that Miss Ashley, instead of getting the remainder, gets only one-third. His brother succeeds to the other two. This will was drawn out and signed prior to the quarrel between the brothers. The one I want was executed after that time.'

'I would be very sick sorry to see him get onything awa, much less two-thirds. We hae fand ae will at onyrate. The other may not be far aff. We'll finish what we're at, I reckon.—Is that will for nae use at a'?''

'In the event of us not finding the other, it

will be. It contains a provision for Miss Ashley, which is one good thing. If there was no will, she would get nothing. If the other is not forthcoming, we must act on this one.'

'Do ye think Mr Monkton would ken o' that will being inside the book?'

'No; I don't think he would. That book does not seem to have been disturbed for a long time. He must have thought he had destroyed it. But yet'—The solicitor stopped short in his speech as a sudden thought struck him. 'If it be true that his brother and he had become friendly again, he may have burnt the last will, intending to make a new one; or he might be aware of the existence of this one, which would do perfectly well,' he said. 'He may have even burnt the will on the evening on which he died.—Was there any appearance, Mrs Crawford, of his having burnt any papers?'

'I heard the housekeeper say he had been burning some papers; but of course they might be some auld letters or things o' no consequence.'

'Quite possible. We will not assume that it is burnt yet, till we see.—There goes twelve o'clock. Another twenty minutes and we will have finished.—What's that?'

It was a noise like the faint creaking of a door, distinctly heard through the stillness of the house, seemingly coming from one of the rooms on the floor immediately above. Mr Barnett and Mrs Crawford both strained their ears to listen. For the space of nearly a minute they heard nothing.

'Perhaps Miss Ashley or the housekeeper looking out to see if the hall-gas is still lit, or if we are up-stairs,' Mr Barnett said. 'I hope it is not that brother spying about to see what we are after. If he had happened to be outside this door a little ago, he might have heard us talking of the will.—There it is again. Some one is certainly awake up-stairs.'

Listening intently, they now heard a slight sound, as of a footstep coming slowly down the stairs step by step. The footstep seemed too light to be that of Henry Monkton; it must be either Miss Ashley or the housekeeper, Mrs Bolding.

'They're taking their braw time, whoever it is,' said Mrs Crawford in a whisper. 'They have got to the foot of the stair now. They're coming in here.—The Lord preserve us; it's Mr Monkton himself!'

The door had opened, and a tall figure in white walked slowly into the room. Mrs Crawford, almost fainting with terror, cowered down on the floor and clung to the tails of the solicitor's frock coat. Both were on the opposite side of the desk from the apparition, which advanced with noiseless tread into the centre of the room, and there paused, regarding them with a fixed stare. It held something in its right hand like a long blue packet. Mr Barnett, his blood freezing in his veins, stood literally paralysed and incapable of motion. He felt his hair rise on his head. For the space of one dread minute he actually believed that the spirit of his dead friend stood before him. Then came a wild feeling of relief as he recognised the apparition. It was not the dead man in the spirit, but his brother in the flesh, whom he beheld.

It was Henry Monkton in a fit of somnambulism.

There he stood, clad in nothing but his long night-shirt, his feet bare, his eyes wide open and unseeing, utterly unconscious of where he was or in whose presence. It was the first time in his life that Mr Barnett had beheld any one thus walking in his sleep. The sight was to him something ghostly and terrible—a sort of life in death. What was the sleeping man going to do? What was that which he held in his hand?

Mr Barnett stooped down and whispered his discovery of who the apparition was into the ear of the terrified Mrs Crawford, who speedily recovered from her fright, and both together watched the movements of the somnambulist, who seemed uncertain what to do next. First he laid down the blue packet he carried on the desk, which the solicitor now saw to be a long envelope, evidently containing something. From this envelope the sleeping man drew forth a document, which he opened out and seemed to glance over, after which he refolded and returned it to the envelope. This he laid on the desk, left it there, and walked forward to the fireplace, where he stood for a minute or two leaning against the mantel-piece, apparently wrapt in thought. Struck by a sudden thought, Mr Barnett bent across the desk, took up the envelope, drew out the document enclosed and hastily scanned it over. A single glance was sufficient. It was the missing will.

Quick as thought he snatched up the will found by Mrs Crawford, which was lying beside him, thrust it into the envelope, and slipped the newly discovered one safely into his pocket. Next he leant over and softly placed the envelope with its new enclosure back where it had lain. It was but the work of a second or two; Mrs Crawford watching him the while with bated breath, half suspecting what the envelope had contained.

The somnambulist, after standing in the same position at the fireplace for some seconds longer, returned to the desk, took up the will, went again to the fireplace and held the envelope and its contents above the now burnt-out fire, as though about to drop them into the flames which he imagined he saw. Then he turned hurriedly and glanced towards the door, put his hand containing the will behind him, as if wishing to hide it from the gaze of some one, stood for a minute in that position, and then slowly walked out of the room, closing the door behind him. Mr Barnett darted after him and followed him cautiously up-stairs. He watched him until he saw him go along the corridor and enter his room in safety; after that the solicitor returned to the room below.

'Mercy on us! Did ever any mortal see the like o' that?' This exclamation burst from the lips of Mrs Crawford as Mr Barnett rejoined her in the library. The good woman had recovered the use of her tongue, and was inclined to laugh at her recent fears. 'I really thought it was the dead man himself,' continued she. 'Eh, but he was awfu' like him, though!—What paper was that ye took? Was it the will, and had he got it after a'?''

'Yes; it was the will. Here it is, safe and sound. He may do what he likes with the one he has got. I will take care this one does not fall into his hands again.'

'But how would he come to get it, think ye?'

'That is quite easily understood, Mrs Crawford. Mr Monkton must have had it beside him the night he died, and it would be lying among the loose papers on the desk. His brother, hunting amongst these papers on his arrival here, had found the will, read it; and knowing that if it were destroyed or put out of the way, he himself would be heir to everything, resolved to repress it. I remember you said he seemed a little confused when you entered the room. You had probably disturbed him while perusing the will. He has had it in his possession all along. The wonder is that he has not burnt it before this. Perhaps he could not make up his mind whether to destroy it or give it up. I can understand now his non-interference with things. He knew that the game was in his own hand.'

'It maun hae preyed on his mind to a terrible extent, though. That maun be what caused him to walk in his sleep.'

'No doubt. He seemed to be acting over again what occurred in this room when he found the will. You saw him look towards the door, as if he had heard some one coming, and then put his hand behind him, apparently to hide the will?'

'Ay, he just looked something like that when I saw him the first day standing by the fire. I'll no forget what I hae seen this night in a hurry.—Ye're sure that's the right will now?'

'Yes; there's no doubt of it this time. It is dated 5th August 1881, exactly four months to a day later than the other.'

Mr Barnett's supposition as to the manner in which Henry Monkton had got possession of the will was quite correct. He had found it on Mr Monkton's desk amongst the other papers; and after reading it was unable to make up his mind whether to destroy it or leave it somewhere where it might be found by Mr Barnett. Mrs Crawford had disturbed him in the library before he had had time to read it, hence he hastily folded it up and carried it with him to his room till he could peruse it at leisure.

Prior to his meeting with Mr Barnett in the garden, he had, after much inward discussion, determined to destroy the will; and as he knew the solicitor to be well aware of its existence, he had invented the story of having met his late brother in London, and of having become reconciled to him, in order to raise a belief in Mr Barnett's mind, when he found the will not forthcoming, that Mr Monkton might himself have destroyed it, intending to make a new one. He was made aware of his brother's visit to town on the Tuesday through an acquaintance who had met him coming from Mr Barnett's office.

About half an hour after Mr Barnett had retired to his room, Henry Monkton suddenly awoke from the deep sleep into which he had fallen, and sat up in bed, unaware that he had ever left it. His room was not quite in darkness, for a small flame suddenly shooting up from the fire, dimly lit the surroundings. The light attracted his attention.

'I have been dreaming of that cursed will again,' he muttered, thrusting his hand under his pillow to feel if the document were safe. 'Full fifty times have I resolved to destroy it, and as often something has held me back. The fire is still burning. I will be tormented no longer. This very minute it shall be consigned to the

flames; then surely I shall have peace. It is an unjust will. It should never have been made. That girl, an utter stranger, to get everything, and I nothing. Not while I live to prevent it.'

Not allowing himself one instant for reflection, he rose, and crossed the room quickly to the fireplace. The flame was still burning invitingly. By its light he read the writing on the back of the envelope, to make himself certain that it was the one containing the will, then thrust both envelope and its contents into the heart of the fire. With glittering eyes he watched the creeping flame speedily devour them. For some seconds the whole room was brilliantly illumined, and then came darkness. The incubus was removed; the will was gone for ever!

Mr Monkton's funeral was over. Dust had been consigned to dust, to await the final resurrection. The next act in the drama was the reading of the dead man's will, an event usually anxiously looked forward to by eager prospective legatees.

In the drawing-room after the funeral were assembled Mrs Crawford, Miss Ashley, Henry Monkton, Sir Andrew Dawson, Mrs Crawford's son Peter, who was a clerk in the City, and Mr Barnett. Several of the principal servants were also present. Henry Monkton, in spite of his best efforts, could not wholly conceal his agitation. Miss Ashley appeared calm and composed. She was thinking more of the kind guardian she had lost than of what he had left behind him. Mr Barnett, who had the will in his pocket, now rose to speak.

'You all know, of course, that it is customary for the will of a deceased person to be read immediately after the funeral,' he began, fixing his eyes on Henry Monkton, who quailed under their keen glance. 'But before I say more, I wish to know, supposing the principal will not to be at hand, if I may be allowed to read from the draft which I have here? Draft and principal are precisely alike in substance.'

No one spoke for some seconds. No one, indeed, had any interest to speak save Henry Monkton. Miss Ashley was no relation to the deceased, and Mrs Crawford and her son were but distant connections.

Mr Barnett was about to resume, when Henry Monkton interrupted him. 'What is the good of reading from the draft?' said he. 'We must have the will itself. Where is it? Why have you not got it?'

'These inquiries, Mr Monkton, you are probably in a better position to answer than myself. Have you no idea where your brother's will is?'

The question was put so direct that Henry Monkton lost his temper. 'What do you mean?' he said in an angry tone. 'How should I know anything about it? It is not likely I shall gain anything by it. You would take care of that while framing it, I'll bet.'

Mr Barnett, without taking notice of this innuendo, simply said: 'Then you know nothing of the will? You have not seen it?'

'No; I have not seen it, if that will satisfy you; and now, kindly proceed. I suppose the upshot of all this is that there is no will?'

'Oh, no. You are mistaken; the will is here all right enough,' Mr Barnett said, producing it. 'But I have to thank you for its restoration, as

well as for its disappearance ; I only got it last night.'

Henry Monkton, amazed and confounded at the production of the will, which he could only conclude to be a later one than that which he had burnt, had not a word to say. He was, however, at a loss to understand the last sentences uttered by Mr Barnett. 'I do not understand you,' he said at length. 'I have no connection with the will whatever. If it was ever lost, it is evidently found again. Be kind enough to leave me out of the matter altogether ; I know nothing about it.'

'My friends,' said Mr Barnett, 'look at this man. He comes down here, pretending regret for the brother he has lost, and with a lying story on his lips that his brother and he, who for a very long time had not spoken to each other, had become friends again a week to-day—three days before that brother's death. He finds his brother's will in the library, reads it, and seeing that he himself is left almost nothing, and that this innocent girl here inherits everything, resolves either to destroy or conceal it. In his policy, he does not assume the mastership here ; he interferes with nothing, knowing well that he can bide his time ; and this for the purpose of deceiving those around him into a belief that he neither expects nor desires to gain anything by the death of his brother. He intended, no doubt, to counterfeit surprise when no will was to be found. This will which I hold in my hand is the one taken from the library by that man. Up till last night at twelve o'clock, it was in his possession, at which time it found its way into my own.'

Not one of the hearers was half so much astonished at hearing this speech as was Henry Monkton. Believing that he had burnt the will which he had found, he was amazed at what he heard. But he thought he saw an opening to prove the falsity of some part at least of the solicitor's statement.

'You will all observe,' said he, rising and gaining courage, 'that this gentleman accuses me first of stealing my brother's will, then, apparently, of restoring it again. This restoration, according to his story, would seem to have taken place last night at midnight. At that time I was in bed and asleep ; he, for aught I know, was the same. I did not see him after dinner yesterday. The whole tale is a base fabrication.'

'It is true. I have a witness here.—Mrs Crawford, will you kindly tell what we both saw last night ? Perhaps you will convince him.'

'Deed, I'll soon tell, and no be backward either,' said Mrs Crawford ; and she proceeded to relate in detail what she had seen : the white figure entering the library ; her terror when she saw, as she thought, the apparition of her dead relative ; the packet which it carried in its hand ; how the figure turned out after all to be Henry Monkton himself, walking in his sleep ; and how Mr Barnett had succeeded in substituting the one will for the other.

The company heard the relation of the story with amazement. As for Monkton, he was simply stricken dumb. Every one in the room turned to look at him ; he was pale as death. Aware that he occasionally walked in his sleep, he had no doubt of the truth of what Mrs Crawford had just narrated, or of the fact that he had

been tricked by the solicitor. He did not speak. Foiled by himself, by his own unconscious act, he slunk out of the room, and shortly after left the house.

THE EYES OF MEN OF GENIUS.

EMERSON used to say that each man carried in his eye the exact indication of his rank in the immense scale of men. Another close observer of human nature asserts that persons with prominent eyes are found to have great command of words and to be ready speakers and writers. A third holds the theory that the prevailing colour of the eyes of men of genius is gray. These preliminary statements may, we think, suffice as introduction to a slight comparative study of the eyes of some notable men of modern times. Our readers shall make the study for themselves ; we, on our part, will provide a few examples from which to theorise. With the eyes of 'witching womankind' we have nothing to do in the present paper : were we but to introduce these 'leaders of men's souls'—brown, black, gray, or

With the same blue witchery as those
Of Psyche, which caught Love in his own wiles,

we should possibly get no further ; like the Arab poet who, having once asserted in his song that his love had the eye of a gazelle, recurred again and again to the pleasing metaphor, and had in the end to make it the burden of a tolerably long effusion. His imagination could find room for nothing else.

Colonel Higginson mentions Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'gray eyes ;' whilst Mr F. H. Underwood, 'who once studied them attentively, found them mottled gray and brown, and indescribably soft and winning.' Elsewhere, we find it asserted that 'no finer eyes had appeared in the literary circles of Great Britain since Burns's time than those of Hawthorne.' Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, describing their visit to Leigh Hunt in 1856, speak of his 'silvered hair, thin pale cheek, and wondrous eyes, which were no less beautiful in their aged aspect than they had been in their youthful one.' Dickens's eyes were characterised by Forster as 'wonderfully beaming with intellect, and running over with humour and cheerfulness ;' and by Carlyle as 'clear, blue, intelligent.'

David Gray's were 'large and lustrous ;' and Dante Rossetti's 'gray-blue, clear, and piercing, and characterised by that rapid penetrative gaze so noticeable in Emerson.' In one of his letters to Cottle, Southey refers to William Godwin's 'large noble eyes.' Landor's have been described as 'bold, full, blue-gray,' and as 'large and full.' In one of Carlyle's letters to Emerson, he refers to Landor as 'a tall, broad, burly man, with gray hair, and large fierce-rolling eyes.' Emerson learned from this same source of Southey's eyes 'that seem running at full gallop ;' and of old Rogers 'with those large blue eyes, cruel, sorrowful.'

James Russell Lowell's eyes 'in repose have clear, blue, and gray tones, with minute dark mottlings. In expression they are strangely indicative of his moods. When fixed upon study, or while listening to serious discourse, they are

grave and penetrating; in ordinary conversation they are bright and cheery; in moments of excitement they have a wonderful lustre.'

Shelley's eyes are always spoken of as magnificent, and fully indicative of his wayward genius. One writer describes them as 'large and animated, with a dash of wildness in them;' another speaks of them as 'such a pair of eyes as are rarely seen in a human or any other head, intensely blue, with a gentle and lambent expression, yet wonderfully alert and engrossing.' Medwin, whilst writing of Shelley's personal appearance, refers to his blue eyes, 'very large and prominent. They were at times, when he was abstracted, as he often was in contemplation, dull, and as it were insensible to external objects; at others, they flashed with the fire of intelligence.' Tom Moore's eyes were 'as dark and fine as you would wish to see under a set of vine-leaves.'

Of Coleridge it is reported: 'His forehead was prodigious—a great piece of placid marble; and his fine eyes, in which all the activity of his mind seemed to concentrate, moved under it with a sprightly ease, as if it were pastime to them to carry all that thought.' Another friend of his writes: 'The upper part of Coleridge's face was excessively fine. His eyes were large, light gray, prominent, and of liquid brilliancy, which some eyes of fine character may be observed to possess, as though the orb itself retreated to the innermost recesses of the brain.' In his *Life of Sterling*, Carlyle introduces his famous description of Coleridge's appearance. 'The deep eyes, of a light hazel, were,' he says, 'as full of sorrow as of inspiration; confused pain looked mildly from them, as in a kind of mild astonishment.'

Of Charles Lamb it has been said: 'His features were strongly yet delicately cut; he had a fine eye as well as forehead.' The eyes of Keats were described by one of his contemporaries as 'mellow and glowing; large, dark, and sensitive.' Cowden Clarke states that they were of a brown colour, or dark hazel, thus contradicting Mrs Procter's assertion that they were 'blue.' Goldsmith's were gray or hazel; they were designated by himself as 'disgustingly severe.'

'The finest eyes, in every sense of the word, which I have ever seen in a man's head (and I have seen many fine ones) are those of Thomas Carlyle.' Such is the testimony of Leigh Hunt. In a description of the 'Chelsea Sage' as a lecturer at Willis's Rooms, we find the following: 'There he stood, rugged of feature; brow abrupt like a low cliff, craggy over eyes deep-set, large, piercing, between blue and dark gray, full of rolling fire.'

Leigh Hunt, in his *Autobiography*, speaking of Wordsworth's appearance, says: 'I never beheld eyes that looked so inspired or supernatural. They were like fires half burning, half smouldering, with a sort of acrid fixture of regard, and seated at the further end of two caverns. One might imagine Ezekiel or Isaiah to have had such eyes.'

Walter Scott said of Burns: 'There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a cast which glowed (I say literally glowed) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head,

though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time.' Another's testimony is: 'In his large dark eye the most striking index of his genius resided. It was full of mind, and would have been singularly expressive under the management of one who could employ it with more art for the purpose of expression.'

Darwin had a 'prominent forehead and over-arching brow, and keen deep-set eyes, in which resolute strength and piercing insight were indicated.'

Many other examples force themselves upon our notice; but we think our list has been sufficiently extended to show how interesting a field the subject opens up for observation and theory. It has the additional charm of having to do with human life by which we are surrounded on every hand, and in which we daily take our part and place. And the days of full eyes and heaven-born genius are not altogether things of the past.

'IN AUTUMN OF THE YEAR.'

WHEN golden grain hath crowned the ear,
And sweet September rivals May,
In the ripe radiance of the year,
Upon this lustrous Autumn day,
To the lone moor-bound woods I fare
Ere yet the russet boughs be bare.

Within this fair and dazzling glade,
Screened from the sunbeam's stroke I rest,
And mark the gold to silver fade
When evening's glory floods the west,
Stretched in sweet ease upon the heath,
The woven forest boughs beneath.

The silver twilight sets around,
The sun sinks glimmering through the trees,
The dews kiss chill the heath-clad ground,
And borne upon the wak'ning breeze,
The northern ocean's moaning drear
Breaks in dread echo on mine ear.

Mysterious harmony it makes,
This restless murmur of the sea,
And dark foreboding dreams it wakes
Of storm-blown leaf, and wind in tree,
Whisp'ring of Winter's fateful breath,
Chill winnowed through the doors of death.

C. W. BOYD.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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TEMPLE GHOSTS.

If it be true that the shades of the long dead hover round the places endeared to them by association with the hopes and fears of life—if the veil which rests, like that of Mokanna, over the hollow face of the spectral Past could be drawn aside for mortal gaze, few rarer fields of vision for the curious would there be than the time-honoured precincts of the Temple. And this still more so, if it were possible to see those immaterial forms of men and women who have never walked the earth in other sphere than that of fancy, and yet to us, who have learnt to know and love these creatures of poetry and fiction not less than those of history, are almost like dear friends whose hands we have often clasped or gazed into their eyes.

And yet this is no vain impossibility, nor is any etherealisation of vision needed to enjoy these entrancing scenes. The mental eye, quickened by the fire of imagination, can revel in halls of delight that the mere dull observer neither sees nor dreams of. The careless eye gazing on moonlit abbey ruins, Druidic circles, or aged moss-grown piles, sees but a useless and an ungainly heap of brick or stone, and reverts with comfortable satisfaction to the less sentimental vision of nineteenth-century villadom. Not so do sights like these affect the gaze of the thoughtful and imaginative few. To them, the roofless chancel and hoary keep are filled with shadowy forms of the dead Past, and cowed monks and belted knights and courtly dames pace the weather-beaten floors, while faint echoings of long-silent tongues strike on the crumbling walls, and scenes of life and death, of mirth and sadness, flit in vivid colours before their eyes. Truly, there are few pleasures like the pleasures of imagination! And so, reader, if you would know such pleasures as these, and feast your eyes on what is hidden from the many, come with me to-night; better in the silent night, when Sleep has stretched his mystic wand over the busy city, than in the noise and turmoil of the garish day. Hither! then,

reader, wrap thyself, Faust-like, in my magic cloak, and so, like Goethe's pair, we may traverse air and earth unfelt by human touch and unseen by peeping eye.

Out of the Fleet, now quit of its roar and bustle, as the City clocks chime the first hour of the morning—let us turn beneath the old portals of this Middle Temple archway, under whose shadows we seem to see the form of him who designed it, the architect also of the great cathedral not very far away. Down the Lane, lined with tall prim brick-built houses, redolent of the days of good Queen Anne, and see who comes here—handsome, gay, with lithesome step, and backward glance of humorous scorn, hurrying past us, doggedly pursued by another, with firm-set teeth and knitted brow, feverishly clenching his hands in impotent fury at the tantalising figure he is following. Eugene Wrayburn, most jocular of briefless juniors, is not this wanton trifling with the emotions of him thou makest thy satire's butt, unworthy of a barrister-at-law and a gentleman? Yet Bradley Headstone wearily follows, and they are lost in the mists of the night.

Entering Brick Court, stately in its very simplicity, rise with me, fellow-wanderer, into the midnight air; peer through the cracked pane of this grimy window, and tell me what thou seest. A dishevelled wight sits in a room barely furnished, except with loose paper scraps and unpaid bills, which are numerous enough, drawing out of his genius, stimulated by poverty and despair, sweet pictures of rural loveliness, now very dear to us to whom Oliver Goldsmith is a household word, and the Vicar of Wakefield and his children like old, old friends. But see! through this window above, in soberer but less threadbare attire, at a table piled with calf-bound tomes of Coke and Bracton, the erudite compiler of legal commentaries, transferring with busy quill to countless sheets what shall long be the first stepping-stone of embryo judges, and the *pons asinorum* of briefless juniors.

But let us descend in our Mephistophelean mantle, and turn towards the sombre shades of

the old Hall, and watch the fantastic scenes in the dusky interior. See! the room is filled with gay ladies, ruffed and farthingaled, courtiers and counsellors and men of letters listening to yonder figure with that calm lofty brow, which we still see sculptured over the tomb, in the little Warwickshire church that holds the ashes of this 'Imperial Cæsar' of literature. Here 'sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,' read to Royalty the most ethereal of all his plays; and so this picture fascinates our eyes till the figures grow dim and dissolve into another scene of mirth and beauty. Thronged grows the floor of the great Hall, animated the wit and laughter, and on all sides are courtly bows and stately courtesies and lovely forms lost in wealth of jewels; and one advances with 'clear and cold-cut face,' haughty with the haughtiness of the Tudor line, imperious with the majesty of the great realm she loved so well, and so good Queen Bess leads off the dance with the Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton. We gaze with awe and wonder at the faces of years long past, till the figures grow cold and lifeless and vanish as we look, and nothing is left but the cobwebs on the oaken joists, and darkness rests over all. 'We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep!'

Back into Fountain Court, where the leafy branchlets are quivering in the night-breeze, and the little fountain, the *genius loci*, tosses its incessant spray with a murmuring sound, like a voice from distant years. What sights must this same little fountain have seen, what sounds it must have heard, plashing constantly in these quiet shades! As we stand gazing, we seem to forget the hour and the darkness; the old Court grows bright with a glamour which turns its forensic sombreness into something like a smile. The sunbeams dart through the leaves of the trees; the sparrows wash their feathers free from City soot and dust, in the clear waters, while the 'little fountain sparkles in the sunshine.' We see approaching a maiden form of sweet fragile beauty, not less sweet in her Puritanic primness, blushing to raise her eyes to meet those of another form advancing from the other side. Dear little Ruth Pinch! how could the fountain help sparkling more brightly and splashing more merrily at thy presence! And John Westlock! John Westlock! staidest of London bachelors, how many weeks' purchase would Fiery-face give for thy washing if she could see thee now?

We may not linger here, but pass on to the Gardens, and as we descend the steps, we think we see two familiar figures wending their way to their murky chambers. Poor 'Pip,' lost in love of Estella, and fearing for the safety of the convict benefactor who has been the unknown cause of all his 'Great Expectations.' And can we pass this other shade unnoticed? Who is it but Tommy Traddles? Not the Traddles of Gray's Inn days, harbouring in felicitous but circumscribed seclusion the whole sisterhood of 'the dearest girl in the world;' but Traddles as we last knew him, the eminent Q.C., drawing huge retainers, more numerous than the skeletons of schoolboy days. We fain would linger over the creations of that genius, but must speed our way across the velvet turf

of the Gardens, where we, with the magic aid of our cloak of Fancy, behold the angry forms of stern-faced warriors, and on our ears fall passionate words like these:

Let him that is a true-born gentleman . . .
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this brier pluck a white rose with me;

and then others with fiercer earnestness:

Let him that is no coward, nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.

And while the words still ring in our ears, we see before us the round stone porch of the old church, and the air seems to ring with the clang of steel. All around are sunburnt and scarred faces of red-cross knights, while from the chancel comes the sound of voices chanting the vesper hymn. Shades of brave crusaders are here, men who, perchance, have seen the giant axe of the Lion-hearted king cleave many a Saracen skull; or who have struck a blow for the Holy Sepulchre at Acre or Askalon. Some maybe have fought under the perjured Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and seen the Black Knight charge for the Jewish maiden. But in an instant they are gone, 'vanished into air, into thin air;' and clear and cold in the darkness stands out the old church, where these and many more were laid in their long home centuries ago. Now

Their swords are rust,
Their bones are dust,
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.

Nor are these the only forms that haunt these consecrated walls. Near here, 'Elia' must have lived some part of that weary witty life, thinking out, possibly, those beautiful Essays which have rendered the name of Charles Lamb immortal. Near here, Boswell must often have walked with the ponderous Doctor before adjourning to the *Cock Tavern*, hard by—now, alas! like its former neighbour, Temple Bar, fallen into the hands of the destroying Vandals—for gossip with the geniuses that gathered there. Not far away, too, Pendennis must have lain sick in his attic chambers, tended by loving hands; and poor little Fanny Bolton have wept her heart out at the loss of her adorer; and pensive Laura and her guardian have watched through long hours the sleepless tossings of their loved one. What slashing criticisms of aspiring authors must have emanated from the pen of the precocious young reviewer in those dreary rooms! Hard by, also, must Clive Newcome more than once have entertained the dear old Colonel; 'Philip' undoubtedly have had some of those character-forming 'Adventures,' and Mr Timmins have received that parliamentary brief out of which sprang the 'little dinner-party;' and finally, there, in Here Court, lived the deep-hearted creator of them all.

And still other shadows of a distant Past throng around us—whole airy legions of riotous law students rollicking home from Alsatian brawls, initiating into the mysteries of London dissipation innocent young gallants like Nigel Olifaunt, who have come to seek, or quite as often to lose, their fortunes in the Metropolis.

We could linger long on thoughts and scenes like these; but the prosaic shriek of some belated

river-boat calls us too hastily back to the nineteenth century.

With a start, we wake from our reveries, and remember that, after all, we have only been gazing on pictures of Fancy's painting; and so, with a sigh, we return once more to what, with Herr Teufelsdröckh, we vow to be 'this poor hampered, miserable, despicable Actual.'

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER II.

FIVE minutes might have passed when Gerald Brooke and the Baron Von Rosenberg came sauntering along the terrace, and entered the room through one of the long windows.

In appearance the owner of Beechley Towers was a thoroughgoing Englishman, and no one would have suspected him of having a drop of foreign blood in his veins. He was six-and-twenty years old, tall, fair, and stalwart. His hair, beard, and moustache were of a light reddish brown; he had laughing eyes of the darkest blue, and a mouth that was rarely without a smile. His bearing was that of a well-born, chivalrous, young Englishman. As he came into the room, laughing and talking to the Baron, he looked like a man who had not a care in the world.

The Baron Von Rosenberg was so carefully preserved and so elaborately got up, that one might guess his age at anything between forty and fifty-five. He was tall and thin, with a military uprightness and precision of bearing. He had close-cropped iron-gray hair, and a heavy moustache of the same colour. He spoke excellent English with only the faintest possible accent, but with a certain slowness and an elaboration of each word, which of themselves would have been enough to indicate that he was not 'to the manner born.'

'I had no idea, my dear Brooke, that you were such a crack shot,' remarked the Baron. 'I had made up my mind that I should have an easy victory.'

'I learned to shoot in Poland, when I was quite a youngster. It is an amusement that has served to while away many idle hours.'

'I have a tolerable range at Beaulieu; you must come over and try your skill there.'

'I shall be most pleased to do so.'

'I have also a small collection of *curios*, chiefly in the way of arms and armour, picked up in the course of my travels, which it may amuse you to look over.'

'Your telling me that,' answered Gerald, 'reminds me that I have in my possession one article which, as I believe you are a connoisseur in such matters, you may be interested in examining.' As he spoke he crossed to a cabinet, and opening the glass doors, he brought out a pistol, the barrel and lock of which were chased and damascened in gold, and the stock ornamented with trophies and scrolls in silver inlay and repoussé work. 'It was given me when I was in India by a certain

Nawab to whom I had rendered some slight service,' said Gerald as he handed the pistol to the Baron. 'It doesn't seem much of a curiosity to look at; but I am told that in its way it is almost unique.'

'I can readily believe that,' answered the Baron, as he examined the weapon minutely through his gold-rimmed glasses. 'I have never seen anything quite like it, although I have seen many curious pistols in my time. I myself have two or three in my collection on which I set some little store. I call to mind, however, that a certain friend of mine in London, who is even more *entêté* in such matters than I am, owns a weapon somewhat similar to this, inlaid with arabesque work in brass and silver, which he has always looked upon as being of Spanish, or at least of Moorish workmanship.—Now, my dear Mr Brooke, I am going to ask you the favour of lending me this treasure for a few days. I go to London to-morrow, and while there, I should like to show it to my friend, so as to enable him to compare it with the one in his possession. He would be delighted, I know, and'—

'My dear Baron, not another word,' cried Gerald. 'Take the thing, and keep it as long as you like. I value it only as a memento of some pleasant days spent many thousands of miles from here. My servant shall carry it across to Beaulieu in the course of the evening.'

'A thousand thanks; but I value the weapon too highly to trust it into the hands of a servant. I will return it personally in the course of a few days.' So saying, the Baron, with a nod and a smile, dropped the pistol into the pocket of his loose morning coat.

'But madame your wife,' he said presently; 'may I not hope to have the pleasure of seeing her again before I take my leave?'

Gerald crossed the room, and was on the point of ringing the bell, when Mrs Brooke entered.

The Baron's heels came together as he bent his head. 'I was just about to take my leave, madame,' he said. 'I am overjoyed to have the felicity of seeing you again before doing so.'

There was something too high-flown about this for Clara's simple tastes, and her cheek flushed a little as she answered: 'I hope you have enjoyed your pistol-practice, Baron.'

'Greatly. I assure you that Mr Brooke is an adept with the weapon—very much so indeed. I must really beg of him to give me a few lessons.'

Gerald laughed.

'As a diplomatist by profession, Baron, you are doubtless a proficient in the art of flattery,' said Mrs Brooke.

'A mere tyro, dear madame. Sincerity is the badge of all our tribe, as every one knows.'

At this they all laughed a little.

'But now I must positively say adieu.'

'By which road do you return to Beaulieu, Baron?' inquired Gerald.

'The afternoon is so fine and the distance so

short, that I purpose walking back through the park.'

'Then, with your permission, I will walk with you as far as the corner of the wood.'

'Need I say that I shall be charmed?'

Mrs Brooke gave the Baron her hand. He bent low over it. For once the ramrod in his back found that it had a hinge in it.

'You will not be gone long?' said Clara to her husband.

'Not more than half an hour.—We will go this way, Baron, if you please.'

'Are all diplomatists like the Baron Von Rosenberg, I wonder?' mused Mrs Brooke. 'If so, I am glad Gerald is not one. His politeness is so excessive that it makes one doubt whether there is anything genuine at the back of it. And then the cold-blooded way in which he looks you through out of his frosty eyes! Could any woman ever learn to love a man like the Baron? I am quite sure that I could not.'

She seated herself at the piano, and had been playing for a few minutes when she was startled by the sound of footsteps on the gravel outside. She turned her head and next moment started to her feet. 'George! You!' she exclaimed; and as she did so, the colour fled from her cheeks and her hand went up quickly to her heart.

At Mrs Brooke's exclamation, a tall, thin, olive-complexioned young man, with black eyes and hair and a small silky moustache, advanced into the room. He was handsome as far as features went; just now, however, his expression was anything but a pleasant one. A something that was at once furtive and cruel lurked in the corners of his eyes, and although his thin lips were curved into a smile, it was a smile that had neither mirth nor good-nature in it. A small gash in his upper lip, the result of an accident in youth, through which one of his teeth gleamed sharp and white, did not add to the attractiveness of his appearance. In one hand he carried a riding-whip, and in the other a pair of buckskin gloves.

'Good afternoon, Clara,' he said with a careless nod as he deposited his hat, gloves, and whip on the side-table.

'You quite startled me,' said Mrs Brooke as she went forward and gave him her hand.

'You expected any one rather than me—of course. As I was riding along the old familiar road, I saw your husband, in company with some other man, walking down the avenue. In the hope that I might perhaps find you alone, I rode on to the *Beechley Arms*, left my horse there, entered the park by the side-entrance that you and I know so well, and here I am.'

'I am very glad to see you.'—Mr George Crofton shrugged his shoulders.—'Why have you not called before now? Gerald has often wondered why we have seen nothing of you since our return from abroad.'

'How kind, how thoughtful, of my dear cousin Gerald!' This was said with an unmistakable sneer.

'George!'

'Clara.'

'You are not like yourself to-day.'

'Look you, Clara—if you expect me to come here like an every-day visitor, to congratulate you on your marriage, you are mistaken. How is it possible for me to congratulate you?—and if I

were to say that I wished you much happiness, it would be—well—a lie!'

'This from you!'

He drew a step nearer, flinging out his clenched hand with a quick passionate gesture. 'Listen, Clara. You and I have known each other from childhood. As boy and girl we played together; when we grew older we walked and rode out together; and after you left school we met at balls, at parties, at picnics, and if a week passed without our seeing each other we thought that something must have happened. During all those years I loved you—ay, as no other man will ever love you—and you, being of the sex you are, could not fail to see it. But your father was poor, while I was entirely dependent on my uncle; so time went on, and I hesitated to speak. But a day came when I could keep silence no longer; I told you everything, and—you rejected me. If I had been wild and reckless before, I became ten times more wild and reckless then. If before that day I had offended my uncle, I offended him beyond all hope of forgiveness afterwards. But before I spoke to you, my irresistible cousin had appeared on the scene and had made your acquaintance. Your woman's wit told you that his star was in the ascendant, while mine was sinking. Pshaw! what need for another word. It is barely eighteen months since you and he first met, and now you are the mistress of Beechley Towers, while I am—what I am!'

It was with very varied emotions that Mrs Brooke listened to this passionate outburst. When it came to an end she said in her iciest tones: 'Was it to tell me this that you came here to-day?'

'It was.'

'Then you had much better have stayed away. You do not know how deeply you have grieved me.'

'I have told you nothing but the bitter truth.'

'The truth, perhaps, as seen through your own distorted vision. From childhood you were to me as a dear playmate and friend, and as a friend I have regarded you till to-day.'

'A friend! Something more than friendship was needed by me.'

'That something would never have been yours.'

'I will not believe it. Had not a rival crossed my path—a rival who wormed his way into my uncle's affections, who ousted me from the position that ought to have been mine, who is master here to-day where I ought to be master—had he never appeared, a love so strong and deep as mine must have prevailed in the end!'

'Never, George Crofton, as far as I am concerned! You deceive yourself utterly. You'—She came to a sudden pause. A servant had entered, carrying a card on a salver. Mrs Brooke took the card and read, 'M. Paul Karovsky.—I never remember hearing the name before,' she remarked to herself. Then aloud to the servant: 'Where is the gentleman?'

'In the small drawing-room, ma'am. He said that he wanted to see Mr Brooke on particular business.'

'Your master is out at present; but I will see Monsieur Karovsky myself.'

Turning to Crofton as soon as the servant had left the room, she said: 'You will excuse me for a few moments, will you not? Gerald will be

back in a little while, and I do so wish you would stay and meet him. George'—offering him her hand with a sudden gracious impulse—'let this afternoon be blotted from the memory of both of us. You will never say such foolish things to me again, will you?'

He took her proffered hand sullenly enough. 'I have said my say,' he muttered with averted eyes; with that he dropped her fingers and turned away.

A pained expression flitted across her face as she looked at him. 'You will wait here till I come back, will you not?' she said; and then, without waiting for an answer, she quitted the room.

With his hands behind his back and his eyes bent on the ground, George Crofton paced the room once or twice in silence. Then he said, speaking aloud, as he had a trick of doing when alone: 'It is a lie to say she would never have learned to love me! She may try to deceive herself by saying so; but she cannot deceive me. Had not my smooth-tongued cousin come between us, she would have been mine. I had no rival but him. Not only has he robbed me of the woman I loved, but of this old house and all this fair domain, which would all have been my own, had he not come between my uncle and me, and made the old man's bitterness against me bitterer still. Oh,' he exclaimed bitterly, 'I have every reason for loving my dear cousin Gerald!'

Presently he caught sight of the miniature of his cousin where it hung above the davenport. 'His likeness!' he exclaimed. 'The original is not enough for her; she must have this to gaze on when he is not by.' He took the miniature off the nail on which it hung and scanned it frowningly. 'To think that only this man's life stands between me and fortune—only this one life!' he said. 'Were Gerald Brooke to die without heirs, I—even I, his graceless scamp of a cousin—would come into possession of Beechley Towers and six thousand a year! Only this one life!' He let the miniature drop on the hearth, and then ground it to fragments savagely under his heel. 'If I could but serve the original as I serve this!' he muttered.

The sound of the shutting of a distant door startled him. He pressed his hands to his forehead for a moment, as though awaking from a confused dream; then he sighed deeply and took up his hat, gloves, and whip. 'Adieu, Clara; but we shall meet again,' he said aloud. With that he put on his hat and buttoned his coat and walked slowly out by the way he had come.

Two minutes later Mrs Brooke re-entered the room. She looked round in surprise. 'George gone?' she said to herself. 'Why did he not wait and see Gerald?' She crossed to the window and looked out. 'Yes; there he goes striding through the grass, and evidently not in the most amiable of humours. How strangely he has altered during the last three or four years; how different he is now from what he used to be when we were play-mates together! If he had but some profession—something to occupy his mind—he would be far happier than he is. But George is not one to love work of any kind.' With that Clara looked at her watch and dismissed Mr Crofton from her thoughts. 'I wish Gerald were back. What can that strange Monsieur Karovsky want with him? What can be the business of importance that has

brought him here? I feel as if some misfortune were impending. Such happiness as mine is too perfect to last.'

She was crossing the room in search of a book, when her eye was attracted by the fragments of the miniature on the hearth. She was on her knees in a moment. 'What is this?' she cried. 'Gerald's likeness, and trodden under foot! This is George's doing. Oh, cruel, cruel! What a mean and paltry revenge! It is the portrait Gerald gave me before we were married. I could never like another as I liked this one. Oh, how mean! Gerald must not know—at least not for the present.' Tears of mingled anger and sorrow stood in her eyes as she picked up the fragments and locked them away in her desk. She had scarcely accomplished this when she heard her husband's footsteps. She hastily brushed her tears away and turned to greet him with a smile. 'And this is what you call being half-an-hour away!' she said as he drew her to him and kissed her.

'Von Rosenberg and I were busy talking. We had got half-way through the wood before I called to mind where I was.' He sat down and fanned himself with his soft felt hat. 'He tells me,' went on Gerald, 'that he has taken Beaulieu for twelve months—furnished, of course—so that we are likely to be neighbours for some time to come.'

'He must find English country-life very tame and unexciting after being used to Berlin and St Petersburg.'

'You may add, to Paris also. Some years ago he was attached to the German Embassy there.'

'To live as he is now living must seem like exile to such a man.'

'I am afraid it is little better. But the whisper goes that he is really exiled for a time—that he has contrived in some way to incur the displeasure of the powers that be, and that leave has been given him to travel for the benefit of his health.'

'Poor Baron! Let us hope that his eclipse will only be a temporary one.—By-the-bye, there has been some one else to see you while you have been out.'

'And they call this the seclusion of the country!'

'Some Russian or Polish acquaintance whom you probably met when abroad.'

'Ah! His name?'

'Monsieur Karovsky.'

Gerald Brooke drew in his breath with a gasp. 'Karovsky—and here!'

'He says that he has important business to see you upon.'

'He is one of the few men whose faces I hoped never to see again. Where is he?' There was trouble in his eyes, trouble in his voice, as he asked the question.

'When I told him that you were out, he said that, with my permission, he would smoke a cigarette in the grounds while awaiting your return. What a strange, almost sinister-looking man he is! How I wish he had stayed away!'

Her husband did not reply; he looked as if he had not heard what she said.

Next moment Mrs Brooke started to her feet. 'There he is. There is Monsieur Karovsky,' she cried.

And there, indeed, he was, standing just outside

the open window smoking a cigarette. Perceiving that he was seen, he flung away his cigarette, stepped slowly into the room, removed his hat, and bowed.

GEOGRAPHICAL ALLUSIONS IN COMMON USE.

WORDS, the instruments by which communication of thought between man and man is conducted, have frequently been compared to the coins which serve so similar a purpose in the transference of wealth; and the simile is not inappropriate, for the majority of the words which form our language bore, we doubt not, at their rise the impress of some mark which would have revealed their origin, had not time and change contributed to its obliteration. And as coins continue to pass in currency even when battered and defaced, so words often remain in use after change of form and meaning has rendered their recognition almost impossible.

If by some process of thought or some exercise of will we could make ourselves acquainted with the vicissitudes which every gold, silver, or copper coin which passes through our hands has undergone from the day when it issued bright and new from Her Majesty's Mint to the time when, worn away by the touch of many hands, it is withdrawn from circulation, what new insight into human nature, what new depths of sympathy should we acquire! And in the same manner if every word which we employ could as plainly divulge to us its origin and the shades of meaning which make up its history, how largely would our stock of general knowledge be increased!

We would endeavour briefly to collect together a few words which bear the impress of a geographical derivation—names of natural products and of manufactured goods which are called after the countries or cities whence they were first obtained. The animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms can each adduce examples to swell the list. The animal world is perhaps the least prolific in such instances of nomenclature, from the fact that animals are the least common articles of exportation, and, as a general rule, flourish only in the climates of which they are natives. Some birds, however, occur to our mind. The name of the *canary*, the little songster which gladdens our nurseries by its cheerful notes, points us to its original home, the islands off the western coast of Africa, whence its first emigrant ancestor was brought to England some three centuries ago. It is remarkable, however, that the brilliant yellow plumage, from which we derive a word distinctive of its delicate colour, is a result of domestic breeding, and is not found among the wild birds of the Fortunate Islands. Our gaily plumaged *pheasants* transport our minds to the eastern shores of the Black Sea, where the river Phasis (now called the Rioni) gave its name to the winged natives of the district which it watered. And when we pass into our farmyards, the strutting little *bantam* reminds us of the province in the far-off island of Java, once a debatable possession between Dutch and English; and the *turkey*—Well! mistakes will occur in the most carefully traced human genealogies, and our feathered friends are not always more fortunate. Somehow it has

happened that this naturalised American has become ticketed among us as if it came from Eastern Europe; while exactly the same error is seen in the French '*Coq d'Inde*.'

Of the numerous names of plants and fruits which enter into our subject we need but mention as typical examples, *cherry*, from the city Cerasus, in a northern province of Asia Minor, whence the tree was first brought to Italy; *damson*, the Damascene plum; *currants*, believed to have been derived from the city of Corinth, on the authority of a line of Juvenal; *indigo*, the Indian dye, from the growth of the plant in India; and *tobacco*, the honour of naming which is claimed by no fewer than three distinct places: Tabacco, a province of Yucatan; the Caribbean island of Tobago; and Tobasco, in the Gulf of Florida. The first-named district can perhaps produce the strongest evidence in support of its contention.

Mineral products which take their names from the places where they were first discovered are not much more rare. *Magnet* and *lodestone* are severally deducible from Magnesia and the ancient province of Lydia in which it was situated. *Alabaster* took its name from Alabastron in Upper Egypt, where it abounded; even as many precious stones, *chalcony*, *agate*, *sardius*, and the like betray in their names the places whose soil they once enriched.

But still more interesting than these easily multiplied traces of the natural products of places of ancient and modern fame are the instances of geographically derived names of manufactured goods. Were it possible to make out a complete list of all these articles, we venture to think it might afford some slight consolation to those whose minds are exercised by one of the many puzzles of political economy, that is, the rival claims of British industry and of foreign importation. By this means alone—and it affords, we must recollect, but a view of an infinitesimal part of the subject—we may to some extent realise how many articles in common use, now staple productions of British manufacture, were in earlier days imported from other countries. Take, for example, the fabric which is perhaps most largely used throughout the world for wearing apparel, *calico*. It takes its name from Calicut, an Indian kingdom on the coast of Malabar, and was first brought to England by East India Company traders in 1631. The art of weaving this cloth had been practised in the East for centuries, calico-printing even had been long carried on in a somewhat primitive fashion, but it was unknown in this country till the seventeenth century. In 1676 this manufacture was carried on to a small extent in the south of England; some sixty years later it was established on a considerable footing in Glasgow and the west of Scotland; in 1764 it became a branch of Lancashire industry. We need not dilate on its importance at the present date, the thousands of hands to which it gives employment, the thousands of mouths which are by its means supplied with bread. We will but mention, as giving some idea of the magnitude of the calico trade, the fact that, in 1874, the calicoes exported from the British Isles were of a value considerably exceeding nineteen millions. Of the other materials of dress which we will briefly mention not a few might tell a similar tale. *Dimity* no longer hails only from Damietta;

and the word *damask* is applied to less gorgeous fabrics than those which issued from Damascus to satisfy oriental ideas of magnificence. *Muslins* came first from Mosul, *nankeen* from the city of Nanking, in China. *Cashmere* bespeaks still more unmistakably its own origin. *Holland* brings our thoughts nearer home; while *cambric* came originally, and we believe comes still, from the French town of Cambrai. More than once during the last century was the jealousy felt by English manufacturers of their more immediate neighbours and rivals in commerce, expressed by the prohibition or restriction of the importation of this fine linen fabric. Space forbids that we should increase the list of industries relating to dress materials further than by recalling the little Norfolk town where *worsted* was extensively spun at an early date.

Before passing altogether from the subject of clothing, we must also give to the Italian city of Milan the credit of giving us the word *milliner*. It points to a time when the capital of Lombardy 'gave the law to Europe in all matters of taste, dress, and elegance.' The now almost obsolete *mantua*-maker would seem to claim for another town, not far distant, some share of this honour, which Paris now monopolises.

Other traces of our indebtedness to foreign commerce are not difficult to find. The word *parchment* may be traced back through its Latin form to Pergamos, a city in that province of Asia Minor which has been so prolific in giving geographical names. This derivation is possessed of a peculiar interest as an illustration of the familiar proverb, 'Necessity is the mother of Invention.' The Egyptian papyrus had long been the staple writing-material, but when Ptolemy prohibited its exportation, the ingenious inhabitants of Pergamos devised this substitute for the continuation of their famous library. The name of one of the largest Eastern states, and one of the most advanced for many centuries in every branch of science and practical knowledge—that is, China—adheres with a strange pertinacity to every kind of porcelain. The connoisseur may speak glibly of *Delft*, of *Majolica*, of old *Chelsea*, and many another variety, but to each and all of them, even as to the commonest stoneware, he applies, despite its incongruity and contradiction, the generic name of *China*. The celebrity of Chinese porcelain in ancient days must account for this verbal absurdity. If we may credit their own annals, the ceramic art was not unknown to the Chinese 2697 B.C. Be this as it may—and the inquiry certainly does not concern us by any relation to the English language—Chinese porcelain was very early famous; and each dynasty of kings vied with its predecessors in introducing new and improved colours and decorations. In process of time its fame, and at a later date its manufacture, spread westwards. The neighbouring country of Japan gives us a name for the mode of decorative varnishing which is practised in boxes, trays, &c. of Japanese manufacture, as also on many articles which come into the market from no greater distance than Birmingham or Wolverhampton.

Two coins next occur to us. The now extinct *guineas* took their title from the district on the western coast of Africa whence was procured the precious metal of which, in 1673, they were first coined. It is alleged that the gold thus employed

was the spoil of a rich prize taken from the Dutch traders by the renowned Admiral Holmes. The first issues of guineas bore the impression of an elephant to denote their African origin. In a less questionable manner do we derive the name of our *florins* from an early coinage of the Florentine mint. Of weapons also, two may fitly enter into our category. The *pistol* betrays in its name its Italian origin from the northern town of Pistoja, still famous for the manufacture of firearms. Bayonne claims the distinction of first manufacturing the *bayonet* in the seventeenth century. Others, however, trace the name to the spontaneous invention of the Basque peasantry of La Bayonette, a lower ridge of the Pyrenees, in a battle with the Spaniards. These hardy mountaineers, running short of powder, devised the expedient of fastening their long knives to the ends of their muskets, and thus equipped, they charged the astonished enemy with a successful issue.

Against the use of our concluding word we would recommend the midland counties of England to enter a protest. *Brummagem*, in its application to worthless or inferior articles made in imitation of more valuable commodities, is an unworthy monument to remain in our language to the great town of Birmingham. Cheap toys, jewelry, and ornaments do indeed issue from her factories, and electro-plating forms an important trade, but it is metal-working in its more important branches which makes Birmingham's fame. Well has it been said by a modern writer: 'She [Birmingham] haunts us from the cradle to the grave. She supplies us with the spoon that first brings our infant lips into acquaintance with pap; and she supplies the dismal furniture which is affixed to our coffins. At home or abroad, sleeping or waking, walking or riding, in a carriage or upon a railway or steamboat, we cannot escape reminiscences of Birmingham.' It is a hard fate which makes the travesty of the name of this town which thus supplies our needs a synonym for 'cheap imitations.'

Numerous other examples of geographical nomenclature might be cited, but we place these instances before our readers as samples only of an indissoluble connection between 'local habitation and a name.'

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE key turned in the lock, and Cecilia stood in the half-light, with swollen eyes and tearful face and disordered hair, like a blurred picture. Mrs Winter, conscious of old social differences, but emboldened by the bonnet, embraced her on the spot; and the girl clung to her piteously with fresh tears, not as yet knowing the meaning of her visit, but scenting sympathy and friendship.

'Now, you won't cry no more, my love,' said Mrs Winter, wiping her own eyes and turning the key in the lock. 'I can tell you one thing, my dear, as ought to do your heart good. Young Mr Jousserong, up at our house, is in such a state o' mind that I'm sure as Isaiah's more than half afraid of him. As for this 'ere marriage as

your father talks on, it'd be no less than a sinful crime to carry it through. And all the fathers in the world, my dear, might talk from now till Judgment Day, but they'd never mek it law as a gell could give her hand where her heart could never be. Why, my dear, if you was to drop a line to the vicar, or, for the matter o' that, if I was to do it, do you think as he'd cry the bands in church next Sunday? Not he. I can tell you a thing or two about Robert Snelling, my dear, as'ud never let you marry the man, not if every hair of his head was hung wi' diamonds. He's as cantankerous and contrarismose as he's high, my dear, and that ain't sayin' a little, for he's the tallest man in the parish. He's got that notions of himself as he might be Lord Barfield or the Pope o' Rome and yet be no prouder. There's nothin' satisfies the man; and to think o' throwin' away a pretty blossom like you, my dear, on such a rubbish-heap as that meks me sick to think about it. Never you fear, my darlin'; theer's them about as'll take care o' you.'

'I wo—won't marry Mr Snelling,' sobbed Cecilia; 'I'll die first.'

'Highty-tighty!' said Mrs Winter, 'who's a-talkin' about dyin'? We'll marry our own sweet-heart first, that's what we'll do, won't we?—You listen to me, my dear. I'm a old experienced woman, and I can talk to you. You let Mr Jousserong do what young Squire Tanant did when he ran away with Miss Featherstone. Her father was agin the match, and he wanted her to marry a lord, as was older than he was, though you'd hardly believe it, and had led a dreadful life; and the young Squire he went up to London, and he paid a hundred pound for a special license at Doctors' Commons; and he came down with it in his pocket; and he married the lady at ten o'clock in the mornin' the very day afore the old lord was to have wedded her. He killed her with his wild ways afterwards, and ran through her fortune in three years; but that's how he got over old Featherstone and married the girl of his heart.'

To this consolatory and hopeful narrative, Cecilia gave attentive ear. She seemed to see a spark of hope in it; and yet desperate as her affairs looked, she was hardly prepared to defy her father in that way. 'I don't know what to do,' she said helplessly. 'I only know that I'll never marry Mr Snelling.'

'Come, my darlin',' urged Mrs Winter, 'you're fond of Mr Jousserong, ain't you? I'm sure he's as pretty a figure of a man for a little un as you'd see anywheres. He's got a good round lump at the bank, as I know from Isaiah, and as good a livin', seemingly, in them clever fingers o' his as if he owned land and houses. Now come, my dear, tell me, ain't you fond of Mr Jousserong?'

It took a great deal of persuasion to draw out the truth. Cecilia confessed at first that she liked Achille, and then acknowledged that she liked him very much indeed. Finally, by dint of some art and much persistence, Mrs Winter elicited the statement that Cecilia would never, never, never marry anybody else.

'Now, my dear,' said Mrs Winter, when this result was attained, 'will you let the young man do his best to help you out of this sore trouble?'

I'm sure he's got the willin' heart to do it. You could know that only by lookin' at him, at least a old discernin' woman like myself can. Now, will you, my dear, just say "Yes" to that? Will you tek what help your friends and your sweet-heart can give you?'

Perhaps if Jousserau had been there to plead his own cause, the affirmative answer might have come more easily than it did; as it was, it came at last, but only after an infinity of persuasion.

'Theer's a love,' said Mrs Winter approvingly. —'Now, dry them pretty eyes, and Flit away, sorrow, for love comes now.'

Right at the finish of this scene of consolation, the Roman Father came home again, and standing at the foot of the stairs, roared for Cecilia in a tone of noisy bantering good-humour.

The girl clung to her new-found ally. 'Here's father! What shall we do? He'll know that you are here.'

'Oh yes, my dear,' said Mrs Winter, with a prophetic little shiver, 'he'll know I'm here. I'll let him know that this instant minute.' Therewith, in rustling silks, she sailed undaunted to the door, and from the landing her voice sailed before her satirically shrill. 'What d'ye want, to beller at the gell i' thatnin for?'

For the moment the farmer stood aghast at these unexpected accents; but by the time his daughter's champion had descended, he had recovered himself; the wonderful bonnet gave him a chance at once. 'Bess o' Bedlam's fine to-day,' he said, as a greeting to his visitor. The lady's voice had conveyed a challenge, and he was not slow to accept it.

Mrs Isaiah, forgetful of the black silk gown, planted her knuckles on her hips and faced him with arms akimbo. 'I wonder you ain't ashamed,' she began, 'to look a decent woman i' the face.'

'Fetch one in and try,' he responded with ready impoliteness.

But for this, there would have been an immediate outburst of oratory; but the retort was so swift, sudden, and unexpected, that the good woman was checked in the very beginning of her flight.

'You've heerd the news?' said Shorthouse, with a sardonic grin. 'All right. I know what ye think about it, and you can save yourself the trouble o' talkin'. If I'd got a jaw as slack-hung as a female's, I could say it all myself as well as thee could'st. If I might tek the liberty o' saying so, mum, you're one o' that family o' poultry as does the cackling for other hens' eggs. You've been known for that this thirty'ear.'

'I'm not one o' them,' retorted Mrs Winter, 'as puts their fingers into other folk's pies.'

'I'm honest, quoth Tom Pickpocket,'" responded the farmer.

'But this I will say,' pursued Mrs Winter, ignoring the interruption, 'that I never met such a gallus ode fool as you be in all my born days. My Isaiah called o' the parish clerk this mornin', and heard what you and Bob Snelling had done between you.—Oh! you can pretend to tek it easy'—for the farmer had taken down his Broseley and was filling it with an air of philosophic reflection—'but nayther you nor no man can afford to forget what his neighbours think about him. The wull parish'll cry "Fie" upon you. You've got a name a'ready to be a bitter hard un; but I

ain't afraid on you, and I'm glad to be the first to speak my mind.'

'Dear me!' said Shorthouse, pulling at his pipe and throwing one leg comfortably across the other, 'how this does remind me of old times! I could almost think as my missis was alive agen.'

'You're treatin' your child,' cried Mrs Winter, 'wuss than the beasts of the field. You're a-passin' your own flesh through the fire unto Moloch, that's what you're a-doin'.'

'Look here,' said Shorthouse; 'you go and spend your spite agen the chap as sacked your man, elsewheer. I've got nothing agen Isaiah, if he hadn't married you; and bein' a widderer myself, I can afford to pity him.'

'Pity!' cried Mrs Winter; 'it ain't under your skin. You've got the prettiest gell i' the parish somehow or other—though it's no thanks to your beauty, to be sure—and you want to throw her away on a man as is old enough to be her father; and a contrarier heart can't be found in six parishes. D'ye think as the vicar'll cry the bands if I was to speak a word to him; and I will, mind you. Have your wicked way, you shan't, Dan'l Shorthouse.'

'Tek yours, my good woman,' the farmer answered—'tek it quick, and stop on it. It'll never cross mine, with my good-will. I've always thought well of Solomon's family wisdom, but never so well as now. You go home and read what he's got to say about the contentious woman.'

'You quote Scriptor, you villain!' cried Mrs Winter, goaded to an almost wordless wrath by the farmer's constant victory. 'I've no patience with you.'

'That's what I used to think when my father give me a-hidin'. You ain't expected to have any patience, missis. If you've got common-sense left enough to find your way, go and seek it.'

Mrs Winter retired, vanquished, and yet victorious. The plot was laid already, the insolent, cruel farmer undermined, and she had spoken not a word about it. Once or twice she had been sorely tempted openly to prophesy disaster to his plans, but she had resisted the temptation.

The conversation the good lady reported at home bore but little resemblance to that which had really taken place, for before she reached her husband's door, she had found a perfect response to each of the farmer's seemingly unanswerable satires, and had quite convinced herself of the truth of her own version. She poured it all out upon Isaiah, who laughed, and took pride in her verbal smartness; and Jousserau descending, joined in the laughter, anxious as he was.

'If you're ready, Mr Jousserong,' she said, 'Cecilia's willin'. It took a mighty heap o' trouble to drag it out of her; but if you'll go to London and get a special license, her'll marry you, if nothing better can be done.'

The artist expressed his readiness to do anything to rescue his love from a fate so terrible as that which threatened her. Banking hours were over, and there was no drawing the money that night; but here Isaiah came to the fore, and offered manfully to cash his lodger's cheque for two hundred pounds upon the spot. He volunteered, moreover, to put the pair of steppers into the brake and drive Jousserau to the railway station.

Jousserau scrawled his cheque, and ran up-stairs to dress and pack. When he descended again, the money lay already in gold and notes upon the table; and Isaiah was outside, hurrying on the preparations for the drive. Their way led them past the farmer's house; and Cecilia, hearing the sound of wheels, peeped out of window, and saw her knight flying away to find arms for her deliverance. Jousserau kissed his hand to her as he was borne swiftly by, and she responded to his farewell in a like fashion and shrank blushing behind the curtain.

CHAPTER XL.

About noon on the following day, young John, accompanied by his *fidus Achates*, rushed up to Isaiah's house and with great *empressement* demanded to see Mr Jousserau.

'Mr Jousserong's gone to London, my lad,' said Isaiah, who himself answered the summons of the boys. 'He can't be back afore nightfall, if he gets back then.'

At this the two visitors stared at each other with faces so ludicrously crestfallen and wondering, that Isaiah was moved to ask what was the matter.

'Why,' said John, 'it's Madame Vigne's birthday, and Mr Jousserau invited her and Monsieur Vigne and Will and me; and we were all to picnic at Quarley Woods together. We have waited more than an hour already. He was to meet us at the *Quarley Arms*. He can't have forgotten.'

'He must ha' forgotten,' Isaiah answered, 'for he's gone up to London on very important business. It's most likely put the picnic out of his head. I've heerd him talk about it; but I don't remember what day he fixed it for.—You're sure it's to-day?'

'Yes,' John insisted. 'It's Madame's birthday. She knows her own birthday.'

'Hm!' said Isaiah, scratching his head and staring downward at the boys. 'That's a rum start, that is. What are you going to do?'

'I don't know what we can do,' Will answered disconsolately. 'We can't send them back again.'

'Well, no,' returned Isaiah with a long-drawn drawl. 'You can't send 'em back again, I reckon.—Wait a bit; I'll talk to the missis about it.'

The result of the conference was that Isaiah offered the hospitalities of his own house to the disappointed guests, and undertook to explain to Madame the reason of Jousserau's absence. The brake was harnessed to convey her and her husband from their present resting-place. The boys were sent into the garden to await his return; and Mrs Winter and her maid plunged into the kitchen to make ready for these additions to her table. In something over half an hour Isaiah came back, having explained the position of affairs to Madame with perfect success. That excellent personage was profoundly interested in Achilles's love affairs, and proved to be already deeply in his confidence. Mrs Winter having brought matters to such a pass in the kitchen that she could safely leave the maid, assumed her company attire, and related triumphantly the revised and improved story of her interview with Farmer Shorthouse. Madame laughed until her fat sides shook again, and was so appreciative

of Mrs Winter's aftermath of wit, that the hostess corrected earlier impressions and took the warmest fancy to her. The story was, of course, privately discussed; and the boys, as being too young to be entrusted with so important a secret, were shut out from the conference.

After the mid-day dinner, John was eager to show Madame Vigne his new abiding-place, and above all, to display the splendours of that half-ruined turret which belonged wholly to himself.

'Ah but,' said Madame, shaking her sage head, 'your uncle does not like me, my child; and perhaps I am not very fond of your uncle, and altogether it may be best that I should not go.'

'But uncle isn't at home,' John protested eagerly. 'He went away on horseback before I came out. He has gone to Birmingham to the exchange, and when he does that, he never comes home before night-time.'

The boy was so eager, that Madame, after her own good-natured fashion, gave way to him. Mrs Winter, to whom Tallymount Hall had been a sealed mystery all her life, was eager to see it. She had passed the locked gates scores of times in her childhood, and had known the story of the wicked Squire and his ghostly revisiting of the grounds ever since she could remember. She, being assured of Snelling's absence, was as eager to go as John was to take her; and Isaiah being easily persuaded also, the whole party made off to the ruined Hall. John led them to his turret chamber, and displayed his small museum of birds' nests, home-preserved skins of stoat and weasel, the doleful results of an attempt of his own to stuff a kestrel, and other wonders of the like nature. When everything had been inspected, and everybody had been put into a certain position to admire the view from the window, the visitors, who were about to leave, were astonished by the sudden entrance of the master of the place.

Everybody thought him a little pale and worn; but he assumed an aspect of unwonted jollity. 'Showing your friends about, John?' he began. 'That's right, my lad. Make 'em welcome—make 'em welcome.'

His first thoughts had leapt to the idea of some perquisition into his intended crime, and the sound of voices in the chamber had rooted him with terror for a moment. But standing below to listen, he had learned that all the voices were gay and friendly, and he began to see his own advantage in this unexpected gathering. If he had planned it for himself, it would never have been a hundredth part so valuable as it might be now. When he put his plan into execution, and the turret chamber came down with young John in it, he would have the testimony of the boy's best friends to the apparent safety of the place. He would have their testimony, too, as to his relations with his ward; and he tried, by a boisterous, half-hysteric cordiality, to show that they were altogether friendly.

'This is a niceish sort of a place for a young chap to have all to himself, Isaiah,' he said, slapping his old henchman on the shoulder. 'Fine place for a lad to sport about in. I should ha' been rare and proud, when I was a lad, to ha' had the run of anything like it.'

His geniality was a little overdone; and the

friendly clap on Isaiah's shoulder was altogether miscalculated. In place of setting Isaiah immediately at friendly ease, he made him wonder, the friendly freedom was so unlike Snelling.

'The gaffer's been a-drinkin', Isaiah whispered, a minute or two later, to Mrs Winter, when, after some difficulty, they had succeeded in manœuvring her into a corner.

Mrs Winter formed a voiceless 'No' with her eyes, and then touching her wedding ring with the tip of a forefinger, smiled meaningly.

'Ah!' said Isaiah in a cautious murmur; 'most like you're right; I never thought of that.'

'Well, mum,' said Snelling, turning upon Madame Vigne, with his respectable bulky swagger a trifle overdone, as everything was doomed to be with him that afternoon, 'here's your lad, ye see. He doesn't look as if there was much the matter with him, does he?—Turn your face up, lad, and let the lady have a look at you.—There he is, mum, as bright and healthy a lad as you'd desire to see.'

'Ye-es,' said Madame, 'he is looking very well; he is looking very happy.'

'Your Uncle Robert hasn't eaten you up yet; has he, lad?' said Snelling with a noisy laugh.

Messieurs John and Will both broke out laughing at this; and Madame, who had been looking a little doubtful, permitted herself to smile.

'He's been a twel'month under my care now,' cried Snelling. 'Ask him how he likes it.—Pretty contented, John, my lad, eh?'

'Pretty contented, uncle,' John answered, still laughing.

The ease and informality of this response, and a little gleam of affectionate humour in the boy's eyes as he made it, did more to convince Madame than Snelling's blustering proclamations could have done in a day.

'I shall be very glad to think, sir,' she said, 'that I have been mistaken.'

'Come now,' answered Snelling, 'that's pleasant hearing.—I'm not the man myself to nurse a spite agen anybody, and I'm going to let bygones be bygones all round. I'm sure you meant well by the lad, though you might ha' done much better, maybe, by sending him home again. But that's neither here nor there. You've proved a kindly meaning; and if I hadn't been afraid that you'd be hurt by it, I should have asked to pay you for it, long ago.'

PECULIAR WEDDINGS.

It is our firm belief that more peculiar incidents take place at weddings than at any other public ceremony, religious or civil. We have known a good many odd things happen at weddings, in the course of several years' experience as a town and country parson, and we think a few of them may be worth chronicling for the amusement of the British public. We may fairly say that we were introduced to weddings *en masse*. Our first curacy was at the old parish church in a large northern manufacturing town, where it was no unusual thing to have thirty or forty sets of banns to read out on a Sunday morning, and where the number of weddings was in proportion. We are afraid to say how many happy couples

we united in the first week of our ministerial experiences. We arrived at our curacy on a Monday afternoon, and found on the Tuesday morning ten weddings awaiting us. On our innocently remarking to the clerk that they would take up some time to perform, he informed us, with a sort of pity at our ignorance of how things were done, that we were mistaken upon that point. 'You see, we marries them all at once'—a custom to which we soon got used.

On one Christmas-day morning there were no fewer than seventeen weddings fixed for the same hour, half-past nine. As there was a service at half-past ten, it was not easy to get through the work, even though the happy pairs were 'married all together.' Luckily, our chancel was a large one; so, ranging the wedding parties in a huge circle around us, we stood in the centre, addressing to the congregation at large the exhortations suitable to all alike; and going the round of the circle, from pair to pair, with the questions which have to be put individually. Our old parish, like most other old town parishes, is now divided into ten, and weddings *en masse* are a thing of the past.

We once took a wedding at which the only attendant, besides the groomsman and bridesmaid, was a stout determined-looking elderly female, who did not come up with the wedding party to the altar rails, but seated herself in one of the choir stalls not far off. We observed that both bride and bridegroom looked at her with very disquieted glances. Once or twice we noticed that the elderly female seemed to be about to make a move, especially at that part of the service when possible opponents are requested to 'speak, or else hereafter for ever hold their peace.' When the service was over, we inquired of this good dame why she had come to the wedding. 'I'm the girl's mother,' was her reply, 'and I came to prevent the business.' We naturally asked why she hadn't 'prevented the business;' and we found that the thought had struck her at the last moment that they 'might do worse than get married, after all.' We have often since thought of what must have been the agitated feelings of that bride and bridegroom until the irrevocable words were said over them.

A terrible incident happened at another wedding, that of a couple both of middle age. There was a grating just in front of the altar rails, which led down to the pipes which heated the building. In his agitation in putting the ring upon the finger of his bride, the unfortunate bridegroom let it go, and it rolled down the grating. The clerk descended and hunted for some time. The ring, however, could not be found. The poor bride shed copious tears, and the bridegroom gallantly stanchied them as well as he could with a large red-and-green handkerchief, murmuring soothingly: 'There, don't 'ee cry—don't 'ee cry,' in the endearing tone which is often used to a baby. We are sure we sympathised; but our sympathy was hardly sufficient to control our risible propensities. A ring had to be borrowed from one of the officials; and the bride's tears were dried at last.

Marrying a couple one or both of whom are deaf is a funny experience. We remember a bridegroom who was perfectly deaf, and could not catch the import of a single word uttered in our

loudest tones. Could he read? we wondered; and to find out, we placed the book before him. Yes, he could; and began: 'I, M., take thee, N., to my wedded wife.' We tried, but in vain, to make him understand that he must substitute his own name for M., and his bride's for N.' He smiled a smile of incomprehension; and we had to leave him to describe himself as 'M.' The words 'ordinance' and 'plight' were too much for him—he shook his head, and left them out altogether. We wondered then, and we have occasionally wondered since, how the courtship of that worthy couple had gone on. It must certainly have been an *affaire du cœur*, not of the mere external senses.

A couple once presented themselves who had not given any previous notice of their intention to be married. The bridegroom, when he was asked why he had not done so, replied: 'Because I want to be married by license.'—'Then,' we said, 'we suppose you have brought the license with you?' But we found, from his answer, that he imagined a license was a document which a clergyman could make out at any moment on a sheet of paper. When he had grasped the idea of what marriage by license really was, and that, consequently, he could not be married there and then, the state of mind into which he and the rest of the party were thrown may be better imagined than described. We felt very sorry for them; but of course we could not help it. It was amusing to hear the ejaculations of the different members of the party. 'Oh dear, what are we to do?' sobbed the bride.—'Well, I have been made a fool of,' said the bridegroom.—'Law is law—yes, law is law, and it can't be helped,' was the philosophical reflection of the bride's father. They were married shortly afterwards, but not by license.

Talking about marriage licenses, it is curious what vague ideas many persons have about them—not only those in the humble station in life to which the couple just mentioned belonged. Twice we have been stopped in the streets, once in a midland factory town, and once in a cathedral town in the south, by respectably dressed youthful couples, and asked if we were a 'parson;' and on receiving an answer in the affirmative, further asked whether we would make out a license and marry them as soon as possible.

Once, also, we met with an equally curious mistake about banns. After reading the banns for the first time of a young labourer and a young woman whose engagement was unknown to us, we congratulated the parents of the young lady, when we next called, on their daughter's matrimonial prospects. 'Oh,' said the mother, 'she doesn't want to marry him; but I s'pose she must now, 'cause the banns are put up.' And we actually found that the young man had 'put up' the banns entirely on his own account, and had persuaded the girl and her parents that now he could legally claim her as his wife. Explanations followed; and the banns were not published again.

We remember a wedding which had some very peculiar circumstances attending it. All the legal conditions were complied with, and yet there was an air of secrecy and mystery about the whole business. At ten o'clock the bride arrived, in ordinary dress, by herself; at twenty minutes

past ten the bridegroom appeared, coming from quite a different direction, also by himself. A few hurried words were exchanged between them in the vestry. The clerk and sexton, who both happened to be about, were requested to act as witnesses. When the service was over, the bridegroom left the church alone by the west door. Some twenty minutes afterwards the bride departed, by another door, and went off in another direction. We never gained any clue as to the motives for all this secrecy; but 'where there's a mystery there's always a history.' We wonder what their history was.

Only a few months ago we had an odd instance of the way in which a witness may be procured. The happy pair were driven to the church in a local fly, the driver of which appeared subsequently as 'best-man.' He told us afterwards that he had no notion when he reached the church that he was to act in that capacity; but that, when they alighted, the bridegroom told him that to act as 'his man' was 'part of the job;' and so he accommodated himself to circumstances.

Let us conclude this series of wedding recollections by mentioning what we consider a very pretty custom which is observed in some parts of Kent and other southern counties. An arch is constructed by the villagers at the churchyard gate, on which are suspended the implements of the handicraft to which the bridegroom belongs. A carpenter has his saw and plane and foot-rule; a blacksmith his hammer and pinchers and horse-shoes; and so forth. We have seen these sometimes combined in a very tasteful manner. There yet dwells in our memory the case of a bridegroom who had no particular occupation but that of frequenting the public-house, and in his case some cynical friends stood holding a huge basin of beer outside the churchyard gates.

'LA VENDETTA' AMONG THE PATHANS.

CORSICANS are noted among even the vindictive inhabitants of Southern Europe for their peculiarly revengeful dispositions. Their enemies are never forgiven; and the mistaken duty of revenge is handed down from father to son, till a fit opportunity enables them to discharge the supposed debt with the effusion of blood. The Corsican *vendetta*, slow but sure, recalls the words of Byron:

There never yet was human power
Which could withstand, if unforgiven,
The patient watch and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

The Corsican's *vendetta*, however, has to wait, and sometimes has waited for many years and scores of years. But there are other nations among whom also revenge is considered a duty; and there are places where public opinion and a firm government do not give even that much protection to life which under ordinary circumstances exists in Corsica itself and the countries into which Corsicans are likely to follow their victims.

Among savage races, whose passions are under no control, and whom a false religion teaches that revenge is a sacred duty, the gratification of that revenge does not take the course of cautious

devising and long waiting. It daringly pounces upon its victim at the very first occasion. There opportunities frequently present themselves, or are easily made for the purpose, by the ardour and ingenuity of the man thirsting for revenge. This holds especially in countries where the excessive heat of the weather and the simplicity of life compel people to live much in the open air, to have several doors and many windows to their houses, and to sleep either with doors and windows wide open, or even in the open air. Among such races one of the most revengeful is the Pathan of Afghanistan and its neighbourhood.

Here is a tale of a Pathan vendetta, carried out in a singularly bloody manner, quite characteristic of the race. We learned the facts during our stay at Nowshera, near Peshawar, in 187-. The scene was a small town at no very great distance from Nowshera, and not more than thirty miles from the British frontier line. The town itself lies in British territory; but its criminals often find an easy and safe retreat beyond our frontier, and consequently out of reach of British justice. When we visited this town, we noticed a large two-storied house, whose appearance, immensely superior in size, form, and material to that of the huts around it, proclaimed its owner a wealthy man among his fellows—possibly their chief. The house, however, was empty; and its look of desolation showed that for years it had undergone no repairs, and was in a fair way to become very soon an uninhabitable ruin. We inquired why it was thus untenanted and uncared for, expecting to hear some weird story of ghost or goblin: instead of that we heard this tale of bloody feud.

The owner of that house had been the chief of the village and the wealthiest proprietor for miles around. He had several sons, but only one daughter, the prettiest girl in the village. Love, that laughs at all social restrictions and inequalities, accidentally threw her, when in her fourteenth year, in the way of a young man of twenty, a common farm-labourer of the village. The girl was of a marriageable age, according to Pathan custom; and the young man, too, was desirous of taking to himself a wife. He was poor; but, in the East, poverty, though not admired, is by no means held despicable. As a counterpoise, he was strong, well built, athletic, and of prepossessing appearance.

Their first meeting had occurred casually, when she went in the early morning, as is always done in the East, to the village well, to fetch water for the day's consumption. The morning breeze had blown aside her veil; and the first sight of her beautiful face in all the glory of its early womanhood had hopelessly pierced the young man's susceptible heart. The girl herself had not been insensible to his good looks and open admiration. It was a case of mutual love at first sight. Courtship in our sense of the word is, of course, an unknown thing among the Pathans. Even speech was out of the question; it would have been an offence against their etiquette, punishable with the sword. But when other means of communication fail, eyes somehow often manage to tell silently the tale of love, and so it occurred in this case. Each morning the youth came at the same hour to the same place, on the way to the village well, where they had first seen each

other. (We call it the village well, *lucus a non lucendo*; they are generally outside the village, and often at some distance.) Just as regularly, too, came the young lady, and allowing her veil to give a glimpse of her face, gratified while she increased their mutual affection. For a few seconds they used to gaze at each other; and they knew that each loved and was beloved in return.

After some little natural hesitation, the young man went boldly to the girl's father and asked his daughter's hand in marriage. Great was the indignation of the village *Croesus*! He quoted, indeed, the oriental proverb, 'The frog has caught a cold.' The young man was shown roughly to the door, much as he would have been in similar circumstances in the more civilised West. After this, the young woman was jealously kept at home. The meetings on the way to the well could no longer take place. But bolt or bar or lock is equally unable to keep out Love. The means were never known, but still the lovers managed to convey messages to each other: write they did not, for of reading and writing both of them were quite innocent. The schoolmaster is not even yet abroad in those regions to any great extent. The result of the rejection of the young man's suit was like the attempt to dam a stream, or to extinguish a fire with oil. It only increased the ardour of the young people; and as soon as the first vigilance of her family began to relax, under the impression that the young man's pretensions had been effectively crushed, the lovers did what other lovers have done under similar circumstances—they eloped.

One morning when the family arose, the young woman was nowhere to be found. It was soon discovered that the young man, too, had disappeared during the night; and the best horse also of the village chief was missing. There could be no reasonable doubt that all three had gone away together, the lover carrying off his beloved on her father's horse. Before daybreak they were safe in independent territory. Trained and expert trackers, of whom each family has a few, had traced their journey over the frontier. News soon after arrived that in a village some miles beyond the frontier, in independent territory, they had found an equivalent to the olden Fleet Prison parsons and Gretna Green smith, in the person of a complainant *Moollah* or Mohammedan registrar. For a consideration, he had quickly united the pair in wedlock, according to the simple rites of the Mohammedan religion. They were therefore legally and honourably married, both according to their religious and social codes, which are in reality identical. But the abduction of the girl and the theft of the horse—one just as much as the other—was a deadly insult to the bride's family; and among Pathans, insults, like injuries, are atonable only with blood. That blood would be shed was not only a foregone conclusion; it was, according to their ideas, even a positive duty.

Every Pathan owns a long, sharp, and keen knife, and a sword, and most of them also a matchlock. Every man is trained from childhood to the effective use of these weapons. The two families numbered among them some twenty adult males who 'played with the sword.' All these had, of course, become parties in this deadly feud, though not one had been an aider

in the act that caused it, or had even known that it was contemplated. No matter. Every one well knew that a systematic butchery must soon ensue. The young people also had known it, and they had doubtless discounted in their minds the fatal cost of the step which love and the old man's obstinacy and pride had forced upon them. Houses in those parts, as already remarked, are seldom locked, the windows easily admit an intruder, and the mud walls can be quickly and noiselessly broken into. Agricultural labour daily takes nearly every one into fields and lonely places. Blood is hot; revenge burns fiercely; opportunity is not rare. It caused, therefore, no surprise when, a few days after the elopement, the bridegroom's father—about fifty years old—was found dead on his bed, stabbed to the heart while asleep. The Pathan knife, the deadly *charah*, is of a uniform size and make; and there is little chance of identifying a murderer if not caught red-handed in the very act. No prolonged investigation was made. Every one knew the cause and the motive of the murder, though it was impossible to prove whose was the hand that had dealt the fatal blow. The corpse was buried in the evening. The following morning, one of the brothers of the bride was found stiff and cold, also stabbed to the heart with a *charah*. He, too, was buried.

A few days passed uneventfully; but all knew, of course, that this second murder also had to be avenged; or, to put it in another form, a life had been taken for a life, leaving the original insult still to be dealt with. A few days afterwards, another man fell of the bridegroom's family—shot dead in the fields, and that death was speedily avenged by the murder of another male from the bride's family. And so the deadly feud progressed, each family being alternately murderers and victims. The authorities tried to stop the slaughter, and the police appeared in numbers. No one, of course, knew anything about the murders or the cause: they were quite accidental—'who did them, and why, God only knew.' The members of each family disclaimed all feelings of anger, all desire of revenge. Things were quiet while the 'authorities' were about. As soon as they were gone, the smouldering embers soon burst into flame, and alternate murder thinned the ranks of both families. At last the bride's father and the bridegroom were the sole two males left—one in each family.

One night the bridegroom rose quietly from the side of his sleeping bride; he saddled the stolen horse and rode swiftly to his native village, the now desolate home of his childhood. Dismounting at some distance, he tied his horse to a tree and entered the proud but almost deserted mansion of his father-in-law. With his sword he slew the heart-broken and bereaved old man, regained his horse, and rode back to the new home of his exile by the morning light. His wife was already up. He folded her tenderly in his arms, yet stained with her murdered father's blood; and thus gently he broke the news: 'We must now love each other only the more fondly, my own heart; our fathers and brothers all sleep in peace.' She understood him fully, and was not at all surprised, for she had already guessed the object of his nocturnal journey. They had both well known from the beginning

what was the only possible result, according to their customs, of the step which they had taken.

In four months a score of men, 'brave and true and mighty in war,' had been laid low in bloody and untimely graves by the assassin's bullet, sword, or knife. The feud, which had sprung up and raged like a volcano, was speedily quenched in blood. But the more natural and pleasing fire of wedded love continued to burn not the less warmly, brightly, and constantly in the hearts of the lovers, though it had caused the destruction of both families.

Let Corsica yield the palm to Afghanistan in the matter of deadly vengeance.

SEA-LIONS AND SEA-BEARS.

THERE are perhaps comparatively few people who are aware that the sealskin of commerce is not made from the skin of a seal but from a different animal altogether. It is true that the skins of seals are used for clothes; but the best 'sealskin,' which is familiar to everybody, is the product of a sea-bear or eared seal, which is, however, popularly known as the Northern Fur Seal (*Arctocephalus ursinus*). This animal inhabits the North Pacific shores, and is there extremely abundant. It is called the *fur* seal because of the fine soft fur which covers the body; interspersed among these are coarser hairs. Closely allied species occur in the southern hemisphere; and in both regions there are other eared seals which lack the fine fur and only possess the coarse hairs. These 'hair seals' are not commercially of so much value. The term sea-bear is commonly applied to the fur seals, and sea-lion to the hair seals. They both belong to the group of eared seals, which, though confounded by the earlier naturalists with the true seals, are in reality quite distinct from them. The eared seals form, in fact, a very natural assemblage of animals; any one who will take the trouble to compare the Patagonian sea-lion with the British seal at the Zoological Society's Gardens can readily see the important differences that distinguish them. The sea-lion has small but distinct external ears; in the seal the 'conch' of the ear is entirely absent, and the aperture of the ear is alone visible. The limbs of the sea-lion are just as fitted for swimming as those of the seal, the whole limb forming a flat paddle; but in the sea-lion the hind-limbs are capable of a freer motion, and the animal can therefore progress with comparative ease upon land; indeed, the small Cape sea-lion can run with some rapidity upon dry land. The seal, on the other hand, is more completely fitted for a marine existence; the limbs are more closely connected with the trunk, and it is unable to make use of them upon the land. Under these circumstances, its progression is simply due to the muscles of the abdomen: it wriggles along as a man would do if placed upon his face with the legs and arms tied.

The intelligence of the sea-lion appears to be rather greater than that of the seal. The keeper in charge of these animals has succeeded in teaching the Patagonian sea-lion a number of tricks, which it performs at feeding-time for the gratification of the visitors. In short, it may be safely held that the sea-lions or eared seals are more nearly akin to the terrestrial carnivora than are

the seals, and that they have more recently become adapted to an aquatic existence. Unfortunately, we cannot at present do more than speculate as to how the land ancestors of the sea-lions first took to an aquatic life. Some few remains of sea-lions are known to us in a fossil condition; but they offer no suggestion as to how the transition took place. These remains, which are, of course, only bones and teeth, agree in every character with existing sea-lions, and have not belonged to 'transitional forms.' But before attacking this problem, let us pause to reply to a question which might not unnaturally occur to some: How can it be assumed that sea-lions and seals have descended from terrestrial ancestors? Is it not at least possible that they have always been marine animals from the beginning of time? It is true that these animals have a fish-like form, tapering at both extremities, and are furnished with 'flippers' or fins. But there is a great difference between the fins of a seal and the fins of a fish. The skeleton of a seal's fin shows an exact resemblance to the limb of a quadruped; the five fingers are there, and even the nails at the extremities of the fingers, only they are encased in a common integument; the web-footed condition, which is found in the otter and other animals which lead a partially aquatic life, is exaggerated. The fins of a fish show no such resemblances to limbs which are found in terrestrial animals. Furthermore, in every point of its organisation the sea-lion or the seal agrees with the mammalia, and particularly, as has been already stated, with that group of mammals termed carnivora. No one can doubt that mammals are essentially terrestrial animals; not only because, as a matter of fact, the vast majority are dwellers upon the land, but because nearly every point in their structure indicates that that is their natural habitat. For example, the lungs are suited to breathe air directly, and cannot make use of the air dissolved in water as the gills of a fish can. If the sea-lion had been always an aquatic animal, its resemblances to the terrestrial carnivora would be absolutely inexplicable.

The otter offers a valuable hint as to what the very earliest sea-lions probably resembled. Any one who has watched this creature in captivity—in its natural haunts it is practically impossible to study it—cannot fail to have been struck by the ease with which it changes from a terrestrial to an aquatic life. It runs about with activity upon the land, glides into the water with an imperceptible splash, and swims with the rapidity of a fish. Its elongated form, short limbs, and webbed hind-feet are not disadvantageous to it when upon dry land, and are clearly admirably suited for swimming. The sea-lion represents an advanced stage in the conversion of a terrestrial into an aquatic form; the limbs have become shortened and more fin-like; that is, more suited to swimming, and less suited to walking; the hind-limbs are closely approximated to the rudimentary tail, and perform to some extent the office of the fish's tail—that of steering.

The seals are still further advanced in the same direction: the general form of the body is if anything more fish-like; the hind-limbs are more closely bound up with the tail, and form, therefore, a more efficient steering organ; the external ears have disappeared. It must be

remembered that the function of the external ear is that of concentrating sounds, which are conveyed through the aperture to the internal ear, which is the organ of hearing; accordingly, there is not so much need of an external ear in animals which live in water, where sound travels better than in air. The absence of an external ear in seals indicates, therefore, their longer adaptation to an aquatic mode of life.

It may be gratifying to those whose business is transacted at sea to learn that, generally speaking, marine animals have a larger brain than their land allies. In other respects it will be seen from what has been said that the marine carnivora are as compared with the land carnivora degenerate; but this degeneration has only affected such parts of the body as are useless in their changed mode of life. Degeneration, in fact, in this case goes hand in hand with progression.

Although there is no great difficulty in imagining *how* the conversion of a terrestrial carnivore into a seal may have taken place, we still require a *motive* for such a change. It seems almost as if the marine carnivora would have done much better for themselves if they had remained in the other condition. Frequently, however, Nature does not allow of such a choice; gradual changes in sea and land have taken place, and are taking place, in our globe; the result of these must in many cases have been the stern command to some groups of animals, 'Be modified or perish.' There are certain facts which indicate that sea-lions became sea-lions not from choice, but in obedience to this command. Mention has been made at the commencement of this article of the northern fur seal; besides this species, only two others, the Californian sea-lion and Steller's sea-lion, are found in the northern hemisphere; all the rest that are known—perhaps seven or eight distinct species—are confined to the antarctic region. There is therefore some reason to suppose that, the headquarters of the race being in the antarctic area, they have originated there.

Now, there are no terrestrial carnivora known, either living or fossil, in any of the land-masses bordering upon the antarctic area which are so like sea-lions as to be probably descended from the same stock. This statement, however, naturally only applies to South America, Australia, and New Zealand, and not to the great antarctic continent which covers the South Pole; we have no knowledge of this land-mass, for the very good reason that an impenetrable wall of ice, formed by the congealed masses brought down by innumerable glaciers to the sea, for the most part prevents all access. We know that long ago the northern hemisphere down to the level of the northern English counties was covered with a great ice-sheet. This period, which has left its traces in the form of glacial mud and moraines, is known as the Glacial Period. The phenomena are believed to be due to certain astronomical causes into which it is not necessary to enter at present, except to say that such glacial periods are recurrent and alternate from the northern to the southern hemisphere. There is at present a glacial epoch in the southern hemisphere.

Judging from the facts at our disposal, it is highly probable that at one time the southern continent enjoyed a comparatively mild climate, and supported an indigenous fauna and flora.

Among the animals which flourished at that time may have been the immediate ancestors of the sea-lions. The increasing cold may fairly be supposed to have gradually extirpated the land fauna, and compelled the ancestral sea-lions to seek their food in the water. In order to secure sufficient prey, some modification in their structure suiting them to a partially aquatic life was gradually acquired and increased in successive generations. Finally, the entire burying of the land beneath a vast ice-sheet drove them off the land altogether, and those animals which were best prepared for this change alone survived, and transmitted these very peculiarities to their offspring. This is, of course, a suggestion as to the reasons which led to the origin of sea-lions which may or may not prove to be correct.

LOST LITERATURE.

By Lost Literature we mean not the literature which has been lost by the premature death of genius, nor that left unfinished—such as the late John Foster's invaluable *Life of Swift*—but literature actually produced and now irreparably lost. There are doubtless thousands of plays, novels, and other works so lost which did not deserve to live, and we ought to feel thankful that they are gone. Occasionally, somebody issues 'an unpublished poem' by Burns, or 'a hitherto overlooked letter' of Sir Walter Scott. This raking-up of neglected effusions is usually a thing to be discouraged. It is seldom possible that really good productions can remain long undiscovered, and it is no kindness to the great dead to publish hastily conceived and ill-considered efforts. There is usually, too, a suspicion attaching to such discoveries—a feeling which recalls the famous frauds of Macpherson, Chatterton, and Ireland.

The fine literature absolutely lost is very considerable. Of classical literature alone, books could be filled with the mere names of works, never to mention the mutilated state of many that survive. The causes of loss are few. Fire is the most common. Ben Jonson by a fire in his house lost an entire drama, a *Life of Henry V.* with notes, and a number of other works. The Fire of London was responsible for the loss of many valuable works of the Elizabethan period and of much early English poetry. A severer blow to lovers of Anglo-Saxon literature was the burning of the Cottonian Library in 1731, when a vast quantity of old manuscripts was destroyed. In 1752, by a fire in Lincoln's Inn Fields, a large collection of manuscripts and pamphlets gathered with great labour by Lord Chamberlain Somers was lost. About the same time, Davies' Notes on Cicero's *De Officiis* were lost by a fire in the Strand of London. In 1780, Lord Mansfield's library was destroyed by fire, and caused an immense loss of manuscript treasures.

Of the treasures lost by fire during times of war, volumes might be written. Not to go beyond this century, we might mention the loss of the invaluable manuscripts of Joh. Gottl. Buhle in the burning of Moscow. Nearer our own time, the Franco-Prussian War caused severe losses to various important French libraries.

The second cause of loss is the ocean, whose 'greedy maw' swallows all kinds of treasure

so remorselessly. Early in the fifteenth century, Guarino Veronese was returning to Constantinople with a shipload of classical manuscripts. The vessel was wrecked, and the treasures lost, a misfortune which turned the scholar's hair white in a few hours. Our own Spenser suffered serious loss by the shipwreck of a servant crossing from Ireland. The last six books of the *Faerie Queene*, and a considerable number of translations and poems, including *Dreams*, *The Court of Cupid*, and *The Hell of Lovers*, were thus consigned to a watery grave. In 1600, on the death of Vincentio Pinelli, his library was packed in three vessels bound for Naples. One was attacked by pirates, who flung out the books and papers into the water and along the shore, some of the precious manuscripts being used to stuff windows with! In 1698, a Dutchman named Hudde—who while in China had passed himself off as a native, and had attained to the dignity of a mandarin—had, after thirty years' labour, collected a huge mass of manuscripts. On his way home he was shipwrecked, and his collection was totally lost, one of the most remarkable and regrettable of all literary losses.

Ignorance and culpable carelessness have been responsible for some sad losses. The selfishness of theatrical managers, who forbade the printing of plays, caused terrible losses and mutilations in the domain of Elizabethan literature. Shakespeare and others whose works are preserved have suffered much, and but for the carelessness of collectors, the fierce discussions about 'correct readings' would have been greatly diminished. Heywood—described by Lamb as a prose Shakespeare—was the author or joint-author of over two hundred plays, few of which remain. Many valuable dramas of Massinger, Ford, Webster, and Middleton were also lost through carelessness; and besides dramas, we have lost Heywood's *Lives of the Poets*. Heywood was the friend of Shakespeare and other dramatists from 1595 to 1630, and had written their *Lives*, with a mass of curious anecdotes and reminiscences. If this work had been preserved, we should probably have been spared the absurd question, 'Who wrote Shakespeare?' A very curious loss was occasioned in Italy in the fourteenth century when Raimondo Soranzo lent the manuscript of Cicero's *De Gloria* to a friend, who pawned it, and who died before its hiding-place could be discovered.

Domestic servants are not often possessed of literary tastes, and they are frequently forbidden to dust, or even to enter, studies and other apartments sacred to literary genius. They have, however, succeeded in committing several horrible blunders. Towards the close of last century, a servant of Warburton, the Somerset Herald, came across a unique mass of manuscript plays, which she used up in lighting fires and making pie-crust frills! Truly, to what base uses we may return! And everybody remembers how a domestic of John Stuart Mill consigned to the flames part of the manuscript of Carlyle's *French Revolution*. The horror of Mill at the loss, and the 'agony' of Carlyle in rewriting the work, are now matters of history. Luckily, it was not 'lost literature.' Strangely enough, the losses through manuscripts becoming illegible by damp or dirt are not so numerous as might reasonably be expected.

We have alluded to the general undesirability of publishing *all* an author has written; but, on the other hand, censors and editors have sometimes been too severe in their judgments. Hurd, for example, can never be pardoned for allowing Cowley's Letters to perish; nor can Pope be more favourably regarded for having decreed the destruction of Lord Peterborough's Memoirs, which would have been of much use to historians. Pope, however, suffered personally in this respect, his prose treatise on *The Immortality of the Soul* being condemned to mortality. A very serious loss was the destruction of Crabbe's novels, *The Widow Grey*, and others. Byron truly described this poet as 'Nature's sternest painter, yet the best;' and his descriptions of scenery and manners must have been of much value. Moore, again, was responsible for the destruction of Byron's Memoirs.

There are some reliable instances recorded of valuable works being destroyed by their authors. Fracastor, an eminent scholar of the sixteenth century, had written in Latin a wonderful *History of Venice*, and in a paroxysm of fever he burned it.

Notwithstanding these and many other sad losses, there is much to be thankful for. When we consider the miraculous manner in which many works have been preserved, we are apt to wonder that more have not been destroyed. Britain perhaps compares favourably in this respect with most continental nations, and the works left us constitute our literature the grandest in the world.

CHILDREN'S FACES.

You bring me peace, O innocent child-faces!

With your clear questioning eyes,

Your fairy forms, your sweet unconscious graces,

Your lips, where laughter lies.

Out in the world too long, I grow heart-weary;

But in these leisure days,

Throwing aside the old routine so dreary,

I join the children's plays.

What fun we have! what skating and what racing

Out in the frost and snow!

What battling with the north wind, keen and bracing,

That sets the blood aglow!

In twilight, round my chair they love to gather,

To hear the story told—

Heroic tales of many a brave forefather

In stirring days of old.

Ofttimes I pass the room where they are lying,

Each in a snowy bed,

And hear my little name-child sweetly trying

To pray for 'Uncle Fred.'

God bless the children with their rosy faces!

Their eyes like Truth's clear wells,

Their loving hearts, their many heavenly graces,

Their lips, where laughter dwells.

R. A. McWILLIAM.

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THE TRACE OF OLD TIMES.

It is man's prerogative to be possessed of the gift of history and to interest himself in ancient things. He 'considers the days of old.' The instinct which lies at the bottom of every historic study is a feeling which we and the world of to-day have developed out of the old time that was before us. The due understanding of the Past is but a deeper way of looking at the life that now is. Every part of our modern appliances is the outcome of an innumerable succession of things that led up to it. The genius who startles the world with a 'new' discovery simply avails himself of materials which previous hands have prepared for his use, and passes them on in a more highly developed form.

If, for example, we take the Walter Printing Press, with its marvellous adjustments of mechanism, it is pointed out to us how this or that factor of the machine is an 'improvement' on something earlier; and so our thoughts are led back step by step farther than the time when Caxton or Gutenberg put his blocks of letters together and produced printed words; while, if we place ourselves in imagination in Caxton's printing-office, it is only to look back still farther to the things from which he and his opportunity had in turn been evolved. This 'looking back' is not only a necessity in the promotion of man's material progress, but belongs at the same time to the finer, the poetic instincts of life; and it would be surprising if it did not possess a profound fascination for many thoughtful minds. The historian, the antiquary, and in another way the scientific student of nature—of which Darwin is the great type in our day—all find their varied interest in that past world from which we have grown to be what we are. It is not a dead past. Its voices are not mere echoes from the tombs. If 'a primrose by the river's brim' is to the poet something more, so to the instructed and thoughtful student of antiquity is even a fossil something more than a fossil. There is in the past a perennial revelation.

It is part of the grand, silent procession of a Life which has no beginning and no end, which 'remakes the blood and changes the frame,' and which for the moment is ours.

The main interest of the Past, as of everything in life, centres in man and in the question how man has acted. The average person does not go very far back in this retrospection. His history begins with the Conquest, which to him is real history. He dimly knows that there was an old world of Greeks and Romans; an old world of Hebrews and Egyptians; but his thought about such things is so touched with the 'far-off' colour, that they might as well belong to mythology altogether. Perhaps one day he chances to go into a museum and see an Egyptian mummy, and then he half realises that, folded round and round in these decayed wrappings, is the body of some one who did actually live on this earth three thousand years ago—lived joyously in the light of the same sun, loved, and suffered, and fell on sleep at length. Such impressions are, however, too fragmentary to exercise much permanent influence on his mind and life. It is when we come to our own good, bad, and indifferent kings and their deeds—and the nearer to the present age the better—that the ordinary historic sense is felt. Henry VIII. bulks out largely, if only for the very human consideration that he had six wives. Queen Elizabeth commands recognition for her long reign, and because her powerful character achieved lasting results for her country's good. King John has told upon the general memory through his association with Magna Charta. Oliver Cromwell is a solid fact; and Charles I. is another fact, if not quite so solid. And their works live after them. Most intelligent persons know in some measure that such figures have gone before them and had a hand in making the world; and if there is too much of 'royalty' in the retrospect, it is partly from the fact that the king stood for more in the old days than he stands for now; and partly because we learned our history in 'bad form.' The conception of the subject has enlarged; we begin to know that it

was not only the privileged few at the top of the social scale that framed our destiny, but the work and life of common men, whose names did not outlast their little day; 'the mute, inglorious' Miltons, the Cromwells and Charles the Firsts of some obscure corner of the land; as the earth has been fertilised by thousands of tiny rivulets as well as by the few great streams.

Everything is of value which reminds us of an earlier age; every monument by which we trace the life of men before we come upon the scene. England is, happily, still rich in these mementoes. In a fuller sense than that in which Colonials speak of it, ours is the 'old country.' Our painters love to make the village church, with moss or ivy overgrown, a feature of their landscape; and the poet stirs the solemn note of a thousand years when he sings:

Old yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

You may travel over immense tracts of country in America and not come upon anything even to remind you of that village church. A mighty country it is, impressing us with its amazing wealth and variety of resources, and the almost feverish forward hurry of its industries; but the beautiful mark of age is not there, in the nature of things. Nor, for the most part, do the people think of building—as Ruskin says we ought to build, and as undoubtedly our forefathers tried to build—"for all time." With this and the succeeding generation a great deal that is now considered of importance will be taken down—if it doesn't tumble down and save men that trouble—and make room for something else, and 'it never will be missed.' One comes home with renewed veneration for the things among us which are daily telling the story of antiquity. The best of our American cousins feel it too, and they come to England sighing for the sight of 'something old.' They make pilgrimages to several spots in which the past is most at home. They go to Chester, and Canterbury, and our ancient universities. It is, in the phrase of one of themselves, 'like nuts and old port' to walk over the ground which has been trodden by the feet of our famous men, and see where they are laid to rest.

For age, indeed, we have nothing to compare with 'the land of Egypt.' There are no English mummies; no Sphinx looks down upon us from the far, still centuries. But if the comparison of actual periods of time is not in our favour, some other things give us the advantage of a better standpoint from which to view the past. In Egypt the change between Then and Now, from the time of the Pharaohs to our own, has been far less—in the sense we are considering—than that between England of the Middle Age and the England of to-day. A colossal decay is all that is visible in the land of the Pharaohs. The improvements, the modern appliances have not come in to give relief to it. With us the old and the new exist side by side; the old, alas, in too rapidly diminishing quantity. The modern railway train carries one, at the rate of sixty miles an hour, to the classic seats of 'quaint and olden' memories. The Roman wall and

the Norman church meet us in our country rambles.

The march of improvement is imperious, at times ruthless; everything has to go before the destruction which is regarded as necessary to the progress of mankind. But the conception of what is necessary, it may be hoped, is becoming more enlightened, and a more reverent sense is growing up as to the honour due to ancient landmarks. If it be necessary that we should get our letters by the first post, or dine and do our sleeping while the train bears us along at express speed, yet it is even more necessary that we should know something of the long chain of things of which our lives form the link now being wrought on the anvil of time and change. More and more, in proportion as 'the old order changes, giving place to new,' the relics of that Past are invested with poetic and religious value, as they make their mute appeal. And their mission is not only to serve as the skeleton at the feast of life, and fill us with the pause and sadness of mortality, but to teach us the lesson contained in Wordsworth's lines:

Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live and act, and serve the future hour;

And if, as to the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, through faith's transcendent
dower,

We feel that we are greater than we know.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN George Crofton informed Mrs Brooke that it was while riding along the road outside the park palings he had seen her husband leaving the house, he stated no more than the truth; but one little point he had not seen fit to mention—that he himself was not alone at the time. When he had recovered from his momentary surprise at seeing his cousin, he had said to his companion—an extremely handsome young person in a riding-habit that fitted her like a glove: 'Let us put the pace on a bit, Steph. I've just remembered that there's a call I ought to make while I'm in this neighbourhood.'

A few minutes later they pulled up at the *Beechley Arms*, a country tavern only a few hundred yards distant from the back entrance to the park. Here Mr Crofton had been well known in days gone by; and by the time he had dismounted and had assisted his companion to alight, the buxom landlady, all smiles and cap-ribbons, had come to the door to greet him.

'Why, Master George, it's never you sure-ly,' she said. 'It seems like old times come back to see you come riding up just as you used to do.'

'Then you have not quite forgotten me, Mrs Purvis,' he said, as he shook hands with the landlady with that air of easy affability which he knew so well how to assume. 'I don't wish to flatter you, but, on my honour, you look younger every time I see you.'

The landlady smirked and blushed, and said: 'Get along with you, do, sir;' and then led the way to her best parlour, an old-fashioned, low-ceilinged room, with a diamond-paned window and a broad, cushioned window-seat.

George ordered some sherry and biscuits to be brought; and as soon as the landlady had left the room, he said to his companion: 'I shall have to leave you for half-an-hour, Steph, to make the call I spoke of just now; I shall be sure not to be gone longer. You won't mind, will you?'

Mademoiselle Stephanie made a little *moue*. 'I suppose you will go whether I mind or not,' she said.

'I must go,' he replied. 'It is a matter of extreme importance.'

'In that case there is nothing more to be said,' she answered with a shrug. A moment later she added: 'Only, remember, if you are away much longer than half-an-hour, Tartar and I will go back home by ourselves, and leave you to follow at your leisure.'

George Crofton laughed. 'Never fear, *carissima*; I won't fail to be back to time. Besides, our dinner will be waiting for us three miles farther on. Did I tell you that I had ordered it by telegraph before leaving town?'

'There's one thing neither you nor I must forget,' she answered, 'and that is, that I'm due at the *cirque* at nine o'clock to the minute. Signor Ventelli never forgives any one who is not there to time.'

At this juncture Mrs Purvis came in with the wine and biscuits. George hastily swallowed a couple of glasses of sherry; and then, after giving a few instructions with regard to the horses, and reiterating his promise not to be gone more than half an hour, he went.

Mademoiselle Stephanie Lagrange was a very pretty woman—a fact of which she was perfectly cognisant, as most pretty women are. She had a profusion of light silky hair, and large steel-gray eyes that were lacking neither in fire nor audacity. Her lips were thin and rather finely curved; but her chin was almost too massive to be in proportion with the rest of her features. Her figure was well-nigh perfect; and as she was a splendid horsewoman, she never appeared in the Row without having a hundred pair of eyes focused on her, and a hundred tongues asking eagerly who she was. In case the reader should put the same question, it may be as well to state that Mademoiselle Lagrange was a prominent member of the celebrated Ventelli Circus troupe, on whose posters and placards she was designated in large letters as 'Queen of the Haute Ecole.' Whether Mademoiselle Lagrange was of French or English extraction was a moot-point with several of those who knew her best, seeing that she spoke both languages equally well. Some there were who averred that she spoke English with a slight French accent, and French with a slight English accent; but be that as it may, no one knew from her own lips where she was born or of what nationality her parents had been.

As soon as she was left alone, Stephanie took off her hat and veil and seated herself on the window-seat, from whence she could look into a strip of old-fashioned garden at the back of the tavern. As she nibbled at a biscuit and sipped her sherry—Steph was by no means averse to a glass of good wine—she soliloquised, half aloud: 'Why has my good friend George left me, and who is the person he has gone to see?—Eh bien, cher monsieur, there appear to be certain secrets in your life of which I know nothing. It must be

my business to find out what they are. I like to have secrets of my own, but I don't like other people to have secrets from me.'

At this point, in came bustling Mrs Purvis, ostensibly to inquire whether the lady was in need of anything, but in reality to satisfy in some measure the cravings of her curiosity. She found Mademoiselle Stephanie by no means disinclined for a little gossip; only, when she came to think over the interview afterwards, she discovered that it was she who had answered all the young lady's questions, but that the young lady had answered few or none of hers.

Yes; she had known Master George from quite a boy, Mrs Purvis went on to say, gratified at finding a listener so ready to her hand. He had been brought up at the Towers—the great house in the park there—and everybody thought he would be his uncle's heir. But as he grew up he fell into bad ways, and all sorts of tales were told about his extravagance and dissipation; and no doubt he was made out to be far worse than he really was. At length the old gentleman turned him out of doors, and made a fresh will in favour of his other nephew, Mr Gerald Brooke—he who now lives at the Towers—while Master George had to content himself with a legacy of five thousand pounds. And then there was Miss Danby—the late vicar's daughter—whom everybody thought Master George would marry; but she, too, turned against him, and married his cousin, so that he lost both his inheritance and his wife.

'And does this lady whom Mr Crofton was to have married live at the place you call the Towers?' asked Stephanie.

'Certainly, miss. She is mistress there; and a very beautiful lady she is.'

'It is her whom he has gone to see,' said Stephanie to herself. 'He pretends that he loves me, but he cannot forget her.—So this is your secret, *cher George*! I shall know how to make use of it when the time comes.'

Suddenly she started and half rose from her seat. Her eyes had been caught by something outside the window. She turned quickly on Mrs Purvis. 'That child—where does he come from? Who is he?'

The landlady's gaze followed hers through the window. 'Do you mean that little fellow on the grass plat who is throwing crumbs to the birds? He's a mountebank's son, as you may see by his dress. His father is having some bread-and-cheese in the kitchen. What a shame it is that such a dear little mite should have to earn his living by turning head over heels in the streets.'

For several moments Stephanie stood motionless, her eyes fixed on the child. Then, without turning her head, she said: 'Thank you. I require nothing more at present. When I do, I will ring.' The tones in which the words were spoken conveyed more than the words themselves. Mrs Purvis bridled like a peacock, shook her cap-ribbons, and marched out of the room, slamming the door behind her with unnecessary violence.

There were two doors to the room, one by which the landlady had made her exit, and another which led into the garden. This second door Stephanie now opened, and at the sound the boy raised his eyes. She beckoned to him, and he

came forward. It may be that he had visions of more fruit and sugared biscuits.

Stephanie drew him a little way into the room, and going down on one knee, she passed an arm round his waist. It was evident that she was full of suppressed emotion. The conversation that ensued was carried on in French.

'Tell me your name, *cheri*.'

'Henri Picot, mademoiselle.'

She had known what the answer would be; but for a moment or two her lips blanched, while she murmured something the boy could not hear.

'And your father?' she said at last.

'He is here, indoors. Poor papa was tired; he is resting himself.'

'Does your papa treat you kindly, Henri?'

The boy stared at her. 'Papa always treats me kindly.—Why should he not?'

'And your mamma?' said Stephanie with bated breath.

Henri shook his head. 'I have no mamma,' he answered with a ring of childish pathos in his voice. 'She has gone a long, long journey, and no one knows when she will come back. Papa does not like me to talk about her—it makes him so sad. But sometimes I see her in my sleep, and then she looks beautiful, and smiles at me. Some day, perhaps, she will come back to papa and me.'

She kissed him passionately, to the boy's wonderment. Then with a half-sob in her voice, she said: 'But you have a sister, have you not?'

Henri's large eyes grew larger. 'No; I have no sister,' he answered with a shake of his head.

'But you had one once, had you not? Does your papa never speak of her?'

'No; never. I had a mamma, but I never had a sister.'

For a moment or two Stephanie buried her face on the child's shoulder. What thoughts, what memories of the past, rushed through her brain as she did so? 'Cast off and forgotten!' was the mournful cry wrung from her heart.

Suddenly a voice outside was heard calling, 'Henri, Henri, où es tu?' followed by a note or two on the pipes and a tap on the drum.

'Papa is calling me; I must go,' said the boy.

Stephanie started to her feet, and lifting him in her arms, kissed him wildly again and again. Then setting him down, she pressed some money into his hand and turned away without another word. Henri darted off.

'He is gone—gone—and perhaps I shall never see him again!' She sank on her knees and buried her face in the cushions of the window-seat. Her whole frame shook with the sobs that would no longer be suppressed.

Five minutes later George Crofton entered the room. For a few seconds he paused in utter amazement; then going forward, he laid a hand on the girl's shoulder. 'Steph,' he said, 'Steph—why, what's amiss?' As he spoke his eyes rested for a moment on Picot and Henri, who were crossing the grass-plat hand in hand.

CHAPTER IV.

'Pardon. I hope I do not intrude?' said M. Karovsky, addressing himself to Mrs Brooke with the suave assurance of a thorough man of the world. 'I saw through the window that Mr Brooke

had returned, and as my time here is limited—*me voici*.' Then advancing a few steps and holding out his hand to Gerald, he added: 'It is five years, *mon ami*, since we last met. Confess now, I am one of the last men in the world whom you thought to see here?'

'You are indeed, Karovsky,' responded Gerald as he shook his visitor's proffered hand, but with no great show of cordiality.—'Have you been long in England?'

'Not long. I am a bird of passage. I come and go, and obey the orders that are given me. That is all.'

'My wife, Mrs Brooke. But you have seen her already.—Clara, Monsieur Karovsky is a gentleman whose acquaintance I had the honour of making during the time I was living abroad.'

'May we hope to have the pleasure of Monsieur Karovsky's company to dinner?' asked Clara in her most gracious manner, while at the same time hoping in her heart that the invitation would not be accepted.

'*Merci, madame*,' responded the Russian, for such he was. 'I should be delighted, if the occasion admitted of it; but, as I said before, my time is limited. I must leave London by the night-mail. I am due in Paris at ten o'clock to-morrow.'

'For the present, then, I must ask you to excuse me,' said Clara.

Karovsky hastened to open the door for her, and bowed low as she swept out of the room.

'That man is the bearer of ill news, and Gerald knows it,' was the young wife's unspoken thought as she left the two together.

M. Karovsky was a tall, well-built man, to all appearance some few years over thirty in point of age. His short black hair was parted carefully down the middle; his black eyes were at once piercing and brilliant; he had a long and rather thin face, a longish nose, a mobile and flexible mouth, and a particularly fine arrangement of teeth. He wore neither beard nor moustache, and his complexion had the faint yellow tint of antique ivory. He was not especially handsome; but there was something striking and out of the common in his appearance, so that people who were introduced to him casually in society wanted to know more about him. An enigma is not without its attractions for many people, and Karovsky had the air of being one whether he was so in reality or not. He was a born linguist, as so many of his countrymen are, and spoke the chief European languages with almost equal fluency and equal purity of accent.

'Fortune has been kind to you, my friend, in finding for you so charming a wife,' he said, as he lounged across the room with his hands in his pockets, after closing the door behind Mrs Brooke. 'But Fortune has been kind to you in more ways than one.'

'Karovsky, you have something to tell me,' said Brooke a little grimly. 'You did not come here to pay compliments, nor without a motive. But will you not be seated?'

Karovsky drew up a chair. 'As you say—I am not here without a motive,' he remarked. Then, with a quick expressive gesture, which was altogether un-English, he added: 'Ah, bah! I feel like a bird of ill-omen that has winged its way into Paradise with a message from the nether world.'

'Whatever your message may be, pray do not hesitate to deliver it.'

But apparently the Russian did hesitate. He got up, crossed the room to one of the windows, looked out for half a minute, then went back and resumed his seat. 'Eight years have come and gone, Gerald Brooke,' he began in an impressive tone, 'since you allied yourself by some of the most solemn oaths possible for a man to take to that Sacred Cause to which I also have the honour of being affiliated.'

'Do you think that I have forgotten! At that time I was an impetuous and enthusiastic boy of eighteen, with no knowledge of the world save what I had gathered from books, and with a head that was full of wild, vague dreams of Liberty and Universal Brotherhood.'

'The fact of your becoming one of Us is the best of all proofs that the cause of Liberty at that time was dear to your heart.'

'But when as a boy I joined the Cause, I was ignorant of much I have learned since that time.'

'The world does not stand still. One naturally knows more to-day than one did eight years ago.'

'Karovsky, I know this—that the Cause, which, when I joined it, I believed to be so pure in its aims, so lofty in its ideas, so all-embracing in its philanthropy, has, since that time, been stained by crimes which make me shudder when I think of them—has dragged its colours through shambles reeking with the blood of those who have fallen victims to its blind and ferocious notions of revenge.'

'Pardon. But can it be possible that I am listening to one who, only eight short years ago, was saturated with philanthropic ideas which seemed expansive enough to include the whole human race—one whose great longing was that every man should be free and happy?—Ah, yes, you are the same—only time and the world have contrived to spoil you, as they spoil so many others. In those days you were poor; now you are rich. Then you had no fixed home; you were a wanderer from city to city; your future was clouded and uncertain. Now, you are the wealthy Mr Brooke—a pillar of your country: this grand old mansion and all the broad acres, for I know not how far around it, are yours. You are married to one whom you love, and who loves you in return. Away, then, with the wild notions of our hot youth!'

'Karovsky, you wrong me. My love of my fellows is as ardent as ever it was. My—— But why prolong a discussion that could serve no good end? You have a message for me?'

'I have.' The man was evidently ill at ease. He rose, crossed to the chimney-piece, took up one or two curios and examined them through his eyeglass, then went back and resumed his seat. 'Gerald Brooke,' he continued, 'eight years ago, on a certain winter evening, in a certain underground room in Warsaw, and before some half-dozen men whose faces you were not permitted to see, you, of your own free-will, took the solemn oaths which affiliated you to that great Cause for the furtherance of which thousands of others have given their fortunes, their lives, their all. From that day till this you have been a passive brother of the Society; nothing has been demanded at your hands; and

you might almost be excused if the events of that winter night had come at length to seem to you little more than a half-remembered dream. That you have not been called upon before now is no proof that you have been overlooked or forgotten, but simply that your services have not been required. Other instruments were at hand to do the work that was needed to be done. But at length the day has come to you, Gerald Brooke, as it comes to most men who live and wait.'

Gerald had changed colour more than once during the foregoing speech. 'What is it that I am called upon to do?' he asked in a voice that was scarcely raised above a whisper.

'You are aware that when an individual is needed to carry out any of the secret decrees of the Supreme Tribunal, that individual is drawn for by lot?'

'And my name?—'

'Has been so drawn.'

The light faded out of Gerald Brooke's eyes; a death-like pallor crept over his face; he could scarcely command his voice as for the second time he asked: 'What is it that I am called upon to do?'

'The Supreme Tribunal have decreed that a certain individual shall suffer the penalty of death. You are the person drawn by lot to carry out the sentence.'

'They would make an assassin of me?—Never!'

'You are bound by your oath to carry out the behests of the Tribunal, be they what they may.'

'No oath can bind a man to become a murderer.'

'One of the chief conditions attached to your oath is that of blind and unquestioning obedience.'

'Karovsky, this is monstrous.'

'I am sorry that things have fallen out as they have, *mon ami*; but such being the case, there is no help for it.'

'I—Gerald Brooke—whose ancestors fought at Cressy, to sink to the level of a common assassin? Never!'

'Pardon. Might it not be as well, before you express your determination in such emphatic terms, to consider what would be the consequence of a refusal on your part to comply with the instructions of which I have the misfortune to be the bearer?—Mrs Brooke is very young to be left a widow.'

'Karovsky!'

'Pardon. But that is what it means. Any affiliated member who may be so ill-advised as to refuse to carry out the decrees of the Tribunal renders himself liable to the extreme penalty; and so surely as you, Gerald Brooke, are now a living man, so surely, in a few short weeks, should you persist in your refusal, will your wife be left a widow.'

'This is horrible—most horrible!'

'Obedience, blind and unquestioning, the utter abnegation of your individuality to the will of your superiors, is the first great rule of the Propaganda to which you and I have the honour to belong. But all this you knew, or ought to have known, long ago.'

'Obedience carried to the verge of murder is obedience no longer—it becomes a crime. However you may put it, assassination remains assassination still.'

'Pardon. We recognise no such term in our vocabulary.'

'Karovsky, had you been called upon to do this deed'—

'I should have done it. For if there be one man in the world, Brooke, whom I have cause to hate more than another, that man is Baron Otto von Rosenberg!'

'Von Rosenberg!'

'Pardon. Did I not mention the name before? But he is the man.'

For a moment or two Gerald could not speak. 'It is but half an hour since I parted from him,' he contrived to say at last.—'Karovsky, I feel as if I were entangled in some horrible nightmare—as if I were being suffocated in the folds of some monstrous Python.'

'It is a feeling that will wear itself out in the course of a little while. I remember— But that matters not.'

'But Von Rosenberg is not a Russian; he is a German ex-diplomatist. What can such a man as he have done to incur so terrible a vengeance?'

'Listen. Four years ago, when attached to the Embassy at St Petersburg, certain secrets were divulged to him, after he had pledged his sacred word of honour that no use whatever should be made of the information so acquired. Wretch that he was! Von Rosenberg turned traitor, and revealed everything to those in power. In the dead of night, a certain house in which a secret printing press was at work was surrounded by the police. Two of the inmates were shot down while attempting to escape. The rest were made prisoners, among them being three women and a boy of seventeen—my brother. Two of those arrested died in prison, or were never heard of more; the rest were condemned to the mines. On the road, my brother and one of the women sank and died, killed by the dreadful hardships they had to undergo; the rest are now rotting away their lives in the silver mines, forgotten by all but the dear ones they left behind.—You now know the reason why the Baron Otto von Rosenberg has been sentenced to death. The vengeance of the Supreme Tribunal may be slow, but it is very sure.'

There was silence for a few moments, then Gerald said: 'All this may be as you say; but I tell you again, Karovsky, that mine shall not be the hand to strike the blow.'

'Then you seal your own death-warrant.'

'So be it. Life at such a price would not be worth having. "Death before Dishonour" is the motto of our house. Dishonour shall never come to it through me.'

Gerald rose and walked to the window. His face was pale, his eyes were full of trouble; what he had said had been lacking neither in dignity nor pathos.

The Russian's cold glance followed him, not without admiration. 'English to the backbone,' he muttered under his breath. 'It was a blunder ever to allow such a man to become one of Us.' Then he looked at his watch, and started to find it was so late. 'I can stay no longer—I must go,' he said aloud. 'But remember my last warning words.' He took up his hat and moved slowly towards the window.

'Karovsky, for the last time I solemnly declare that this man's death shall not lie at my door!' Gerald sank into a chair, let his elbows rest on the table, and buried his face between his hands.

'I have nothing more to say,' remarked the Russian. He stepped through the window, his hat in his hand, and then turned.

At that moment the door opened, and Mrs Brooke, on the point of entering the room, paused suddenly as her eyes took in the scene before her. 'Gerald!' she exclaimed in a frightened voice, and then her gaze travelled from her husband to Karovsky. The latter, with his eyes still resting on the bowed figure at the table, pronounced in low clear accents the one word, 'Remember!' Then he bowed low to Mrs Brooke, and next moment was gone.

(To be continued.)

RAILWAY GATEKEEPERS.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS THEM.

THE old axiom, that the strength of any chain is the strength of its weakest link, has many illustrations, and one may be found in the great chain of workers employed upon our various railway systems, the effective working of which systems depends upon the fitness and reliability of every link. One of these links, the importance and value of which are apt to be underrated by the general public, is the Gatekeeper at a public-road level-crossing, whose duty it is to open a gate whenever a vehicle has to cross the railway; a simple and prosaic act, requiring very little skill in its performance, and apparently entailing very little responsibility upon the incumbent of the office. But with all its apparent monotony and simplicity, the duty of a gatekeeper, in common with all other duties connected with the actual working of a railway, has its measure of responsibility, and is a matter of equal importance both to the railway company and to the travelling public.

Gatekeepers are perhaps the most nondescript class of railway employees; for while guards, signalmen, ticket collectors, shunters, &c., are recruited from among the porters, gatekeepers are drawn from no particular class, but are furnished by all classes indiscriminately, and sometimes the gatekeeper is a woman. The men who are employed as gatekeepers have always served the company in some other capacity, and no man is ever engaged as a gatekeeper who has not had some experience of railway work. In the majority of cases they are men who have received, in some other branch of the service, injuries which unfit them for any active duty requiring the use of all the limbs; while in some instances the gatekeeper has grown old in the company's service, and to such the gatehouse offers a well-earned and much-coveted retirement from active duty. Thus, while one crossing has for its guardian a man who as a guard has lost a leg, the next may have a shunter who has lost an arm; another may have a porter who has been crushed between trucks; and an adjoining gatekeeper may be a goods-porter worn out with hard work, or even an old station-master no longer able to cope with the increasing demands of a developing traffic.

Gate-crossings are broadly classed by railway managers under two heads—traffic crossings and engineers' crossings. At the former, a man is invariably employed who wears the uniform of

the company, and is under the immediate control and direction of the nearest station-master, being counted as one of his staff, and entered upon the station pay-sheet. He occupies a cottage, built by the company as near as possible to the crossing at which he is employed, and is usually provided with a wooden hut about eight feet square, placed close to the wicket gates through which pedestrians pass across the line, and furnished with windows, giving him a view of the railway in each direction. He is never off duty excepting when he takes his annual holiday, at which time he is temporarily replaced by a relief-man, who is sometimes a man specially appointed for the purpose, and continually employed in relieving gatemen who are sick or on leave; and at other times is a porter from the station, or occasionally a plate-layer. The engineers' crossings are those at which the traffic is not supposed to be sufficiently continuous to require the constant employment of a man to open and shut the gates; and here the gate cottage is occupied by a plate-layer who looks after the gates when he is at home; and whose wife looks after them during the day-time when he is away at work; they having the cottage rent free as remuneration for their joint services as gatekeepers.

Occasionally, a public-road crossing exists close to a signal-box, and then it falls to the signalman to attend to the gates, which in this case are interlocked with the signals; an arrangement which not only prevents the opening of the gates by any unauthorised person, but also prevents the signalman himself from opening them when the signals are lowered to allow the passing of a train.

Where a crossing is close to a station, but not close enough to the signal-box to allow of the signalman attending to the gates, a man is specially employed for the purpose; but the gates are still interlocked with the signals, so that the gateman can only open them by the signalman's permission, and when the signals are all up against approaching trains. This arrangement secures the public from any danger of being run over by a passing train while crossing the line, and at the same time secures the gates and train from damage by coming into contact with each other. It necessarily causes some delay to persons wishing to cross, and not unfrequently has a disturbing influence upon the temper of irascible people who are, or fancy that they are, in a hurry.

The gatekeeper at an ordinary crossing between stations is under no such control, and has no special warning of the approach of trains. He is supplied with a working time-table—not the neatly stitched pamphlet which is sold at the bookstalls, but a bulkier volume of more work-a-day appearance—a revised copy of which is usually issued on the first of each month—in which are entered all the passenger and goods trains running over the line, with the times of their departure and arrival at the various stations. In addition to this, he has usually every Saturday a supplementary time-table, giving information of the running of any special trains that have been arranged for the following week; and occasionally has in addition a special note of some train or trains that have been arranged at short notice.

Even with all this information in his hands,

or rather in his hut, the gatekeeper has to exercise considerable vigilance, as the exigencies of the service frequently necessitate the running of trains of which no notice beforehand can possibly be given to places not in telegraphic communication with headquarters. Usually, when a special train is run without notice, a tail-board—that is, a piece of sheet-iron, painted red—is hung on to the drawbar-hook of the last vehicle of the train immediately preceding the 'special,' and the gatekeeper carefully watches each train as it passes him, to see if it has a 'tail-board on.'

Nowadays, the size of the gates is determined by the Board of Trade, who require, in the first place, that they shall be of sufficient length to leave a clear public roadway between the posts twenty-five feet wide; and in the second place, that they shall shut right across both lines of railway, when the road is double; and that they shall not be nearer than four feet to the outside of the rail when closed for the passage of the train. Here and there, gates may be found which do not comply with those requirements; but they were erected before the Board of Trade took gates under their especial care, and as they require renewal are replaced with others of regulation size. The pattern of the gate and the material of which it is constructed are determined by the company's chief engineer, and each company has usually a standard pattern of its own. It is essential that the gate shall be strong enough to bear its own weight, which is by no means an inconsiderable item. It must be of sufficient height to prevent stock from jumping over it, and must be so designed as to prevent pigs, lambs, &c., getting through it on to the line. These conditions being complied with, the lighter it is made the better; for if an engine strikes a gate standing across the line, it will smash it whatever be its construction; and the lighter it is the less damage will it do to the engine striking it. Iron gates are for this reason not desirable, and are now seldom used.

Another regulation made by the Board of Trade is that upon the centre of each gate shall be fixed a disc of wood or iron some three feet across and painted red, in order that engine-drivers may see it from a distance; and also, upon one of each pair of gates a lamp, showing at night a red light both up and down the line. Each gate is fastened by a large bolt, which in its turn is secured by a padlock, to prevent the gate being opened by any one but the gatekeeper. This may appear at first sight an unnecessary precaution; but when the gatekeeper goes to bed, as even gatekeepers must, it would not do to leave the gates so that any one could open them; and where the gatekeeper is a woman, she usually locks the gates whenever they are shut across the public road.

In spite of all these precautions, gates do occasionally get broken, sometimes from sheer absence of mind upon the part of the gatekeeper, who has been known to shut one gate and forget all about the other until a train was too close to enable him to attend to the gate without danger to himself; sometimes through being closed when a train was due, which ran into them before they could be opened; but most frequently during foggy weather, when trains are apt to run somewhat irregularly, and can neither be seen nor very distinctly heard for any distance. Such damage is at once reported to the head of the department,

who, if the accident is due to carelessness, inflicts upon the offender a fine of a day's or two days' pay.

Each gatekeeper is supplied with a tricolour hand-lamp, some defonating signals, and two flags, one red, one green, in order to signal when necessary to approaching trains; for it does sometimes happen that a vehicle breaks down on the railway while crossing over it; and the prompt use of signals by the gatekeeper is necessary to prevent a train running into the obstruction and so causing a general smash-up. Not long since, at a crossing kept by a woman—the wife of a plate-layer—a load of straw broke down, blocking both lines, at a time when a passenger train was within ten minutes of being due. Away went the woman with her red flag to meet the approaching train, which she succeeded in stopping before it reached the obstruction; her presence of mind and prompt obedience to orders being suitably acknowledged by the company she served.

Other instances might be quoted in which the prompt action of the gatekeeper has prevented a temporary block from becoming a serious accident.

The relations of the gatekeeper to the public may be described as various, depending to a large extent upon the temperament and temper of both parties. Sometimes when the gentleman who wants the gates opened and the gentleman who has to open them are both of an irascible disposition, these relations are a little strained, and not unfrequently call forth some vigorous language from the occupant of the trap, which the man at the gate has to bear as best he may, well knowing that retaliation on his part would lead to his being reported and probably fined.

It is no doubt aggravating to a doctor or veterinary surgeon, for instance, with a long round before him and a skittish horse in the shafts, to have to wait seven or eight minutes because an express train is overdue; and equally aggravating to the gatekeeper to be told that his carefulness is simply crassness and the delay wilful and unnecessary. The belated traveller who at midnight finds his further progress barred by a locked crossing gate, the custodian of which requires a great deal of waking, can hardly be expected to greet with cheerfulness the advent of this guardian angel when he does come. Nor is it quite fair to blame the poor gatekeeper, wakened out of sleep perhaps for the third or fourth time, because he does not regard the traveller as a benefactor of his kind, more especially if Mr Traveller is a resident in the neighbourhood who has a habit of disturbing his slumbers at an unseemly hour. But, as a rule, the gatekeeper is popular with the residents in his neighbourhood; his previous experience has made him both careful and obliging; while from his chats with the people for whom he opens the gates, he is generally a well-informed authority upon all matters of local interest.

It sometimes happens in agricultural districts that a farm is divided into two portions by a railway running through it; and where the farm-buildings are thus separated from the bulk of the land, and the only or chief communication between the two is by means of a level crossing, a little forbearance has at times to be exercised by both parties, who, if they happen to disagree, can cause

each other considerable annoyance, as the following incident will show. A somewhat crotchety old farmer, whose land and buildings were on opposite sides of a level crossing, fell out with the gatekeepers, an equally crotchety old plate-layer and his wife; and whenever the woman's washing-day came round, the old farmer had always an extra amount of traffic over the crossing, which had a disturbing effect upon Mrs Gatekeeper, who sometimes gave him a long wait, on the plea that a train was due. Then the farmer hit upon the dodge of taking some stock across late at night, carefully waiting until the light was put out in the bedroom of the gatehouse before he raised the cry of 'Gate, gate!' continuing this practice sometimes for a week or two at a stretch, to the utter discomfiture of the gatekeeper, who had no alternative but to dress and obey the summons.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XLI.

FOR all that rather wild cordiality of his, Snelling never seemed to forget that he was a kind of grand seigneur among his guests. Isaiah and Mrs Winter had for years obeyed his orders; and Monsieur and Madame Vigne were people who, at least to his fancy, were so far beneath him socially that he was bound to have a patronising manner towards them. But Madame, at the suggestion of payment, put up hands expressive of such a stately negative, that he was a little abashed and disconcerted. He turned away, and saw Master Will in the act of slipping from the room.

'Hillo!' he asked, with a fierceness even more unexpected than his bonhomie had been; 'where are you going to?'

'I wasn't going anywhere in particular,' Will answered.

'Stop where you are, then,' said Snelling sternly. The arch below showed such evidences of his handiwork that it brought his heart into his mouth to think of the multitudinous chances which might lead to his exposure. Nobody so likely to go prowling round there as a boy, and nobody much more likely to proclaim what he had seen, though he had not the faintest idea of its purpose.

'That boy,' said Snelling, trying to force his voice back into a friendly tone, 'is the very imp for mischief. Such a bird's-nesting, high-climbing, limb-risking young rascal theer never was before.—What was you going to be up to, eh?' He ruffled the boy's hair with forced hilarity; and Master Will got away from him, voicelessly resenting this familiarity, and more than half-suspicious of its meaning.

The mere hint of danger had set the would-be murderer's nerves at work; he feared detection everywhere, and felt as though a bird of the air might have carried the matter. 'Isaiah,' he said, 'you'll stop and have a cup o' tea, you and your missis, sence you're here.—If Mrs Vigne will join in, I shall be her grateful servant.—What d'ye say now, ladies? I can give you a very good cup o' tea, I believe. I drink no finer than my

own, wherever I happen to have the pleasure to sit down.'

Madame did not like her host, and would in all probability never have brought herself to like him; but she could not help a twinge or two of remorse as she thought how far she might have misjudged the man. She did not think him agreeable, and she thought that perhaps he might have been at once harsh and inconsiderate with the boy; but she had long acquitted him of the dreadful charge which Will Gregg had brought against him. The facts of the case had never been strong enough to support that terrible theory, and a boy's fancy was hardly evidence enough on which to hold it. So, altogether, Madame was willing enough to accept her old enemy's advances towards reconciliation.

'Yes,' she said. 'Thank you; I will drink a cup of tea with you with pleasure. I did not think to find you so friendly; but since it is so, I will gladly be the same.'

Somehow, Snelling's efforts to patronise Madame Vigne seemed to meet with less than their expected result. Even in the criminal whirl of all his thoughts, he hated her for her self-possession and the independence of her manner.

Snelling led the way down-stairs. The half-ruined flight led directly away from the arch, and his wicked handiwork was visible from no part of it. He marshalled all his visitors nervously away from the place, growing noisier in his affectionation of good-fellowship. 'Queer old place for a lonely man to come and live in, this,' he said, addressing himself to Madame. 'I've cautioned John about it pretty often; but he's not a venturesome boy, like young Gregg yonder, or otherwise there might be some danger for him. I caught young Gregg the other day a-walkin' across that bit o' ruined wall there with a balancing pole, like a juggler at a fair. It turned my head giddy, and I was afraid to call out to him lest he should tumble.—Don't you ever let me catch you at them tricks, John. You recollect as the neck betwixt your head and your shoulders is the only one you've got. Learn to take care of it, my lad—learn to take care of it.'

There was not much accommodation for visitors in Snelling's house, and there was a good deal of laughter about the scarcity of cups and spoons. John and Will were sent into various apartments in search of chairs; and the party on the whole sat down rather jollily, though the host's loud gaiety was curiously fitful, and he was liable to moments of gloomy silence. Whenever these fell upon him, he roused himself with a great effort; but, excepting that his amiabilities were overstrained, as they well might be, considering the curious relationship of his visitors to himself, his manner passed unnoticed. As a matter of fact, the four elders were conscious of their own secret, and felt a little guilty over it. It is possible that their own mirth was a little forced, and that they felt somewhat ill at ease under Snelling's loud hospitalities. They were all tacitly helping to betray him; and though they were sure that they had right on their side, they were not altogether comfortable.

The summer day was drawing to its close, and the shadows were fast lengthening in the fields.

'Our pleasant day is over,' said Madame; 'and

it is time that we walk to the railway station.—That saves three miles, Mr Vintare, and for a person of my figure that is something.'

'Walk to my house, mum,' responded Isaiah gallantly, 'and I'll drive you back to the house in a brace o' shakes.'

'May I go with Madame Vigne, uncle?' John asked.

'Yes, yes,' his uncle answered; 'go if you like.—See you don't get into mischief.—Isaiah, you might come and smoke a pipe and have a bit o' supper with me to-night. I'm pretty lonesome here at times, I can assure you.'

'Thankee,' returned Isaiah. 'I don't mind if I do look in.'—After all, how should Snelling ever know that he had cashed the cheque which bought Jousserau's special license?

Since his discovery of the intruders upon his premises, Snelling had done nothing without a purpose. He thought it fortunate now that the pressure and hurry of his own thoughts had brought him home an hour or two earlier than customary. The visitors would be witnesses to one or two things which it was important to have established in the public mind. They would have to declare, if appealed to, that he had been on terms of perfect friendship with his ward. They would have to declare that the turret chamber was apparently quite safe.

He meant to finish his work that night. His plan was all made ready, and he had even invited Isaiah to supper that he might have one more witness to the purely accidental nature of the catastrophe which should overwhelm young John. Now that he was left alone, he sat down and thought it all out with a diabolic clearness.

He would have no flaw at all in the tale which should be told hereafter. It needed but a mere moment's work to clear away the bricks he had loosened, and that should be done at once. Then the building would hang merely by its own cohesion and by the support of one beam. He had examined it a hundred times, and was certain that when the support was removed a footstep would bring the whole place down.

But he must have his reason ready for sending his nephew into the chamber when he had completed his own share of the labour, and he knit his brows to think it out. If any breath of suspicion should touch him later on, he must be able to justify himself at every step. It would never do to send John in search of an object which an after-search could not discover. It would never do, indeed, to send him at all; the boy must be made to volunteer.

Whilst he sat thinking thus, he was toying with his spectacle case, turning it over and over in his fingers and examining it with great apparent minuteness, as men will do with trifles at moments of great absorption. Suddenly he saw the thing consciously. That would serve perfectly. If he set this spectacle case in the turret room, and having done so, swept away the bricks he had already loosened, he would but have to mention the fact that he had left his glasses in John's hearing and the boy would volunteer.

It was growing dusk already, and Isaiah might well be expected back at any moment. Now was the time. His ward's fortune, for which he had panted, yearned, and burned these two years past, was in his grasp. He rose quietly, took his hat,

and sauntered into the garden, hiding the spectacle case within his sleeve. He had neither ruth nor fear, and somewhat to his own surprise, was little interested. He had worked at his wicked task in such an agony that he had expected the last stroke of all to cost him an almost unspeakable pang; and now that he was actually about it, it cost him nothing.

He looked about him as he stood at the foot of the winding broken staircase, and assured himself coolly and collectedly that he was unobserved. Then he mounted, stepping carefully in the dim half-light, and came upon the chamber. Where should he set the case down? Surely at the far end of the room, where an intruder's weight would tell most. There was a table there beneath the window, and the placid sky with a hint of daylight still shining in it was sprinkled with a pale star or two.

He might have turned back even then and have saved himself. He thought so; but he had gone too far to turn. No man swims up the maelstrom's dizzy whirling slope. A single step forward and the floor swayed beneath him. There was a crack like the report of a gun, and then, with a score of noises, groaning, shrieking, rending, and rushing round him, the place was down.

CHAPTER XLII.

The miserable Tobias, with all thoughts of buried treasure shaken out of him, sat before the coroner for the southern division of the county.

'The last witness has told us that you were the one person found in the grounds of Tallymount Hall at the moment at which the building fell. Be good enough to tell us, if you please, what brought you there.'

'I meant no harm,' Tobias quavered.

'Your expressions at the time would seem to indicate that you were responsible for the fall of the building. You are not bound to say anything that may criminate yourself; but it is the business of this Court to make as full and complete an inquiry into the circumstances of the case as may be possible; and if you were there without a guilty intention, you cannot do better than tell the truth.'

'I saw Mr Snelling,' began Tobias, 'on two occasions doing something at the wall; he was dislodging the bricks, and I thought that something was buried there.'

'You thought there was something buried? Where?'

'In the wall.'

'Something of value?'

'Yes, sir; something of value.'

'What led you to that belief?'

'Mr Snelling looked anxious and disturbed, sir. He never worked more than a minute at a time, and would constantly leave the place to look about him. He worked in the archway, sir, and moved one brick at a time. When he had once got it free, he generally put it back again, and that made me wonder, sir, what he was doing.'

'When did you first begin to observe the actions you attribute to the deceased?'

'On the Thursday of last week. I was gathering firewood, and there is a hole in the wall. I showed it next day to Mr Winter, sir.'

'Come to the evening of the disaster. What brought you at that time in Mr Snelling's grounds?'

'I thought there was treasure hidden in the wall, sir.'

'Here is a plan of the building; show me where the deceased was at work. Now, on your oath, what was your belief as to the meaning of his action?'

'I thought he was looking for something.'

'And you went into the grounds—for what purpose? To see what the something was?'

'Yes, sir.'

'What did you do there?'

'I meant no harm, sir.—I hope the Court will believe I meant no harm.'

'What did you do there?'

'I took out the bricks Mr Snelling had loosened, sir.'

'Well?'

'That was all, sir.' The wretched man looked round the Court with a roving eye. The upper room of the inn was crowded—the inquest was held at the *Horns* at Quarley—and Shorthouse sat in a corner rubbing his nose with a tight-rolled copy of that day's newspaper. The members of the jury were all attentive; every eye was turned upon the witness.

'When you had taken out the bricks, what happened?'

'I heard a footstep, sir, and ran outside the archway.'

'Well?'

'The step went up-stairs, and the whole building fell.—I meant no harm, sir. I hope the Court will believe I meant no harm.'

'You say you first began to observe Mr Snelling's actions on the Thursday of last week, and that you were gathering firewood at the time. It is rather an unusual thing to gather firewood at the beginning of August.'

'I don't know, sir. I was putting by for a rainy day.'

'Tell me exactly what led you to the belief you profess to have had—the belief that Mr Snelling was looking for buried treasure.'

'He looked so anxious, sir. He was in and out of the archway every minute, looking about to see if anybody was coming. He spread a newspaper on the grass, sir, to catch all the little bits of mortar that fell from where he was working.'

'Were you aware that anybody used the room above the archway?'

'No, sir.'

'Did it occur to you to think that the stability of the whole of that part of the building depended upon the archway?'

'No, sir. I thought Mr Snelling would know best about his own house.'

'How long a time elapsed between the fall of the building and the time at which you were given into custody by the witness Winter?'

'I don't know, sir. Perhaps Mr Winter could tell that better than myself, sir. I am an elderly man, sir, and I have had a recent illness, and I was very much shaken by the melancholy event.'

'By what means did you obtain admission to the grounds?'

'I walked in at the gate, sir. I was not observed.'

'What right did you suppose you had to investigate the nature of the deceased's proceedings?'

'None, sir. I was animated by curiosity.'

'Quite simply, no doubt!'

'I thought there might be something to be made by it. I am an elderly man, sir, and I have known hardship.'

'Now,' said the coroner, 'I will read over to you the deposition you will have to sign. Is there anything you desire to add to that? Is there anything you desire to alter?'

'I should like to add that I am an elderly man, sir, and that I meant no harm.'

There was not much to go upon, and yet there was everything to go upon, and bit by bit the dreadful truth pieced itself together in the minds of the jury. They refused to return any other verdict than that the deceased died by the hand of God.

The truth which pieced itself together in the minds of the jurymen grew little by little in the mind of Farmer Shorthouse. He sat like a stone, and seemed neither to hear nor see, when once the truth had been brought home to him. The verdict was recorded; and the jury, splitting into scattered groups, whispered about the case, and filtered slowly from the room. The coroner packed up his papers and drove away. The public left the chamber in which the inquest had been held, and talked over the evidence in the bar and the bar-parlour. Farmer Shorthouse sat forgotten in his corner, until a barman, engaged for the day in anticipation of an increase of business, came into the room by accident, and made a great clattering of pots in order to awaken him. Then he rose and walked homewards without a word, and reaching his own house, sat down wordless in the kitchen for an hour or two.

The news of the general belief had reached Cecilia, and she moved about the house horror-stricken and silent. The great kitchen clock, which had always had a cheerful voice till now, ticked with a threatening ghostly tone in the middle of the stillness.

'Tea is ready, father,' said the girl. She had tried to find courage to speak to him a score of times before.

He looked up at her with a scared face.

'Tea is ready, father.'

'My wench,' said the old man slowly, 'it's no comfort to a father to say as much, but I've been an old fool. It's no fault o' mine as thee bissent married to a murderer.'

'Don't speak of it,' Cecilia answered in a whisper, as if the time had been midnight and the theme an awful secret.

'I've done wi' whatever will I ever had i' that way,' said her father. 'Please yourself, my gell, and you'll never hear a word from me.'

The farmer, now shaken as to the stability of his own judgment, even as regards 'furriners,' referred of course to Cecilia's proposed marriage with the clever French artist, which soon became an accomplished event. The household of the Vignes rejoiced greatly, the more so that the boy John Vale, once again deprived of legal guardianship, found comfort and protection as formerly in the

arms of the warm-hearted Madame, under whose roof he took up his abode. Nor was his property unattended to, for it was Mr Winter's pride to give the lad the benefit of the long experience he himself had had of farming in the days before he purchased his 'steppers.' And so, in unrecorded peacefulness, their lives moved on.

THE END.

SALE BY CANDLE.

To sell by 'inch of candle' is an expression frequently to be met with in English writers of the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth centuries. It was customary in past times to sell goods, let land, and conduct auctions—or 'outcries,' as they were often then called—of all kinds of property 'by the candle.' When the company were duly assembled, the auctioneer lit a small piece of candle, generally an inch or less, and bids were received so long as the candle burned; the last bid before the flame expired securing the article or property offered. Sometimes a red ring was placed round the candle or taper at a certain distance below the flame, and the successful bid was the highest made before the ring was reached.

The custom appears to have been originally French; but it was in vogue in this country as early as the time of Charles I. It is mentioned in the records of the House of Lords in 1641. Milton, writing in 1652, as Secretary to the Council of State, says: 'The Council thinks it meet to propose the way of selling by inch of candle, as being the most probable means to procure the true value of the goods.' Pepys in his *Diary* notes the custom as being new to him, and under date November 6, 1660, records a keen competition at the sale of two ships by this method, when, he says, 'we have much to do to tell who did cry last.' On another occasion, nearly two years later, the diarist mentions a sale of some hulks, which he attended in his official capacity, when, he says, it was pleasant to see how backward men were at the first to bid, and yet when the candle was going out, how they bawled. The office of auctioneer under such conditions must have been almost as onerous, and have required as much nice discrimination as that of judge on a racecourse when the horses come past the winning post in such close order that, in sporting phrase, you might cover them with a tablecloth.

There is an advertisement in the *London Gazette* of 1684 of an unusual sale, which probably did not result in a very brisk fight for the last bid. The announcement was that 'on the 15th of March next will be exposed to sale by the candle two elephants, the one male, the other female. The price and places where to be seen and sold shall be notified by printed bills on the 5th of March.' The 'price' to be so notified was presumably the upset price fixed by the vendor; but what that was, or what the ponderous pair fetched, is not recorded.

The records of the East India Company mention, in 1690, the appointment of a special officer, a Mr Thorowgood, 'to manage the Company's candle at the sale.' These sales were frequently held in the coffee-houses. In the time of Queen Anne the most popular for the purpose were

Lloyd's and the Marine Coffee-houses. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the practice of selling goods in general by the candle seems to have practically died out in the country.

In France, the custom still exists in a modified form at public sales of real property. A Parisian *avocat*, writing to the *Times* in 1873, thus described the process: 'When the bidding is opened, a small candle—similar to a vesta—is lighted; at each bid a new one is lighted, and if no new bid is given before it goes out, a second, and on that going out without a bid, a third candle is lighted. The last bidder at the time the third candle goes out is declared the purchaser.' Much the same method is pursued in the far East. In a consular Report to the Foreign Office on the trade of Saigon and Cochin-China in 1878, it is stated that cultivated state land, or land bearing trees in full growth, is obtainable only at public sale, and that the auction is by candle, the dying out of three lights before a higher bid is made concluding the bargain. It seems highly probable, however, that this mode of sale is not of native origin, but has been introduced by the French.

In Burma, disputes are often settled by ordeals of various kinds. The ordeal by candle is in common use. Two candles, one for each litigant, of equal size and with wicks of equal thickness, are burnt on an altar or in a temple, and the disputant whose candle expires first is considered to have lost his cause. This method would appear to afford a considerable opening for bribery and corruption as regards the official in charge of the all-important 'dips.'

Up to a very few years ago, goods were publicly sold by candle every Friday afternoon at Bremen. The weekly auction was held in a room in the Exchange, and the presiding officer was assisted by a crier and a servant in a flame-coloured coat, who bore a box of little tapers, each of which was calculated to burn for the space of one minute. As soon as one of these was lighted, the bidding began. The candle was extinguished, and a new one lighted as each bid was made, until the light was able to burn itself out before the crier could announce a new bid. The goods offered then became the property of the maker of the last bid. The municipal authorities of Bremen abolished this ancient custom at the end of 1883. It was said that these sales had been held and the candles burned every Friday in Bremen for five hundred years without a break.

In the west of England, land is still let in a few places by this ancient method. The parish meadow of Broadway, near Weymouth, was stated a few years ago to be annually let with the old formalities. An inch of candle was placed on a board nine inches square, and was lighted by one of the parish officers, who then proceeded to take down the biddings. While the candle burned, any one could bid, and the last bidder before the light expired was the tenant for the ensuing year. A small plot of land and a cottage near Chedzoy, in Somerset, are put up to sale by half-inch of candle every twenty-one years. The land is known as 'Church Acre,' and the purchase-money is devoted to ecclesiastical objects. The amount realised by the last sale, which took place in 1884, provided a new clock for the church tower. In the little village of Tatworth, near Chard, also in Somerset, there is a small piece of land, a little

more than six acres in extent, which belongs to no one in particular; but its annual value is shared among certain property-holders in the neighbourhood. All entitled thus to share meet once a year at the village inn, when they style themselves a 'court,' and appoint a steward to conduct the letting. An inch of candle is solemnly lighted, the bidding begins, and according to the old rule, the last bidder before the candle goes out gets the field for the following year. The steward shares the rent amongst those entitled to receive it, and all present settle down for a convivial evening.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE Hygiene Congress which recently met at Paris discussed among other subjects the important one of pollution of rivers, and passed some resolutions which we trust may meet with attention on the part of those in authority. It was recommended that the pollution of all streams by waste from factories should be forbidden absolutely, unless such waste can be proved to be free from injurious constituents; and it was stated that where such preventive regulations have been put in force manufacturers have benefited, for they have in many cases discovered residual products which are far too valuable to be thrown away. Irrigation was advocated as the best means of disposal of contaminated water, provided that such liquid could be so chemically treated as not to be injurious to agriculture. This water percolating through the ground would of necessity be subjected to a process of filtration and purification which could not be brought about by artificial treatment. The difficulty in applying these recommendations was chiefly found in dealing with those manufacturers who could not afford to undertake the necessary works, and in these cases the Congress advised that the authorities should themselves undertake the necessary alterations, and afterwards recover the cost from the persons concerned.

The French papers have recently described an invention which, if as effective as it is said to be, will mark an era in the history of small-arms. This is the substitution of a cartridge-case of vegetable substance for the brass shell generally adopted. The new cartridge-case is consumed at the moment of discharge, and entirely disappears, thus doing away with the necessity for any extracting apparatus. The weak point in the new device would seem to lie in the circumstance that the metal shell closes the powder chamber, and therefore for the time-being forms part of the weapon; but this difficulty is said to be obviated by an attachment to the gun which costs little, and which is easy of application to any weapon. The new cartridge is so much lighter than the metal arrangement which it replaces, that a soldier would be able to carry twice the number with which he is now provided—an advantage which is obvious now that the adoption of maga-

zine-rifles is only a question of time. We trust that these anticipations as to the merits of the new invention are not doomed to disappointment, but we confess that until we have more definite information concerning it, we have doubts as to its efficiency. For one thing, we know of no substance capable of instantaneous combustion which does not itself assume the character of an explosive, and such a substance would obviously be dangerous for storage when so closely allied with gunpowder.

The *Journal of the Franklin Institute* lately published an article by Dr Webster Fox with reference to some not generally known facts concerning the eyesight of children. He contends that a child's eye is far more sensitive to light than the eye of an adult, and that great mischief accrues from ignorance of this circumstance, a mother or nurse often leaving an infant exposed to the glare of the most intense sunlight. This practice may possibly injure the sight permanently, and very probably lays the foundation of absolute blindness. Dr Fox also tells us that the eyes should not be used for purposes of study until a child is between seven and nine years old, and that reading by artificial light should in no case be allowed until the child has passed his tenth year. We are glad to call attention to these sensible remarks at a time when the overtaking of children's intellects is a craze which is doing much harm, and when children who wear spectacles are almost as often seen as those without them.

Mr Henry J. Peddie, Edinburgh, has invented a new method of railway signalling which, properly carried out, would be instrumental in rendering collisions during fog impossible. The apparatus is in two sections, one part being attached to a shoe on the sleeper between the rails of the permanent way, and the other upon the engine. The former consists of a bar which is brought into such a position when the adjacent signals are at 'danger,' that it engages the apparatus on the engine, the result being that the whistle sounds, the steam is cut off, and the brake is applied; all these operations being carried out automatically, and without any interference of the driver. We cannot for want of space describe the ingenious manner in which all this is arranged for and brought about, but the system seems perfectly feasible. Like many another invention for saving life, it has the disadvantage that it cannot be adopted without great expense, and railway companies are slow to act in any way which reduces their dividends. Witness the fact that many lines are still without an efficient brake, an omission which should be regarded as 'culpable negligence' if loss of life should arise.

The ancient monuments of Egypt in the form of tombs, palaces, and temples have been built of such solid materials, and the absence of frost and atmospheric variations have so conduced to their preservation, that it would almost seem as if they were destined to last for ever. And so, perhaps, they might were it not for the cupidity of the Arabs, the thoughtlessness of tourists, and the greed of the collector. These between them have been doing their best to despoil the Egyptian monuments, and it has become necessary to take steps to stop them. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Egyptian Monuments has

been formed with this object, and with the concurrence of the home and Egyptian governments. A report has already been made as to the cost of propping masonry which is in danger of falling, in clearing sites, &c.—the estimated expenses being about nine thousand pounds. This sum it is proposed to raise by subscription, when it will be applied to the immediate wants of about twenty of the more important monuments. When this work is done the Egyptian government will provide guardians who will look after the future well-being of the buildings under their care.

In the French technical journal, *La Nature*, there is described a steam-carriage for common roads, which will carry three passengers. It has a small boiler of the vertical type, which works at a pressure of one hundred and seventy pounds on the square inch, and evaporates about thirteen gallons of water per hour. The speed attained on a good road is fifteen miles per hour, and enough water can be carried to last for a run of twenty-five miles. The fuel (coke) costs one-third of a penny per mile. The entire weight of car, fuel, water, and passengers is twenty-two hundred-weight.

The exhibition of works by English humorists recently held in London was of a most interesting character in throwing light upon the manners, customs, and fashions of a bygone period. It is true that many of the caricatures were of ephemeral interest, so far as their original meaning was concerned, but at the same time they afforded valuable information as to details of dress, and the like, for the student of modern history. In one respect the artists in black and white have a great advantage over those who, like Leech, worked only a few decades ago. He and others had no choice but to draw their pictures direct on the wood block, the operation of engraving then in use destroying the original work. Nowadays, on the contrary, the original remains intact, for it is drawn on card, or paper, and reproduced as a photograph on the engraver's block. Periodical sales of original drawings of this character bring a handsome return to some of the large publishing houses.

The law in New York regarding the execution of criminals by electricity came into force at the beginning of the year; but there is a repugnance on the part of the authorities to enforce it. In the case of one criminal under the sentence of death, strenuous efforts have been made to avert his doom, by statements to the effect that death by electricity is uncertain, and partakes rather of the character of grievous bodily torture. Whereupon a reference commission was appointed to consider the entire question. Among the witnesses called before this commission was Mr Edison, who testified that the electric current could be applied in such a manner as to produce instant death. Such evidence was surely unnecessary when we remember the large number of fatal accidents which have occurred during recent years both in America and in this country.

Those who have watched the progress of aeronautical science, and are qualified to judge of the various schemes which have been proposed for navigating the air, have long ago come to the conclusion that the balloon is quite incapable of solving the problem. Nevertheless newfangled

machines on the balloon principle continue to be devised, and possibly it is a fortunate circumstance that a first trial often demonstrates their uselessness. A machine of this character—consisting of an egg-shaped balloon with attachments to its car in the form of vertical and horizontal propellers—rose from Brooklyn in July last in charge of an experienced aéronaut. The wind rapidly carried the machine in the contrary direction to which it was being steered; and in the end both the cumbrous contrivance and its foolhardy conductor were lost at sea. It is astonishing that any sane being can suppose that he will bend the wind to his wish—Canute's flatterers were not more foolish.

Professor Burton writing to a contemporary from Japan, calls attention to the extreme rarity of any houses in that country which can be called old. The frequency of earthquakes, of which there are some hundreds in every year, causes buildings of brick and stone to be slowly disintegrated—while those of wood succumb to the rarer and more violent shocks. The tinder-like character of the houses, and the circumstance that they are heated by charcoal fires and lighted by mineral oil lamps, are enough to ensure a conflagration after the earthquake has done the initial mischief. Hence it is that it is a most unusual thing to see a really old house in a Japanese town.

Among the wonders shown at the Paris Exhibition is an automatic portrait-taking machine, which is set in motion by the familiar device of dropping a coin into a slot provided for it. This done, the sitter takes his place in front of the machine, and fixes his eye upon a spot arranged for the purpose. A warning dial gives the instruction Attention, when a bell rings during the time of exposure, which lasts from three to six seconds, according to the light available at the time. (This time of exposure is estimated and regulated by an attendant.) In about five minutes a finished portrait emerges from the machine. The process employed (Ferrotypes) is that which is commonly adopted by itinerant photographers at the seaside and elsewhere, and when we note the number of operations which it entails it would seem that they would be impossible without the aid of a skilled hand and eye. A thin enamelled iron plate has to be covered with collodion, sensitised, exposed, developed, dried and varnished. The machine is said to work well and efficiently—and, if this be the case, it will no doubt become well known. But it is obvious that it cannot compete in results with the ordinary and more simple method of taking a photograph.

The penny-in-slot principle has been applied to the ready sale of many articles of an unimportant character, but it has been reserved for the South-eastern Railway Company to utilise it in a manner which travellers will not be slow to appreciate. The modern railway-lamp burning gas is a great improvement upon the dim old oil-burner, which, to the shame of certain lines, is still retained. But the position of the light is generally too far away for comfortable reading. Recognising this inefficiency the company in question has provided some of their carriages with electric reading lamps, which, under the persuasive action of a penny dropped in a slot, will shed forth half an hour's radiance close to the reader's head.

A correspondent of the *Times* points out that edible fungi grow in great profusion in all parts of Ireland, and often close to the doors of peasants who rarely taste anything but potatoes. He also calls attention to the fact that no attempt is made in the schools of that country to acquaint the children with the differences which exist between edible and poisonous fungi. We fear that this objection would apply with equal force to other parts of Britain, and that a valuable form of food is neglected, because so few know what to utilise and what to reject. It is a common mistake that the mushroom is the only form of fungus which is fit to eat; there are many others which are both palatable and nourishing. Where these abound, the children in the schools should be made acquainted with them, and instructed how to prepare them for the table.

The *Pharmaceutical Journal* does well to point out that for killing rats, mice, and other small animals, the more dangerous poisons, such as arsenic, strychnine, &c., are not at all necessary. A comparatively inert substance, sulphate of barium, is an active poison to such creatures—although its precise action is difficult to explain, seeing that it is extremely insoluble. Powdered and mixed with lard or fat, it is readily parted of by small animals, and will soon destroy them.

Some useful and interesting experiments have recently been carried out at the works of Messrs Frederick Siemens & Co., of Berlin, for the purpose of noting the loss of light which occurs through the use of different descriptions of window glass. A Bunsen photometer was employed for the tests, the source of light being two Argand gas-burners. A translucent but non-transparent glass showed a loss of twenty-seven per cent. of light. Next came cathedral glass, so much used now for decorative purposes. This was of the clear variety, with a slight tinge of colour, and showed a loss of twelve and two-thirds per cent. A ground glass with cut stars showed a loss of no less than sixty per cent.; and a new piece of ground glass, without any pattern, forty per cent. These facts should be borne in mind by those who wish to obtain the greatest amount of light from their windows, and they also prove the loss that must accrue from the common custom of using ground glass globes for lamps. Another point not touched upon by these experiments is worth noting, and that is, that glass becomes less transparent by age, and assumes at the same time a yellow tinge.

According to a note in the *Scientific American*, a somewhat strange course is adopted when a patient under chloroform shows the slightest symptom of failure of the heart's action. He is turned upside down with his heels in the air. So efficacious is this treatment considered by the doctors, that the operating tables in the Paris hospitals are so made that at any instant they can be elevated with one end in the air, so that the patient's head is on the ground. We presume that the explanation of the matter is, that the flow of blood is for a time changed in its direction.

The time lost under the present system of taking 'divisions' in the House of Commons and other public assemblies of a similar character is much to be deplored, and any method by which

that tiresome process can be simplified is worthy of attention. Such a method has for some time been under consideration by the French Chamber of Deputies, and, from a report upon the subject, we gather the following particulars. An apparatus has been devised by M. Le Goaziou which owes its motive power to electricity. On the desk in front of every member's seat is placed a box which is fitted with two handles—the one on the right registering 'aye,' and that on the left 'no;' while if both are moved simultaneously, it means that the member wishes to abstain from voting. At the same time, any member can, within an allowed period, recall or correct his vote. The results are exhibited on a receiver, and can be readily seen and brought to a total. The plan will thus be seen to be somewhat similar to the method of marking by electricity which is common to most modern billiard tables. The idea is good, although it is not new, for a similar method was proposed in this country some years ago.

M. Mallet recently exhibited to the Society of Physics and Natural History at Geneva two balls of almost perfect sphericity, which were formed naturally, but under unusual conditions. One of them of vegetable origin, and perfectly black, was found in the cavity of a piece of oak which had for a long period formed the shaft of a mill-wheel. As this shaft constantly rotated the cavity became charged with dust from the wood, and the moisture bound it together into one mass, which like a snowball constantly grew by added particles on its surface, until this black ball was formed. The other spherical curiosity was of mineral origin, and came from a grotto through which flowed a torrent from the river Rhone. It was a pebble with a calcareous coating, which had probably received its form from being constantly rotated in a hole in the rock by the action of water.

A new device for detecting and estimating the quantity of firedamp present in the airways of mines has been presented to the Royal Society by the inventors, Messrs Pitkin and Niblet. The apparatus consists of two thermometers, one of which has its bulb covered with platinum black, whilst the other is of the normal type, and is simply used for comparison with the first. When the instrument is placed in an atmosphere containing a hydrocarbon, such as firedamp, there is an increase of temperature in the blackened bulb owing to slow combustion of the gas in the pores of the finely divided platinum. The difference of height between the two mercurial columns then indicates the amount of gas present in the air.

THE MUSICAL SMALL-COAL MAN.

THE cry 'Small-coal!' 'Small-coal!'—as familiar to the ears of our great-grandparents as the homely tinkle of the muffin-bell to ours—has long since been hushed. For a century or more it has ceased to add its quota of discord to the medley of perambulatory jargon. It is a departed street-cry. We search our modern dictionaries in vain for its particular signification, but in Johnson we find: '*Small-coal*—Little wood-coals, used to light fires.' There were allusions to it in the *Spectator*

of palmy days, and in Gay's *Trivia*, where the poet sings:

When small-coal murmurs in the hoarser throat,
From smutty dangers guard thy threatened coat.

Among the itinerant vendors of this household requisite of the past was an extraordinary character—chemist, poet, musician, antiquary, all in one. His name was Thomas Britton, a native of Northamptonshire, who started life with a seven years' apprenticeship to a 'small-coal' man in London, at the end of which he returned to his native town of Higham-Ferrers, whence, having soon run through his little savings, he returned to the metropolis and set up for himself in the old line, hiring for the purpose a stable in Clerkenwell, which served him in the twofold capacity of store and dwelling-house. After being settled in business for some little time, he made the acquaintance of his neighbour, Dr Garaniere, a celebrated chemist, who, taking a decided interest in the young man, allowed him free access to his laboratory, of which privilege Britton took such advantage that before long he vied with his patron, built himself a movable laboratory, where, according to Hearn, with whom he was a great favourite, 'he performed with little expense and trouble such things as had never been done before.'

Britton was also passionately fond of music, and in the miserable loft over his coal-store, the only access to which was a narrow breakneck pair of outside wooden steps, he established regular concerts, at which he himself performed on the viol-de-gamba. The annual subscription to these musical entertainments was ten shillings, at which Britton found the instruments and regaled his fellow-artists with coffee at a penny a dish; and in spite of the rudeness of the accommodation, his humble roof was frequented by assemblies of the fair and the gay. Many of the leading professionals, including the aristocratic Handel, it is said, took part in the performances; and it was here that Dubourg, when a child, played, standing upon a joint-stool, the first solo that he ever executed in public. Steele, in No. 144 of the *Guardian*, commenting on the odd and original characters produced by a free form of government, says: 'We have a small-coal man, who, beginning with two plain notes, which made up his daily cry, has made himself master of the whole compass of the gamut, and has frequent concerts of music at his own house, for the entertainment of himself and friends.'

Old-book stalls had an extraordinary fascination for the man. On his daily rounds he would spend more than half his time poring over antiquated works on chemistry and music; and so great was his discernment in the selection of works of merit, that during the rage for old books and manuscripts that set in at the beginning of last century, he was employed to swell the collections of many of the noblest in the land, including the Duke of Devonshire, the Earls of Oxford, Sunderland, Pembroke, and Winchelsea, who allowed him to share in their conversations, when they met to compare notes at a bookseller's shop in Ave Maria Lane after their rambles through the town. Britton would leave his coal-sack at the door, and, dressed in his blue frock, spend many an agreeable hour with his co-enthusiasts. He

himself amassed a splendid collection of musical works, to which he continually added manuscripts copied with his own hand. But he did not confine his attention solely to music and chemistry; he was a collector of 'curios' of all sorts, drawings, prints, ancient and modern musical instruments, as well as treatises on such uncommon subjects as the philosopher's stone, judicial astrology, mystic divinity, magic, &c. At his decease his books and manuscripts were sold by auction at Tom's Coffee-house, near Ludgate, many being purchased by Sir Hans Sloane, which are now in the British Museum; his collection of music alone fetched nearly one hundred pounds.

Poor Britton's end was very sad, and strangely in keeping with his singular life. Whether it was that his head had been turned by his mystical and magical books, he was killed to all appearance by imagination. A jesting friend one day introduced into his company a ventriloquist, who, in a far-away voice, bade poor Britton prepare for his approaching end by repeating the Lord's prayer on his knees. He obeyed the injunction, went home to bed, and died a few days after, September 1714, and was buried in Clerkenwell.

Among those who took frequent part in his concerts was the painter Woolaston, a good performer on both violin and flute, who twice painted him, one of the pictures being now in the British Museum, having been purchased by Hans Sloane. Woolaston was a staunch friend to Britton, and stood by him when at different times he was accused of being an atheist, Presbyterian, and Jesuit, and when his musical assemblies were suspected by some of being a cloak for seditious meetings or magical *séances*. Woolaston, who knew him well, pronounced him a plain, simple, honest man, solely bent on amusing himself. All the print-shops of the last century exhibited mezzotints of this remarkable man, in which he was represented with a sack of small-coal over his shoulder, and his retail measure in his hand, subscribed with the following appropriate lines by Hughes, another member of his orchestra:

Though mean thy rank, yet in thy humble cell
Did gentle peace and arts, unpurchased, dwell;
Well pleased Apollo thither led his train,
And music warbled in her sweetest strain.
Cyllenius so, as fables tell, and Jove,
Came willing guests to poor Philemon's grove.
Let useless pomp behold, and blush to find
So low a station, such a liberal mind.

CARBOLINE.

The introduction of transparent wire-wove roofing, which some little time since was noticed in our columns under the title of a 'New Substitute for Glass' (February 2, 1889), has met with such a marked degree of success, that its promoters—the Wire-wove Roofing Company, 16A Queen Victoria Street, London—are now placing on the market a new material, to which the name of Carboline has been given, similar in many respects to that already described, but opaque and considerably cheaper. Carboline forms an excellent substitute for slates, tiles, corrugated iron, or any of the usual substances used for covering roofs where light is not required; and may also be employed

at greatly reduced cost in place of enamelled iron plates for advertising purposes, in which branch alone an enormous business should accrue to the new material. Carboline being only about one-third the weight of galvanised iron, an obvious saving in the cost of carriage, freight, &c. results; whilst the structure to be roofed in, having a lesser weight to carry, can be correspondingly reduced in strength with a resultant economy in building material.

Further advantages claimed for the new substance under consideration are extreme cheapness, whilst forming a roofing material cool in summer and warm in winter. Being, moreover, unlike galvanised iron, a non-conductor, it is free from noise, a desideratum of no mean importance.

Carboline can be fixed with ease and rapidity by unskilled labour, and possesses all the advantages, save translucency, of the transparent wire-wove roofing, whilst costing considerably less. It is waterproof, unaffected by steam, sun, heat, frost, hail, snow, or rain, and is tough, elastic, and unbreakable.

In conclusion, it may be added that the British War Office, after experimenting with carboline, has ordered a large additional quantity for covering soldiers' huts, a purpose for which it is eminently adapted.

ALTAR AND GRAVE.

BY DR CHARLES MACKAY.

THE spring-time loveliness decays
Ere the cold autumnal days;
The petals of the lily
Fade ere the night grows chilly,
And roses droop before the year grows old,
And the gay greenery turns to russet gold;
And such, alas! is living beauty's doom
When age creeps over it to blight its bloom.

But the calm beauty of the sacred dead,
Lost to our hearts in life's young prime,
Remains for ever in our silent thought,
With tenderest recollections fraught,
Defiant of the touch of time.
Although the hostile seasons pass,
Fond memory's magic glass
Preserves the lovely features unimpaired,
And adds angelic grace
To the beloved face,
Preserved by Death, though Life might not
have spared.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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AN OLD ROMAN GARDEN.

NOTHING but the soothing sense of silence! Far, far away rise the distant snows of the Alps, which, as the splendours of the living day decline, are shrouded in the twilight mists of earth. Nestling in sea-gray olive woods, the lower hills creep into prominence, golden-tinged, red, brown, silvery gray, with the warm Venetian tints of the million-hued roofs of Nice. Peeping from between the dark-stemmed silvery foliage and the flowering Judas trees, down where the tideless waters lap the porphyry shores, the low brown eaves of cottage roofs huddle together. A belt of purple cloudland marks the spot where sea and sky fade into eternity. A few fleecy clouds sail across the blue vault, like ships full rigged; and the puff of scented air wandering over the citron and orange groves gives promise of rain, to soften the air, and moisten the lips of the flowers, which are already beginning to carpet the earth beneath the vines and olives. Violets white and purple raise their scented heads; hypanthias and scarlet anemones star the ground with many a brilliant fleck of colour. Buttercups and daisies there are in plenty; but one looks in vain for the precursor of summer, the faint sweet primrose.

The rambling old Garden is walled in with a dike of uncertain age, largely composed of the veritable stones which went to build the fine old Roman baths and Temple of Apollo, which now lie by in melancholy grandeur. Bits of marble, rosy and white, are intersected; and on sunny mornings the lizards run over the warm surface of the stones and in and out of the mossy crevices. A glorious growth of ivy crowns the summit of the wall; depending, hang the clusters of rich purple berries, with the bloom full upon them. From out the niches spring lovely specimens of the hard fern, polypodium, and maiden-hair, spleenwort, also a variety of bracken, said to be indigenous to the Roman ruins, which fills every fissure of the dry rock and wall.

What chapters could be written on this long low pile of stones, with the tangled wealth of foliage, its myriad living inhabitants, its ancient marbles, each a landstone marking the centuries! Hard by are the ruins of the Temple of Apollo. The recesses that once held the sculptured figures, alas! are now empty. The old doorway has been blocked up with mortar, and the interior, once sacred to the god of beauty, is now the home of the gardener and his family. The low doorway shows the walls of solid masonry to be about four feet thick. Above the lintel, on a marble ledge, a vigorous growth of mountain polypody hangs a green fringe almost into the apartment.

Entering, we find ourselves in a large bare living-room. The dark-raftered ceiling and walls are smoke-embrowned, like an interior of Rembrandt's, with its play of light and shadow, sunshine and flickering firelight. A wide old chimney occupies one end; and looking up, the blue sky is seen shining above. A narrow stone stair, chipped and broken, built in the thickness of the wall, and having at each side a curious old-fashioned cupboard, leads up to the roof. The trained and trellised vines make a temporary covering of green, where once a vaulted stone roof has been. A low uneven parapet of ruined masonry, fern-grown and yellow with lichens, guards the edge. Here a rough wooden table is piled with homely utensils, waiting to be washed: a green pipkin—from which rises a great silvery pigeon—dark rich shades of brown and yellow jars of baked clay. The water is drawn from a very deep well that descends from the roof, and is protected by a broken marble edge. An old wooden pail, attached to a rusty chain, draws up the water, which is sweet and pure. As we look down into its dark-brown depths, the stone walls are seen to be covered thick with the graceful fronds of loveliest maiden-hair, such as many a gardener can never produce in an English greenhouse. In the clear depths, the living stalactites depend in feathery tufts down until their green fronds touch the silent water.

Several cages of birds are hung out, to catch the sun, shimmering between the canopy of leaves: two canaries in one tiny cage—green-finches; in another, a captive thrush singing in the sunny glory. A little wooden door leads down two steps into another apartment, used by the gardener's daughter. Here in a corner stands what once must have been a very fine old Louis Quatorze cabinet, with its painted figures and stiff prim shape, the gilding tarnished, the painting faded, and the wood rotten with long exposure to the damp, and the relentless maw of worms. From what can be gathered from the local patois, with its soft Italian termination, it was removed from the big house upon its being closed, many years ago, when Count Garin ceased to live in the quaint old villa, now converted into an English *pension*. The whole place has a sad air of worn-out faded grandeur, once the scene of Roman magnificence and ostentatious worship. In the old-world Garden, a pigeon-house has been formed from a portion of the ruins, where the iridescent birds preen themselves in the sunny luxuriance, and rows of dried gourds hang in the glowing warmth.

About a stone's-throw off lie the Roman baths. A few relics, saved from the ruthless hands of the tourist, are piled up in a corner—a broken jar or two, a carved stone, a sculptured pillar's base, a handle torn from some stately urn, one or two slabs of rosy marble. Poor stately remains! all that is left of Roman pomp—of the flourishing Roman city, Cimiez, that took the part of Caesar against the infatuated Antony and Egypt's Cleopatra. Looking down on the gaunt amphitheatre, which seated eight thousand spectators, vividly come crowding upon the mind scenes of the dying gladiators and condemned serfs. Here the Roman dames mixed with the populace in the arena, and courted the applause which a sterner republic deemed only fit for slaves.

A little to the east rises a huge plateau, crowned with ruined walls, stately ilexes, ancient olives, which, for age and grandeur, might be the contemporaries of those that clothed the Mount of Olives. The ruins once constituted the house of the Roman Proconsul, razed to the ground when Cimiez in the sixth century fell before the Lombards, who burned and sacked houses and temples, slaughtering without mercy men, women, and children, the few who escaped finding refuge in Nice.

The mansion-house is approached by an avenue of elms ivy-clad and gaunt. A cluster of giant cypresses raise their proud dark plumes towards the cloudy dome. There is no rustle and sway so mournful, nor yet so grand, as the melancholy dirge of the stately cypress. Close by the door lie the sculptured bases of two white marble Corinthian pillars; and under the heavy purple shadow of the tree of death lies an old stone coffin with a handsome carved stone cover. In one corner the carving has been broken off, and one can see into the damp mossy cavity, which once contained all the earthly remains of some noble Roman, laid to sleep there hundreds of years ago under its cover of carved stone.

A glass door opens into the vaulted hall, supported by old stone pillars. Around are ranged quaint stone pedestals, which probably once

held statues taken from the principal gate of ancient Cimiez. On the walls hang several ancient pictures by Italian artists: 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' 'The Birth of Christ,' the sky gilded, and the heads golden haloed. Up the wide old staircase the echoes seem to linger amongst the marble pillars and balustrades. Several old engravings of value still rest on the walls. At night, when the household are asleep, the solitary watcher may hear a curious chopping sound, which lasts from midnight till dawn, and the oldest inhabitants will tell you it is the ghostly visitant who haunts the Villa Garin, and chops wood in the silent hours.

From over the shadow-lands come the odour of budding citrons and orange gardens, and a world of violets filling the woods. A lustre of purple and gold streams over the Estrelles, and blends with the hazy vapours hovering around the olive-clad hills. The soft chimes of the Ave Maria ring out from distant chapels. The solemn tones chant out from the adjoining Franciscan monastery, calling the monks to vespers. Shadowed over by stately ilexes stands the old Gothic marble cross supporting the winged seraphim who appeared to St Francis; and above is the pelican feeding her young—symbol of Christian charity in the Middle Ages.

Whitewashed walls line the stone passage leading to the old well and court built by the Benedictines in the sixteenth century. Many old prints hang round, illustrative of the lives and legends of the saints. A stone passage leads to the Chapel, a vast echoing, gloomy space, built in Basilica form, whose walls once formed the Temple of Diana dating from the first century. There hang several paintings of note by Ludovico Brea, of sixteenth-century fame, and many curious mystic symbols of monastic times. A friendly monk leads the way to the sacristy, lined with frescoes by a Venetian, on into the choir, the seats lining the wall ornamented by finely carved old chestnut wood; and there, three times a day, come the brown-robed monks to pray. In the centre of the apartment, where the masses of shadow are penetrated by the primrose gloaming creeping through the narrow windows, and stealing to the solemn gloom of the vaulted roof, stands the gigantic lectern, of carved chestnut, from which the great old book can be read by all around. From a worm-eaten cabinet, shelved, and filled with sixteenth-century manuscripts, the old monk extracts some old brass-clamped books, and resting them on the time-worn carvings, displays the rich illuminations and quaint caligraphy of the sixteenth century. The vellum is stiff to the touch, and gorgeous with diverse blended colours and gilding; the bindings rich, handsome, and lasting, of finest brown leather, with huge brass bosses and nails; massive brazen clasps keeping the whole firmly together. On the front of the altar in the sacristy stands a beautiful crucifix, the cross ebony, the Christ an exquisite piece of old ivory carving, the base of buhl—the whole comprising a beautiful piece of workmanship. At either side stand obelisk-shaped glass jars, each containing the mouldering bone of a departed saint.

Alongside the Chapel stretches the crowded graveyard, a dangerous spot for malaria as the

evening mists creep up from the river. A glance through an open door shows a trim garden—in which, thanks to Mother Eve, no female foot may enter—and a dreamy vista of far-off snows. The faint tinkle of bells comes from a distant team of patient mules. One mournful and grand Kyrie Eleison is chanted by the murmuring voice of many waters. A beauty not of land or sea hovers over the scene, half-paradise, half-sepulchre; while an old monk, sandal-footed, brown-robed, with tonsured head sunk upon his breast, and wrinkled hands crossed upon his girdle of the knotted rope, paces beneath the ilexes, under the shadow of that home for which he has counted the world well lost.

A DEAD RECKONING.

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER V.

TEN weeks had come and gone since the memorable visit of M. Karovsky to the master of Beechley Towers. It was a pleasant evening towards the end of June. There had been a heavy shower a little while ago; but since then the clouds had broken, and the sun was now drawing westward in a blaze of glory. In the same pleasant morning-room in which we first made their acquaintance, Mrs Brooke and her aunt, Miss Primby, were now sitting. The latter was dozing in an easy-chair with a novel on her lap, the former was seated at the piano playing some plaintive air in a minor key. The glad light, the light of a happiness that knew no cloud, which shone from her eyes when we saw her first, dwelt there no longer. She looked pale, anxious, and *distracted*, like one who is a prey to some hidden trouble. She had spoken no more than the truth when she said that her happiness was too perfect to last.

As the last sad note died away under her fingers she turned from the instrument. 'I cannot play—I cannot work—I cannot do anything,' she murmured under her breath.

At this juncture Miss Primby awoke. 'My dear Clara, what a pity you did not keep on playing,' she said. 'I was in the midst of a most lovely dream. I thought I was about to be married; my wreath and veil had been sent home, and I was just about to try them on; when you stopped playing and I awoke.'

'If I were to go on playing, aunt, do you think that you could finish your dream?'

'No, my dear, it's gone, and the chances are that it will never return,' said the spinster with a sigh.

Clara crossed the room, and sat down on a low chair near the window, whence she could catch the first glimpse of her husband as he came round the clump of evergreens at the corner of the terrace.

'I wish you would not mope so much, and would try not to look quite so miserable,' said her aunt presently.

'How can I help feeling miserable, when I know that Gerald has some unhappy secret on his mind, of which he tells me nothing? He has been a changed man ever since the visit of M. Karovsky. He cannot eat, he cannot rest;

night and day he wanders about the house and grounds, like a man walking in his sleep.'

'Bad signs, very, my dear. Married men have no right to have secrets from their wives.'

'If he would but confide in me! If he would but tell me what the secret trouble is that is slowly eating away his life!'

'I remember that when the Dean of Rathdrum leaned over the back of my chair, and whispered "My darling Jane, I"—'

'Here comes Gerald!' cried Mrs Brooke. She started to her feet, while a glad light leapt into her eyes, and ran out on the terrace to meet him. 'What a time you have been away!' she said, as he stooped and kissed her. 'And your hair and clothes are quite wet.'

'It is nothing,' he answered. 'I was caught in a shower in the wood.'

'Poor fellow! He certainly does look very haggard and dejected,' remarked Miss Primby to herself.

'Have you been far?' asked Clara.

'Only as far as Beaulieu.'

'You called on the baron, of course.'

'No. I changed my mind at the last moment.'

'The first bell will ring in a few minutes.'

'I have one important letter to write before I dress.'

'Then aunt and I will leave you. You will not be long? I am so afraid of your taking cold. Come, aunt.'

'Nothing brings on rheumatism sooner than damp clothes,' remarked Miss Primby sententiously, as she folded down a leaf of her novel, and tucked the volume under her arm.

Then the ladies went and Gerald was left alone. He looked a dozen years older than he had looked ten weeks previously. All the light and gladness had died out of his face; he had the air of a man who was weighed down by some trouble almost heavier than he could bear. 'She is afraid of my taking cold,' he said to himself, with a bitter smile as his wife closed the door. 'Poor darling! if I were to take cold and have a fever and die, it would be the best thing that could happen either to her or me.' He began to pace the room slowly, his hands behind him, and his eyes bent on the ground. 'Nearly three months have passed since Karovsky's visit, and nothing has yet been done. Only two more weeks are left me. Coward that I am, to have kept putting off from day to day doing that which I ought to have done long ago. Even this very afternoon, when I reached Beaulieu, I had not the courage to go in and confront Von Rosenberg. My heart failed me, and I turned back. If I have begun one letter to him I have begun a dozen, only to burn or tear them up unfinished; but now there is no time for further delay. I will warn him that if he wishes to save his life he must leave here immediately, and seek some asylum where his enemies will be powerless to harm him. Shall I vaguely hint at some shadowy danger that impends over him? or shall I tell him in plain terms why and by whom the death sentence has been recorded against him? Shall I write to him anonymously, or shall I sign the letter with my name? Better tell him everything and put my name to the letter; he can then act on the information in whatever way he may deem

best. In doing this, as Karovsky said, I shall be sealing my own doom. Well, better that, better anything than the only other alternative.'

He halted by one of the windows, and stood gazing out at all the pleasant features of the landscape he had learned to know and love so well. 'It seems hard to die so young, and with so much about me to make life happy,' he sadly mused. 'I think I could meet my fate on the battle-field without a murmur—but to be murdered in cold blood—to be the mark for some stealthy assassin! Poor Clara! poor darling! what will you do when I am gone?' He sighed deeply as he turned from the window. His eyes were dim with tears.

Presently he seated himself at the davenport, and drew pen and paper towards him. 'No more delays; this very night the baron shall be told. But how shall I begin? in what terms shall I word my warning?' He sat and mused for a minute or two, biting the end of his pen as he did so. Then he dipped the pen into the inkstand and began to write: 'My dear Baron, from information which has reached me, the accuracy of which I cannot doubt, I am grieved to have to inform you, that your life is in great and immediate peril. You have been sentenced to death by the Chiefs of one of those Secret Societies of the existence of which you are doubtless aware. Your only chance of safety lies in immediate flight.'

'What shall I say next?' asked Gerald of himself. 'Shall I tell him that'—

But at this juncture the door was opened, and Mrs Brooke came hurriedly into the room. 'O Gerald, such terrible news!' she exclaimed, breathlessly.

Gerald turned his letter face downward on the blotting-pad. 'Terrible news, Clara?' he said in a tone of studied indifference. 'Has your aunt's spaniel over-eaten itself and'—

'Gerald, don't!' she cried in a pained voice. 'Baron von Rosenberg is dead—murdered in his own house less than an hour ago!'

Gerald rose slowly from his chair as if drawn upward by some invisible force. The sudden pallor that blanched his face frightened his wife. She sprang forward and laid a hand on his arm. He shook it off almost roughly. 'Tell me again what you told me just now,' he said in a voice which Clara scarcely recognised as that of her husband.

She told him again. 'Murdered! Von Rosenberg! Impossible!'

'Dixon brought the news; he has just ridden up from King's Harold.'

Gerald sank into his seat again. His eyes were fixed on vacancy. For a few moments he looked as if his brain had been paralysed.

Miss Primby came bustling in. 'Oh, my dear Clara, can it be possible that this dreadful—dreadful news is true?'

'Only too true, I am afraid, aunt.'

'Poor Baron! Poor dear man! What a shocking end! I never knew a man with more charming manners. Cut off in the flower of his age, as one may say.'

'Perhaps, dear, you would like to see Dixon and question him,' said Clara to her husband.

He simply nodded. Mrs Brooke rang the bell and Dixon the groom entered. 'You had better

tell your master all you know about this frightful tragedy.'

The man cleared his throat. Gerald stared at him with eyes that seemed to see far beyond him—far beyond the room in which they were. 'I had been down to King's Harold, sir,' began Dixon, 'to see Thompson, the farrier, about the chestnut mare, and was riding back, when just as I got to the Beaulieu lodge-gates I see the dog-cart come out with Mr Pringle the baron's man in it, along with Dr King, and another gent as was a stranger to me. Seeing the doctor there, and that Mr Pringle looked very white and scared like, I pulls up. "Anything amiss, Mr Pringle?" says I, with a jerk of my thumb towards the house, as the dog-cart passed me. But he only stared at me and shook his head solemn like and drove on without a word. Then I turns to the lodge-keeper's wife and sees that she has her apron over her head, and is crying. "Anything serous amiss, mum?" says I. "I don't know what you calls serous, young man," says she, "but my poor master, the baron, was found murdered in the little shally in the garden only half an hour since—shot through the heart by some blood-thirsty villain." I didn't wait to hear more, sir, but made all the haste I could home.'

No word spoke Gerald. The man looked at him curiously, almost doubting whether his master had heard a word of what he had said.

'Thank you, Dixon; that will do,' said Mrs Brooke. The man carried a finger to his forehead and made his exit.

'Poor dear baron!' remarked Miss Primby for the second time. 'There was something very fascinating in his smile.'

'Clara, tell me,' said Gerald presently. 'Am I in truth awake, or have I only dreamt that Von Rosenberg is dead?'

'How strangely you talk, dear. I am afraid you are ill.'

'There you are mistaken. I am well—excellently well. But tell me this: ought I to feel glad, or ought I to feel sorry? On my life, I don't know which I ought to feel!'

'Glad? O Gerald!'

'Ah; I had forgotten. You don't know.'

'You no longer confide in me as you used to do.'

He took no notice of the remark. '"Let the Dead Past bury its dead,"' he said aloud, but speaking exactly as he might have done had he been alone. 'No need to send this now,' he muttered in a lower tone as he took up his unfinished letter. 'If I had but sent it a week ago, would Von Rosenberg be still alive? Who can say?' Crossing to the chimney-piece, he lighted a match and with it set fire to the letter, holding it by one corner as he did so. When it had burnt itself half away he began to whistle under his breath.

'O Gerald!' said his wife in a grieved voice.

'I had forgotten. Pardon—as Karovsky would say.'

'I am grieved to say so, dear, but his brain seems slightly affected;' whispered Miss Primby to her niece. 'If I were you I would call in Dr Preston.'

Before Clara could reply Bunce came in with a lighted lamp half turned down. He left the curtains undrawn, for a soft yellow glow still lingered over field and woodland.

As soon as he had left the room Mrs Brooke crossed to the couch on which her husband had seated himself, and taking one of his hands in hers, said: 'Dearest, you must not let this affair, shocking though it be, prey too much on your mind. It is not as if you had lost an old and valued friend. Baron von Rosenberg was but an acquaintance—a man whose name even you had never heard six months ago.'

His only reply was to softly stroke the hand that was holding one of his.

Clara waited a little and then she said: 'Will you not come and dress for dinner?'

He rose abruptly. 'Dress for dinner!' he exclaimed with a strange discordant laugh. 'How the comedy and tragedy of life jostle each other! Grim death claps on the mask of Momus and tries to persuade us that he is a merry gentleman. Here a white cravat, a dress coat, the pleasant jingle of knives and forks. There, a pool of blood, a cold and rigid form, a ghastly face with blank staring eyes that seem appealing to heaven for vengeance. Yes, let us go and dress for dinner; for, in truth, you and I ought to rejoice and make merry to-night—if you only knew why.'

'Gerald, you frighten me.'

'Nay, sweet one, I would not do that,' he answered as he drew her to him and kissed her. 'I am in a strange humour to-night. I hardly know myself. I could laugh and I could sing, and yet—and yet—poor Von Rosenberg!' He turned away with a sigh.

At this moment in came Mr Bunce again. 'If you please, ma'am,' he said to Mrs Brooke, 'here's a strange young pusson come running to the Towers all in a hurry, who says she must see you without a minute's delay.'

The 'strange young pusson' had followed close on his heels. 'Yes, mum, without a minute's delay,' she contrived to gasp out, and then she stood panting, unable to articulate another word. She was breathless with running.

'Well, if ever!' exclaimed the scandalised Bunce, turning sharply on her. 'Why, you ain't even wiped your shoes.'

'That will do, Bunce, thank you,' said Mrs Brooke with quiet dignity.

Bunce sniffed and tried to screw up his nose further than nature had done already. 'Sich muck!' was his comment to himself as he left the room.

The person to whom this depreciatory epithet was applied was a girl of some sixteen or seventeen summers, Margery Shook by name, who was dressed in a coarse but clean bib and apron, a short cotton frock considerably the worse for wear, gray worsted stockings, thick shoes, and a quilted sun-bonnet, from under the flap of which her nut-brown hair made its escape in tangled elf-like locks. Her bright hazel eyes had in them more of the expression of some half-tamed animal than that of an ordinary human being. Her features, though by no means uncomely, were somewhat heavily moulded and did not respond readily to emotional expression. For the rest, she was a well-grown strongly-built girl, and when she laughed her teeth flashed upon you like a surprise.

Margery's laugh, if laugh it could be called, was perhaps the most singular thing about her.

It was witch-like, weird, uncanny; it never extended to her eyes; it broke out at the most inopportune moments; to have been awake by it in the dead of night, and not to have known whence it emanated, might have shaken the nerves of the strongest man.

Margery was an orphan, and until she was sixteen years old, had been brought up on a canal barge. It was her boast that she could drive a horse or steer a barge as well as any man between London and the Midlands. But there came a day when the girl could no longer either drive or handle the rudder. Ague had got her in its merciless grip. The barge-man for whom she worked landed her at King's Harold with instructions to a relative of his to pass her on to the workhouse. But before this could be done Mrs Brooke had found out the sick girl. She was placed in a decent lodging, and the mistress of Beechley Towers paid all expenses till she was thoroughly restored to health. But not only did she do that: she went to see Margery three or four times a week, and sat with her, and talked with her, and read to her, and tried in various ways to let a few rays of light into the girl's darkened mind. Sometimes it happened that Mr Brooke would call for his wife when she was on these expeditions, on which occasions he would always stay for a few minutes to have a chat with Margery, so that in a little while there was no such gentleman in existence as 'Muster Geril.' But towards Mrs Brooke her feeling was one of boundless gratitude and devotion; it was like the devotion of a dumb animal rather than that of a rational being. Willingly, gladly would she have laid down her life for her benefactress, had such a sacrifice been required at her hands.

When the girl was thoroughly convalescent it became a question what should be done with her. Clara had extracted a promise from her never to go back to her old life on the canal. About this time it was that the Baron von Rosenberg set up his establishment at Beaulieu. An assistant was required in the laundry; Margery thought she should like the situation, so it was obtained for her.

'Why, Margery, what can be the matter? Why do you want to see me so particularly?' asked Mrs Brooke.

'It's about him—about Muster Geril,' she managed to gasp out. 'O mum! the polis is coming, and I've run'd all the way from Bulloo to tell you.'

'The what is coming, Margery?'

'The polis, mum,' answered the girl with one of her uncanny laughs. Miss Primby, who had never heard anything like it before, gave a little jump and stared at Margery as if she were some strange animal escaped from a menagerie.

'The police, I suppose you mean?' Margery nodded, and began to bite a corner of her apron.

'You must be mistaken, child. What can the police be coming here for?'

'To take Muster Geril.'

'To arrest my husband?' Margery nodded again. 'What can they want to arrest him for?'

'For murder.'

'For murder!' ejaculated both the ladies.

There was a moment's breathless pause. Gerald, with one hand on the back of a chair,

and one knee resting on the seat, had the impassive air of a man whom nothing more can surprise. He had gone through so much of late that for a time it seemed as if no fresh emotion had power to touch him.

'Great heaven! Margery, what are you talking about?' said Mrs Brooke with blanched lips.

'They say as how Muster Geril shot the gentleman—the Baron—what was found dead about a hour ago. Not as I believes a word of it,' she added with a touch of contempt in her voice. 'A pistol set with gold and with funny figures scratched on it, was found not far from the corpus, and they say it belongs to Muster Geril.'

'My Indian pistol which I lent to Von Rosenberg ten weeks ago,' said Gerald quietly.

'And now the polis have gone for a warrin to take him up,' added the girl.

'A warrant to arrest my husband?'

Again Margery nodded. She was a girl who, as a rule, was sparing of her words.

'I the murderer of Von Rosenberg!' said Gerald, with a bitter laugh. 'Such an accusation would be ridiculous if it were not horrible.'

Mrs Brooke wrung her hands and drew in her breath with a half moan. The blow was so overwhelming, that for a few moments words seemed frozen on her lips.

Gerald turned to the window. 'Can the irony of fate go further than this,' he said to himself, 'that I should be accused of a crime for refusing to commit which my own life was to have paid the penalty!'

In came Bunce once more carrying a card on a salver which he presented to his master.

Gerald took it and read, 'Mr Tom Starkie.'

'Says he wants to see you very perticler, sir.'

'Into which room have you shown Mr Starkie?'

'Into the blue room, sir.'

'Say that I will be with him in one moment. Come, Clara, come, aunt,' he said with a smile, as soon as Bunce had left the room; 'let us go and hear what it is so "perticler" that Mr Tom has to say to me.'

None of them noticed that Margery had stolen out on to the terrace, and was there waiting and watching with her gaze fixed on a distant point of the high-road where it suddenly curved, before dipping into the valley on its way to the little market town of King's Harold. Twilight still lingered in the west, and Margery's eyes were almost as keen as those of a hawk.

THE TRAINING OF TIDAL RIVERS.

To a seafaring nation like our own, the endeavour to render tidal rivers more safely and easily navigable must always be a matter of interest and importance. In the estuaries of some of the principal rivers of our own and other countries much has already been done. Channels have been deepened by dredging, winding courses have been improved by making straight cuts, obstructing rocks have been removed by blasting, and breakwaters have been constructed, where necessary, for protection against the waves. In some cases great success has been attained, and rivers formerly too shallow for anything but the smallest coasting vessels have been rendered navigable by

large ocean-going steamers. Much still remains to be done, especially for such rivers as have hitherto proved difficult to modify on account of strong currents, caused by the tide or the river itself, or both combined, which baffle the efforts of engineers to make and maintain convenient channels for navigation. In some cases, after great expense has been incurred in the construction of training-walls to guide a river in a particular course through a shallow estuary, very unexpected results have ensued. Sandbanks have formed themselves at inconvenient places, or the estuary on each side of the trained channel has silted up, diminishing the space available for water when the tide is in, and consequently diminishing the amount of water rushing out when the tide is ebbing, which formerly kept the channel open. To experiment on real rivers on a large scale would be very expensive, and might sometimes injuriously modify the estuary in ways not easily foreseen, and difficult, or even impossible, to correct.

Professor Osborne Reynolds was the first, so far as we are aware, to make experiments on a model constructed to scale, in order to show what results might be expected to ensue in a tidal estuary from certain proposed engineering works. He carried out such experiments in 1885, on a model of the estuary of the Mersey, in connection with the Manchester Ship Canal scheme. These investigations have been recently followed up by Mr L. F. Vernon-Harcourt, who has conducted a series of most interesting experiments on a model of the estuary of the river Seine, with the view of testing the comparative merits of several different schemes proposed for the improvement of the navigation of the river; an account of which he communicated to the Royal Society early in the present year (*Proceedings of the Royal Society*, vol. xlv., page 505.—Paper read February 7, 1889). He got a model constructed in Portland cement of the estuary of the Seine on a scale of $\frac{1}{1000}$ horizontal and $\frac{1}{100}$ vertical. The reason for making the vertical scale one hundred times the horizontal is, that the fall of the bed in the tidal part of the Seine is very slight, so that even on these scales the rise of spring-tides at the mouth of the estuary in the model is only seven-tenths of an inch, while the model is nine feet long.

Whether the behaviour of the sand at the bottom will be similar in a model thus altered in proportions, to the behaviour it would show in a model in true proportions or in the real estuary, remains to be proved; but, from what Mr Vernon-Harcourt has observed, it seems likely that the facts which can be ascertained from a model such as his may be of real service to engineers in helping them to judge whether a certain proposed arrangement of training-walls would have the effect intended on the river-bed.

The rise and fall of the tide is produced in Mr Vernon-Harcourt's model by means of a zinc tray hinged on at the estuary mouth, so that the water situated in the tray represents the sea in continuity with the water in the estuary, and that the tray can be raised and lowered alternately to introduce an imitation of the tidal action. The period given to each tide in working the model is about twenty-five seconds. The water representing the fresh water of the Seine is admitted at

the upper end of the model from a tap, and an equal quantity of water is allowed to flow out by a cock with a large orifice at the lower end of the estuary, so placed as to allow the water to escape while the tide is high.

At the mouth of the Seine the navigable channel has not remained constantly in one situation, but has kept shifting to different parts of the shallow estuary. Two banks always appear, however, in some form or other on the old charts, between Havre, on the north side of the estuary, and Villerville Point near Honfleur, on the south. These have been sometimes connected with sand-banks inside the estuary, and sometimes detached. Rock and gravel are represented as cropping up on some parts of these banks in a recent chart drawn from a survey made in 1880. In the model, solid mounds of cement are introduced to represent these banks; also where the rocky bottom is exposed near Havre and Villerville, the model is moulded to the exact depths shown on the chart of 1880. At other parts the cement is kept well below the greatest depth attained by the channel at each place, and the bottom is formed of sand. At first, silver sand was used on account of its being easily obtained, and its purity and freedom from cohesion.

The working of the model was commenced in November 1886. From the outset, some interesting phenomena were noticed. The *bore*—a sudden rise of the water—at a place called Claudebec, and the reverse current just before high-water near Havre called the 'Verhaule,' were notably represented. After the model had been worked for some time, the channels near Quillebeuf—a place about twenty miles above Havre—took lines like those which formerly existed in the real estuary. Also a small channel appeared on the northern shore of the estuary by Harfleur and Hoc Point—a few miles above Havre—which is clearly marked in the chart of 1834. The main channel also shifted about in the estuary, and showed a tendency to break up into two or three channels at a place where the influences of the flood and ebb tides seemed nearly alike and in some sense balancing. The model thus reproduced very nearly the conditions of the real estuary forty or fifty years ago, before the training-walls which exist at present were begun; but the depth of the channels was not as great—as represented by the proportionately large vertical scale—as in the real river, on account, as Mr Vernon-Harcourt supposes, of the small scouring influence possessed by the minute currents in the model. 'The sand,' he says, 'in fact cannot be reduced to a fineness corresponding to the scale of the model, whilst the friction on the bed is not diminished equivalently to the reduction in volume of the current.'

The silver sand used at first was found to be too heavy, and not sufficiently mobile for the model. In carrying on the experiments various substances were tried, to imitate the suspended sediment carried down by the river, the desideratum being something 'insoluble in water, easily scoured, and therefore not pasty or sticky, and sufficiently fine or light to be carried in suspension to some extent by the currents in the model, and not merely rolled along the bottom like the silver sand.' After trying pumice in powder, flower of sulphur, pounded coke, fuller's earth,

lupine seed, coffee-grounds, &c., all of which proved unsatisfactory for various reasons, Mr Vernon-Harcourt found a kind of fine sand with a small admixture of peat on Chobham Common, which suited his purpose. With this sand he formed the bed of the estuary.

In 1848, training-works were commenced in the Seine estuary. The original intention was to continue the trained channel down as far as Honfleur, on the southern side; and to prolong one or both of the training-walls towards Havre, which is situated farther down the river on the opposite side, the interests of both these ports having to be considered. In 1870, the training-walls had reached Berville, about thirteen miles above Havre. At this stage the works were suddenly stopped in the interests of the port of Havre, on account of the large unexpected deposits which were taking place behind the training-walls, and at the sides of the wide estuary below them. Many different schemes have been proposed, especially within the last few years, for extending these works with the object of training and deepening the shifting channel below Berville, and improving the access to Honfleur without endangering the approaches to Havre.

After having reproduced in his model the state of the estuary before the training-walls were constructed, Mr Vernon-Harcourt next proceeded to insert strips of tin, to represent the training-walls as they are at present. These strips were cut to the proper heights according to the scales, and bent to shape, and inserted piece by piece; the model being worked for some time after each piece was put in, in order to imitate as closely as possible the real conditions. The result was that the foreshores at the back of the training-walls were raised by accretions of sand, and the channel between the walls was scoured out in the model as in the actual estuary. Also the accretions extended down beyond the ends of the walls as far as Honfleur on the left bank, and Hoc Point on the right, and a certain channel near Harfleur was filled up—all these changes corresponding with the actual changes in the Seine.

The success of these experiments with the existing walls gives encouragement to suppose that the further experiments afterwards carried out to try the effects of several of the proposed schemes do really indicate more or less exactly what would ensue in each case if the works were constructed.

The schemes experimented on may be divided into three classes: (1) Outlet of estuary considerably restricted. Channel trained inside towards outlet. (2) Channel trained in sinuous line, expanding towards outlet, but kept narrow at changes of curvature. And (3) channel trained in as direct a course as practicable and expanding regularly to outlet. The last form of channel proves to be decidedly the most promising. In the first class of schemes there is a tendency to the formation of a bar in front of the narrowed outlet, also the channel tends to be irregular in depth, and deposits accumulate inside the estuary; while in the second class, the advantages expected by the designers through making use of the scour at the concave face of bends were not realised.

These experiments may prove very useful, not only as affording guidance in the choice of a scheme for the training-works in the Seine estuary, but also as indicating some general principles

for the guidance of harbour engineers in other places. Direct experiments on models for each estuary where harbour-works are contemplated would be very desirable, where possible, in order to reproduce the special conditions of the estuary to be investigated.

MR GATHERWICK'S PRODIGAL.

THERE was a pause in the Gatherwick office. The half-hour after five had rung out some minutes before; six was closing-time; and it was one of the articles of Mr McCallum's creed that it was injurious to the constitution to pass straight from the whirl of business to the chill outside air. Mr McCallum was chief-clerk; there were but two; and whenever it was practicable—that is to say whenever Mr Gatherwick himself was not present in person—he made a point of allowing a suitable margin for general conversation, before the two descended the stairs and set their faces homewards.

It was Mr McCallum, of course, who was leading the conversation to-night, and the subject of all others that had come to the front was the case of the Prodigal Son, suggested possibly by a circumstance that had occurred that same morning. Among the letters by the second post had been one in a big dashing hand, which without reading further than the head of the first page, Mr Gatherwick had promptly put into a fresh envelope and re-directed, presumably to the place it had come from; but he had posted it himself, instead of leaving it with the others to the junior clerk, Davidson. Davidson took a special interest in that dashing handwriting, and was labouring under a sense of injury accordingly.

'For myself, I never quite agreed with all the fuss that was made over that young renegade,' Mr McCallum was remarking with an emphatic flourish of his ruler. 'It's not the practice, in these days at anyrate; and I'd not advise any one to follow his example on the chance of getting the like reception.'

'Then you would have left him to starve, I suppose?' returned Davidson, who represented the entire audience.

'Not entirely—moderation in all things. He might have been taken in on probation for a time, till they saw how far his reform was to be depended upon.—No; on the whole, I'm not saying but I agree with Mr Gatherwick.'

'Mr Gatherwick is obliged to you, sir,' said a deep voice from behind; 'but instead of discussing matters that do not concern you, kindly put up your books and go.'

Mr McCallum collapsed. He did as he was bidden in perfect silence, too overcome even to attempt an apology. Davidson followed him as swiftly as possible, and Mr Gatherwick was left in solitary possession of the field. A limited and very dusty field; but the stiffest battle of his prosperous life had been fought out there. It was the old story: his only son, easy, careless, thoughtless—in all respects the antipodes of his father—mistakes in the cash-book—inquiries hushed up—disgrace, and banishment. That had happened two years ago, and this morning's was the third letter that had been sent back unread.

Mr Gatherwick was at one end of the pole, Mr

McCallum at the other, yet both held precisely the same view on one subject. The prodigal in that old parable had been forgiven much too easily; the father had exhibited an amiable weakness that was altogether reprehensible under the circumstances. Mr Gatherwick involuntarily commended himself for his sounder principles, and felt that he had done righteously in returning that unread letter.

And yet, somewhere underneath was a faint uneasy sense of discomfort—of something wanting. For what end was he working now? He had no irreproachable elder son to fall back upon. Hospitals and almshouses are useful institutions, but few men labour with enthusiasm for their sole behoof. He might endow another school, perhaps; but there appeared to be schools in abundance already, and he himself was a self-taught man. Mr Gatherwick abruptly wound up his reflections at this unsatisfactory stage, locked up his safes and rooms, and hurried away down the stairs and through the busy gas-lighted streets to his handsome solitary house, wherein dwelt no one person to watch and wait for his advent.

The letter went back whence it came—not very far; it was from an English seaport town this time; the last had been from New York. It went back, and was greeted with sore dismay.

'That is the last time I will ever trouble him, Nell,' said Maurice Gatherwick, the younger, flinging it into the fire. 'He does not know what forgiveness means, and he need not begin to learn now, as far as I am concerned.'

Nell looked up from her stitching with a disappointed face. 'O Maurice, I was so sure he would tell you to come home when he found you were so near. What are we to do?'

'Don't fret, Nell. I'll have a hunt round the shipping houses here; and if the worst comes to the worst, well, we can go back to Glasgow on our own account.'

'Do you think it's because—because you married me?' she asked anxiously a minute or two after.

'No, Nell; that it certainly is not. He has not even read the letter, nothing but the address to which he could send it back again.'

When Maurice set out to the far country—New York in his case—Nell and her mother had been fellow-passengers. The mother had been ailing all the journey, and died the day before they reached Sandy Hook. Nell was left solitary, almost penniless. Maurice's sole fortune was two hundred pounds, descended to him from his mother. What could have been a more suitable arrangement than that they should marry and combine their joint misfortunes?

Somehow the States had not proved the Eldorado they had expected. There Maurice gained his first personal experience of poverty. He had no associations of that kind with his own country, and naturally came to the conclusion that once back, it would be an easier matter to find some employment that would eke out their scanty means, beside the hope that Mr Gatherwick might relent and be willing to overlook the past miserable folly. But that hope had to be struck out of their calculations now, and they were not through the first week yet.

The shipping houses followed suit. 'There is only one course left, Nell; we must go back to Glasgow,' Maurice announced at the end of the

second week. 'There will be a better chance there for me; I know the places.'

And so the little tent was pitched once more, and Maurice found himself back among the old haunts—with a difference. Then he had been a rich man's son and heir, now he was one of the rank and file, and the rank and file were inconveniently plentiful, it seemed to him, during that long quest after a clerkship.

'Hurrah! I've got it at last,' he cried, one rainy night, leaping up the stairs into the shabby sitting-room. 'Forty pounds a year, and a steady rise of a pound. Why, in seventy years I'll have—I'll have one hundred and ten!—Never mind, Nell; it's better than doing nothing.'

'A great deal better,' assented Nell cheerfully. 'It will seem quite a fortune after all the failures; only I do think you ought to be worth more than that, Maurice.'

'I used to think so too; but all depends from what point you look at it. Davidson at our office had forty, and it never occurred to me that it was too little. I should like to see that lad again,' he went on, starting off on a new track, as was his fashion. 'He would have done anything for me in those days. I'll look him up when we get settled down here.'

They were both thankful for this clerkship, very thankful; but when one has been in a certain groove for a lifetime, it is not easy changing into another, and those two idle desultory years had not been altogether the best training for a daily steady grind. Maurice liked pleasure and sunshine and ease generally; prodigals are not usually a race of immaculate heroes; time and space granted, his prospects of attaining the giddy height of that hundred and ten stipend were but faint. The novelty wore off in the first three days, and then it was only sheer necessity for himself and Nell that kept him to his post.

'I understand those husk banquets now very well,' he remarked one day to Nell; 'but if that prodigal had had my stool and forty pounds a year, he would have hurried off home even quicker than he did.'

'Don't you think you might try once more?' suggested Nell half under her breath. 'He has no one but you.'

'No,' said Maurice decidedly; 'that's settled. I sent a message to Davidson to come and look us up to-night. Can we afford to give him a cup of tea, Nell?'

'Oh yes,' laughed Nell; 'two, if you don't mind it being a little weak. They say it's bad for the nerves too strong.'

'I couldn't say, it's so long since we had a chance of judging. Never mind; Davidson is not particular.'

Maurice had an extra turn at the grindstone that day, and did not reach home for some time after the visitor's arrival. Nell was sitting by the fire, trying to keep up the conversation, with rather indifferent success. She broke off with a sigh of relief at the sound of her husband's foot on the stairs. Davidson flushed a sudden uncomfortable scarlet; he got up off his seat, and then stood grasping the back and hesitating. However, there was no hesitation about Maurice; he greeted his father's clerk as if they had parted yesterday, and under the most ordinary circumstances, and were meeting now in the paternal

mansion, instead of this fourth-flat threadbare lodging.

'And you are still in the old place, my boy? and M'Callum too? just as usual.'

'Yes, sir.—I'm glad to see you back, Mr Maurice; the place has not been right since you went.—Are you—are you —?'

'No, Davidson; I'm *not*.—Don't run away with any ideas of that kind. That ended some time ago. I have just got to peg on here and help myself.'

'But do you like it, Mr Maurice?'

'Candidly speaking, I can't say I do; but needs must, you know.'

Davidson looked unsatisfied. 'It doesn't seem right,' he was beginning dolefully.

Maurice interrupted his lamentation. 'It's no use crying over spilt milk, my boy. Take you a solemn warning by my case, and don't slide into crooked ways. You don't slide back again as smoothly, by any means.—Now, draw up your chair, and we will have some tea.'

That was the first of Davidson's visits. They continued regularly all the rest of the winter; through the hot stifling summer, when only dust and heat spoke of the green glory that hovered over the whole land beyond this wilderness of stone and lime. Maurice longed as he had never longed in his life for one sight of tossing waves and breezy moors; only there was the landlady and the butcher and the baker, and a whole army of smaller satellites planted between, barring the way.

'Davidson, stay behind to-night; I wish to speak to you,' said Mr Gatherwick in a peremptory voice, one day when that dusty summer was merging into autumn. He was opening his private door as he spoke, and he passed in and shut it to with an ominous click.

Mr M'Callum twirled round on his stool to inspect the delinquent. 'What pranks have you been up to now, Davidson?'

'None that I know of,' was the answer; 'unless'—There he stopped, with a sudden fear that he *did* know, and that there would be a bad half-hour before him. How it could have come to his master's ears puzzled him; he had never mentioned Mr Maurice's name even to M'Callum.

'Well,' pursued Mr M'Callum curiously, 'there is something, and you know that quite well. Better make a clean breast of it at once. Don't wait till it's a case of disappearing, like—well—like some one who shall be nameless. The downward track is easy, but there's no turning back, mind.'

'There ought to be a turning back,' said Davidson gloomily; 'it's hard lines if one slip is to be reckoned up against one always.'

Mr M'Callum whistled. 'So you have been slipping. I thought as much, and you cannot say I have not warned you often enough against trying that prodigal business.'

With a solemn shake of the head, Mr M'Callum turned round to his desk again. There were sounds of some one moving about the inner office, and Mr Gatherwick might reappear at any moment; and in much uneasiness of spirit Davidson also went on with his invoicing.

'Now, then,' began Mr Gatherwick sternly, when six had arrived and, very unwillingly,

McCallum had retired down-stairs—'How long have you been in communication with my son, may I ask?'

'Since last January,' came the unwilling answer.

'Indeed, knowing it to be against my orders.'

'I didn't know it, sir,' said Davidson, blushing at his own audacity. 'You never said we were not to speak to him, and Mr Maurice was very kind to me when he was here.'

'It is not to happen again,' said Maurice's father decidedly. 'I will have no go-betweens in this office. Mr Maurice ought to have known better than to employ you in such a capacity.'

'He had no thought of any such thing,' began the culprit earnestly; 'and he's working so hard, he that'—

'That is enough,' interrupted his master. 'Pay attention to what I have said.—That is all; you may go now.'

Davidson's strongest point was not valour; he went down disconsolately. At the end of the street he encountered McCallum; not that that gentleman was waiting there for the purpose, only seeing—as he mentally phrased it—that there was a screw loose somewhere, it was but considerate to try to put it right, the first step of course being to find out which screw it was.

But that was the difficulty. Davidson flatly declined to give him any information about the matter, and thereby laid the foundation of a coolness that for weeks after completely took the gilt off those constitutional half-hours before closing-time.

Winter set in early that year, early and very bleakly. Week after week the bitter east winds went driving down the streets which Maurice Gatherwick trudged daily back and forwards, scantily clothed, and often scantily fed; little wonder that he felt it keenly.

'I think we must be growing old, Nell,' he remarked one night as he came in with blue fingers and chattering teeth. 'I used to enjoy frost and snow thoroughly, instead of shivering along after this fashion. They say you do feel the cold more when you are getting on in life.'

'It is a new overcoat you are needing, Maurice,' she said, stirring the tiny fire to a blaze. 'Couldn't we manage one? It is such a long way to that office, and you must keep well.'

'Nell, do you know how much cash I possess at this present moment? Just three-and-ninepence. If you will persuade any tailor to furnish one for that, you are heartily welcome to try. Afterwards, you might look up a shoemaker on the same terms; I am needing boots worse still; look at those.'

Nell shook her head.

'Well, well,' said Maurice, with an attempt at looking resigned, 'another month, and the worst of the winter will be over, if we can only hold out.'

If—Before that month was over, the prodigal's brief career was ended. Utterly unfitted for the battle, either by nature or training, it ended as any one might have safely foretold from the first. One morning he was not equal to going down to the office; he would rest and go fresh to-morrow; but to-morrow he did not want to leave his bed, and a cheap doctor had to be hastily sent for.

The doctor spoke of a touch of pleurisy, and a constitution below par, and promised to send in a bottle of medicine and come again to-morrow.

Nell put on her bonnet after dark and raced round to Davidson's lodging.

'He looks so ill,' she sobbed out. 'Oh, do go and tell his father; he wants better food and so many things we cannot get.'

'It'll not make any difference, Mrs Maurice. You don't know what Mr Gatherwick is when he makes up his mind.'

'But for his own son. Do go and tell him,' pleaded Nell.

'It's as much as my place is worth,' said Davidson, aghast beyond measure. 'But it's Mr Maurice. I'll try it.'

Nell went back to her husband. Davidson buttoned up his coat without giving himself time to think, and hurried off to the dull stately house where Maurice had been born and brought up.

'See Mr Gatherwick! Why, he's just at dinner,' said the scandalised man to whom he made his request.

'Dinner or not, you must tell him it's important.'

The man debated for a moment; he was new to the situation, and perhaps scarcely realised the risk. He opened a door close by, and Davidson could hear the message delivered.

'There's the young man from the office, sir, Davidson by name, wishing to see you, and won't take no denial.'

'Davidson? Show him in.'

With his first glance down the brilliantly lighted table, there flashed across the visitor some odd fancy about the fatted calf; it was there in abundance; but this father was eating it alone.

'Well, what has brought you out here?' demanded Mr Gatherwick without laying down his fork.—'You may leave the room,' with a glance at the man in waiting.

'It's Mr Maurice, sir; he's very ill, and his wife's frightened about him. She's too poor to get him what he ought to have.'

At that same table—Davidson could have touched the spot with his hand—had once stood Maurice's chair. Perhaps Mr Gatherwick thought of it also for one fleeting instant before he remembered his principles.

'The old story,' he said impatiently. 'We have heard it all before. I thought I told you some time ago that I would have no communication between you.'

'And I have never been there since,' said Davidson; 'but'—for the first time daring to assert himself in opposition to the great Mr Gatherwick—'I've not forgotten him, and I'm going straight to him now.'

The fatted calf might have played unmolested in its native fields, for all Mr Gatherwick consumed after his clerk's departure. He had believed in and stood by certain rules and principles all his life; his son had gone counter to both. If he were to bring him back to-morrow and put him in the old place, how long would it last? Could he risk that sore disgrace a second time? Possibly at no distant date. This exile meant more to him than it could to Maurice. He had lost the most by it: a solitary old age stretched before him; better that, than to build up fresh plans with a broken faith for foundation. Maurice was young,

and would find out new interests—nay, had found them already. Nothing ever troubled him long, thought the father bitterly; and he sat still and made no sign, while the slow hours ticked themselves past.

Davidson went away to McCallum in the sudden revolt, and told him the tale of Maurice's wrongs. McCallum listened in much perplexity. His theories about prodigals were well known; had he not reiterated them over and over again in Davidson's unwilling ears? And yet he, too, had liked Mr Maurice; prodigals often are rather likeable people—he would go and see him at anyrate, and there would be no harm done if they took some jelly or wine with them.

'I believe it was black currant jelly they used to give me when I was ill,' he remarked on the way. 'We had better buy a pot; it's said to be strengthening stuff, if you give it a fair trial.'

This patient was past giving it a fair trial; he smiled faintly up in McCallum's perplexed face—talked a little disconnectedly about Nell, and his father, and school-pranks long ago—and finally drifted away to a much farther country just before daybreak.

Nell laid her face down on the pillow beside him with a burst of passionate tears. 'We were poor, and hungry, and cold often; but he never said an unkind word to either mother or me since the first day we saw him; and I'll love him—I'll love the very sound of his name all the days of my life.'

And some of us—not prodigals by several degrees—need not complain if we get no better epitaph.

There is something to be said on both sides. Was ever yet a flawless unassailable case recorded? Cheap victories are worth little. Mr Gatherwick vindicated his principles thoroughly, carried them out to the end; but there are times when he sits alone at nights listening to that clock ticking out the hours, and feels that he would give all his wealth for one sight of the young face that lapsed out of the march long before its time, for lack of a helping word he might have spoken—a hand that he might have stretched out.

GIBRALTAR A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

THE celebration of the tercentenary of the Armada raised a transitory interest in Spanish history, and, consequently, in anything connected with our occupation of the mighty Rock-fortress of Gibraltar, to obtain which so many hard-fought battles and sieges have been withstood, and to retain which requires a strong garrison of troops ever ready for any possible though not probable emergency. A perusal of the archives of the garrison since it came into our possession in 1704 gives a little insight into the curious customs and mode of carrying on the government of the place; and the following extracts, collected from the General Orders published between 1700 and 1800, will no doubt prove interesting.

Desertion seems to have been a source of much trouble to successive governors of Gibraltar. In September 1757 the following General Order was issued: 'Four men will be shot for desertion on Windmill Hill in presence of the whole garrison.—*By order of the court-martial.*' These poor fellows fared badly; and no doubt a similar fate would

have befallen the four men referred to in the next extract, but for the kind recommendation of the Spanish general: 'In accordance with the convention, the Spaniards have returned to the garrison four deserters. The Spanish general having been pleased to beg the governor not to inflict the full penalty, it is hereby ordered that three of them have a yellow paper put in their hats, written "Traitor to the King, Country, and Religion," and the other, who has added robbery to his crime, has a green paper, with "Traitor to his King, Country, and Religion, and a Thief," and be marched through the town.'

In some cases it would appear that 'one more chance' was given, according to the humanity or temper for the time being of the governor; for instance: 'James Jewett, of Brigadier Clayton's regiment, has been shot; he, with five other men, having been condemned for desertion. At the place of execution, two were reprieved, and the remainder drew lots for their lives, Jewett being the loser.' And not only were the soldiers themselves sufferers, but the officer came in for a share of the penalty when the deserter escaped altogether: 'Be it known for the future that if any officer's servant desert when absent from the regiment, the said officer shall replace him with a good recruit, or pay twenty-five dollars for the non-effective.'

Summary vengeance was also placed in the power of the sentries, as would appear from the following: 'Yesterday, during bathing, one of the soldiers had the audacity to swim off and desert. Sentries are now commanded to fire on any man who swims beyond fifty yards and refuses to return when ordered.'

Punishments were heavy and swift; and no doubt the discipline of the garrison required a strong hand. For example: 'Private Thomas — to receive ten hundred lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails, so much of the punishment as he can bear to be received at one time on the Grand Parade, and the rest afterwards; the last fifty lashes will be administered by the common hangman between the Southport and Waterport gates, where he will be drummed out of the garrison with a halter round his neck.'

Occasionally, when special works were being executed and labour was costly, it was found an advantage to give prisoners a chance of avoiding some part of their sentence. In 1749, General Bland issued the subjoined Order: 'Men sentenced by court-martial to corporal punishment may commute the same by working on the new road to the signal station, as follows: fifty to one hundred lashes, one day's work; one hundred to two hundred lashes, two days' work; and so on.—*By Order,*

GENERAL BLAND.'

Politics could not be so freely indulged in as at the present day, for 'Mr — is hereby ordered out of the garrison for drinking the health of the Pretender. If he has not left in two hours from this, he will be forcibly turned out.'

The post of executioner at the period must have been anything but a sinecure. He required special protection. 'Samuel Lewis having been duly appointed executioner for this garrison, the governor orders that no person shall offer any abuse to the said Lewis, either by throwing stones or striking or upbraiding him on account of his unpleasant duties—on pain of the severest punish-

ment.' And the above Order being ineffectual, we find shortly afterwards that 'Notwithstanding the Order lately issued, the governor finds that Lewis the executioner has been abused by soldiers and others throwing stones at him, breaking his head, and maltreating him grossly. Whoever shall be found, hereafter, acting in a similar manner in face of these Orders shall be whipped severely by the said executioner until he is satisfied.'

The jailer, even, was not allowed to possess a feeling heart, as the following Order implies: 'It is reported that the provost-sergeant of the Moorish castle does not inflict the whole of the punishment awarded to prisoners under his care. Now it is ordered that, in future, when this occurs he shall receive the remainder himself.'

The common executioner was not the only person who became obnoxious to the inhabitants. On the occasion of the visit to the garrison of the Alcalde of Tetuan it became necessary to appoint a man specially to protect him and his suite: 'During the visit of the Alcalde of Tetuan an orderly sergeant shall be attached to the Moor who is his secretary, to prevent the sailors or soldiers abusing him and his countrymen.'

Gambling and billiard-playing were rife then, as now: 'Billiards shall not be played after second gun-fire in the evening, on peril of having the table broken to pieces and burned on the public parade.'—'Gaming, especially the game of "Devil-and-the-Tailors" and "skittles," will not be allowed in any winehouse.'—'Between June 1st and September 13th no soldier will be allowed to play at fives.'

Robbery had to be dealt with in the absence of police and detectives. Amongst the troops, petty pilfering of the food and clothing having been discovered, an Order was issued to meet the case: 'It having been divulged that soldiers have a method of surreptitiously disposing of their necessities, which they call "fighting a cock," the governor now positively orders that this practice be discontinued, otherwise the men belonging to the barrack-room where this custom takes place will pay the value of the said necessities.' And as this was not successful, possibly from favouritism, the governor determined to make some one responsible: 'It being evident that no robberies can be committed but what may be discovered by the sergeants and corporals, it is ordered that they pay for all if the offender is not brought to light.' When a robber was caught he was made an example of: 'John —, who committed the robbery at the storehouse, will be executed at guard-mounting to-morrow morning at the said storehouse. The body, with a label on the breast, on which is written the word "Plunderer," to remain hanging till sunset.'

Not only were the rations of the soldiers stolen, but the charges actually abstracted from the guns, for what purpose other than mischief is mysterious: 'Some evil person having been so unsoldier-like and scandalous as to have drawn the charges and stolen the gunpowder from eighteen guns, a reward of one hundred dollars is offered for the detection of the infamous thief.—The punishment is death.'

At last, a General Order was promulgated, calling upon the civil inhabitants to turn themselves into special constables for the putting down of crime: 'Every night, certain inhabitants armed

with a permit from the town-major must patrol the streets to prevent robberies. The military patrols are not to interfere with them, but must render assistance if required. And during the day, officers and non-commissioned officers commanding guards are to send out patrols frequently with their arms unloaded to kill every dog they see going about the streets. They are not to fire at any dog, but to kill by stabbing or some other way.'

The extermination of dogs here referred to must have been a wholesome practice worthy of imitation at the present time, when the streets of the garrison are overrun by mongrels of all shapes and sizes. Many of these are, however, only day-visitors from Spain, trained to smuggle tobacco, which is fixed upon their backs and sides like pack-saddles; in which state they are sent off to their homes in the Spanish lines, running the chance of a stray shot from some carabiniere.

Horses and donkeys appear to have been a source of annoyance to the governor at some period, for he gives notice that, 'Any donkeys loose in the town are to become the property of the person taking them away; and any straying on the ramparts are to be shot by the sentries.'—'If any horses are found on the hill to-morrow, the governor will order out a firing-party and shoot them.'—And, again, he aims a blow at horse-racing: 'In consequence of the rioting and disorders which happened yesterday, the governor expressly forbids any more horse-racing.' But this has since been rescinded, as racing is now one of the chief amusements of the garrison.

The sentries at the English lines required continual watching and strict discipline to keep them up to their duties. The Orders dealing with them are very numerous, and a few of the most quaint are selected. Here is a funny one: 'The court-martial assembled to decide whether a sentry quitting his post before relieved, or found sleeping on duty, should be punished by "running the gantlet," or whipped at his post, according to the custom of the garrison ever since it came into the hands of the English; resolved, that in consequence of the scarcity of twigs, "running the gantlet" cannot be continued, and the duty of the garrison being very heavy, no time can be spared to collect them.'

The following may have acted as a suggestion to Lord Wolseley: 'It is intended shortly to issue a little treatise or pocket-book for the instruction of officers and soldiers of this garrison, wherein they may learn what is in future to be considered a breach of duty deserving punishment. From it they will discover that a sentry-box and a shower of rain can justify a sentry in acting in a manner that has hitherto been looked upon as a most notorious breach of discipline.'

When the gates were locked at evening gun-fire, a special salute was required for the keys: 'All guards to rest and beat a march to the keys, town-guard excepted.' And a good attempt at keeping sentries awake was devised by this Order: 'All sentries who do not cry out "All's well" every two minutes shall be punished with two hundred lashes.'

The art of saluting gracefully was duly impressed upon the troops, even at this early date: 'When a soldier passes an officer, he shall look

him respectfully in the face and carry his hand gracefully to his head in salute.'

From the next excerpt it would appear that some special distaste for the duty was felt by the sergeant-major referred to, or surely a verbal command to attend the court-martial would have met the case: 'Captain — being appointed president of the court-martial to be holden to-morrow, the sergeant-major of his regiment will attend the said court and write down the proceedings.'

At the commencement of the present century, an epidemic of smallpox visited the Rock. This caused the issue of an Order stating that 'Cowpox being not so contagious as smallpox, a general inoculation for the former disease is hereby ordered.' And afterwards, the sight of victims being obnoxious to the inhabitants, an Order was put out defining that 'People marked with the smallpox are not permitted to stand at their doors or go into the streets. No mackerel to be suffered to come into town.—By order.' Where the 'mackerel joke'—if it is a joke—comes in, is not sufficiently explicit. And when scurvy attacked the troops, thirty thousand lemons and two thousand pounds of onions were issued in accordance with the Order quoted below: 'Lemons and onions will be issued to the troops without stint, on account of the prevailing scurvy.'

The following summary Order speaks for itself: 'Ships coming into the bay without showing their colours are to be fired upon, and the cost of the shot recovered when the port-dues are collected.'

The creditors of the civil and military inhabitants had evidently been 'walking round' the governor previous to the publication of the following: 'When the bounty-money is paid, all good soldiers are expected to pay their debts, and it is recommended to all volunteers also to apply at least half of the amount in a similar liquidation.'

Fishermen supplying fish to the garrison seem to have been somewhat arbitrarily dealt with. An Order was early promulgated that no fish whatever was to be offered for sale until the governor's table was supplied; but in 1759 this edict was modified by Lord Home, as follows: 'It having been represented to the governor that the practice of bringing fish to the convent for selection by His Excellency's servant, before being allowed to dispose of same to the general public, was a hurt to them, Lord Home hereby cancels that Order; but commands that they do not sell or dispose of any of their fish before the governor's servant has bought what may be required for his table; and the servant employed for that purpose will have orders to be early at the market every morning, and to acquaint the officer of the guard as soon as he has bought sufficient.'

It is apparent that considerable jealousy and bickering were engendered by the fish question. The governor having been supplied, various favoured individuals got the next pick, to the annoyance of the general public; and upon representing the matter to the authorities, the following General Order came out: 'Whereas several fishermen have offended by bringing their best fish into the town for particular persons, instead of displaying it in the public market

—it is ordered that all fish must be sold there in future, and none hawked or sold about the town on pain of the man being seized and the fish forfeited.'

What gave rise to the next extracted Order is not disclosed: 'The governor hopes that for the future no person living in the garrison will send out any letter, parchment, or anything else into Spain through the Landport gate, without first acquainting him and obtaining his sanction.' Nor why there should have been any necessity to give Orders like the following: 'Any man who has the misfortune to be killed is to be buried by the guard where it happens, and his clothes sent to his regiment.'

Here is a General Order defining where, how, and when people may walk on fine evenings: 'Inhabitants are permitted to perambulate the streets of the town or the road to the New Mole and South Barracks till nine p.m. without a light. After that hour, no one will be permitted to be out without a light; and no inhabitant can be out after ten without a permit as well as a light.'

The 'powdered-hair-and-queue' period was one of considerable anxiety to the government, as would appear from the following precise General Order: 'In consequence of some officers not having hair long enough, and finding it difficult to form a queue to their head, it is ordered that such officers may, for a period restricted to two months, during which time the hair will grow, be permitted to affix a queue otherwise. But on no account will the two months be extended.'

Again: 'On account of the scarcity of flour, no soldier will be allowed to powder his hair till further orders: and to economise cartridges, each man will have a charge of powder issued to him in a cane, and a loose ball, which he will carry in the cock of his hat.' The last mandate was, however, due to the scarcity of provisions and ammunition at a moment of peril. Butter, too, ran short: 'In consequence of the scarcity of butter, an additional supply of bread will be issued as an equivalent.'

Then, on the unexpected arrival of more troops, the following Order became necessary: 'In consequence of the want of barrack accommodation, it is ordered that the four regiments of Kerr, Pearce, Egerton, and Bisset sleep their men three in a bed, and as many beds in a room as possible. These arrangements to be made in the morning.'

Various governors have been much exercised how to prevent suicides, and their detestation of the crime may be assumed from a perusal of the following Orders: 'It is the General's Order that Edmund — of the —th regiment be placed upon the gibbet at the top of the hill, as a mark of ignominy for his abominable stupidity and wickedness in disobeying the laws of God by committing suicide.'—'A man of the —th regiment has been so wicked and cowardly as to hang himself. The commanding officer is ordered therefore to put all possible disgrace on such a heinous crime, and treat the corpse with the greatest ignominy. No funeral service shall be held over it; but the body shall be hung, heels upwards, for two hours, and then flung over the line wall like a cat or dog.'—'Yesterday was discovered the skeleton of a soldier at the

foot of the rock, broken to pieces and otherwise unrecognisable. The only marks to distinguish which regiment he belonged to were the letters "J. Y." on his stockings. Any regiment having lost such a man will apply to the town-major forthwith and claim his bones.'

These were the good old days, when the Commander-in-chief was permitted to carry an umbrella without giving offence to the nation: 'No soldier or officer (except the Commander-in-chief) shall carry an umbrella when on duty.' Still, there was an evident wish on the part of the government to retain as far as possible the military appearance of the troops: 'The General desires to express his astonishment at meeting an officer coming from Spain dressed in a large straw hat and an umbrella; and, as if to add to the burlesque, another officer riding behind him. The General forbids any such indecency in future, and will not grant permits to any officer dressed in such an unmilitary manner.'

Funerals must have been performed in rather a perfunctory way to necessitate this Order: 'Chaplains attending funerals will please see that the grave is fully six feet deep before allowing the corpse to be lowered, and more particularly in the case of sailors buried without coffins. And also to see that the grave is properly filled up.'

Here is an encouraging notice, such as we may never expect to see issued in these red-tape days: 'Several valuable suggestions having been made to the governor lately by officers of the garrison, which have been or may be adopted and prove advantageous to the king's service, he wishes to invite further useful observations and hints from officers of all ranks, assuring them that such beneficial discoveries will be publicly acknowledged at the proper time by the proper authorities.'

The following Orders refer to the salutes to be fired on the king's birthday: 'All the guns in the garrison to be fired on the king's birthday.'—'This year [1788] fifty guns will be fired for the king, and twenty-one for the queen.'

We have saved the most important notice till the conclusion, because we believe the offer contained therein has not yet been accepted, and it may meet the eye of the delinquent or his descendants: 'Some gentleman visiting the governor has taken a hat belonging to Mr —, and left his own in its place. The governor gives notice that the owner of the remaining one may exchange hats at the convent, if he pleases.'

MY ORDERLY.

WHEN I was ordered up to the hills on duty, and left my regiment in the Punjab, I took formal leave of my sepoy orderly at the door of our forsaken bungalow, and presented him with all the old newspapers, broken chairs, tin boxes, bottles, and such other valuables as one generally leaves behind on seeking new pastures. But, to my astonishment, he rushed wildly on to the platform just as the train was starting, to give a final salute, gasping for breath, with great tears trickling down his black cheeks. He must have run after the *gari* all the way to the

station, or gone across country through compounds and over walls with wonderful agility for a lumbering six-foot Sikh. Anyhow, I was so touched by this unexpected display of emotion on the part of the simple sepoy, that stretching my arm out of the window, I warmly wrung his hand in a second farewell. Then I suppose he went sorrowfully back to see that nobody had appropriated his precious *Punches* and *Graphics*, and to haggle over the price of the bottles and biscuit-tins in the bazaar, while I rattled away to Lahore, sorry to part with my faithful but stupid *bâtman*. For he was thick-headed to a degree, and, with an intense desire to please, he combined the most astonishing faculty for working mischief and making mistakes in the simplest bit of work.

Once, shortly after he had come to us fresh from the lines, two ladies coming to call found this smiling giant in the veranda, and on hearing that the Memsahib was within, they placed in his unsuspecting hand several cards. This was evidently a new experience for Mana Singh; but being apparently some form of *dâk*—that is, post—he went into the drawing-room, which happened to be empty, and laid the cards on the table on which he had been taught to put letters. He then retired by another door to the back of the house to think over the matter, leaving the ladies to wait outside for a considerable time, when they were luckily seen by my bearer. After this, nothing would induce Mana Singh to face a lady coming to call, he being evidently in dread of meeting the victims of his previous error.

His conversation was absolutely unintelligible, the little Hindustani he knew being obscured by a strong Gurmukhi accent; and his shyness when in society, especially in the presence of ladies, was overwhelming. When he came into the room with one of his very numerous idiotic questions, his feelings generally deprived him of the slender powers of speech he possessed, and he had a trick of picking the whitewash off the wall with his nail, while his two big toes engaged in a furious battle with each other as he stood speechless with shamefaced emotion, the picture of imbecility. When my wife's risibility was naturally excited by this display, he would join in the laugh with a hysterical giggle which continued until he was sent outside to recover.

It was very risky to send him shopping in the bazaar; there was no saying what he might not invest in. After one alarming feat in this line, my wife gave up having his assistance in her housekeeping. He was sent to buy some soap, but evidently misunderstood what was wanted. After having been absent the whole day, during which, as he himself explained, he had ransacked both the Sadr Bazaar and the native city, he appeared triumphantly in the evening with a large living snake tied up in a cloth, which reptile he proudly let loose on the floor to everybody's consternation. Luckily, the snake was harmless; yet it was a most undesirable article of domestic economy, the very antithesis of soap, and so the crestfallen orderly had to return it the next day.

He was not a *shikari*, although very desirous

to figure as such. When we were marching along the Afghan frontier, I sometimes took him out shooting, if any of the more sporting Pathans of the regiment were not available. Then his ingenuity in getting into the way of the guns was remarkable. When beating grass jungle for black partridge his enthusiasm led him far in advance of the line, and on being shouted at in forcible language, he would come smiling back in the teeth of the guns, of course putting up the only old cock we had seen for half an hour, and causing another volley of expletives.

But it was in snipe-shooting that he excelled. He always managed to get stuck in the slimiest bits of the *jhil* or swamp; and when obliged to jump a ditch, he would give a wild ineffectual spring into the air, which usually landed him in the middle of the water, whence he ungracefully floundered, dripping and muddy, to the inexpressible delight of the Pathans who happened to be with us, and who considered his unsportsmanlike proclivities to be fair game. All this he took in the most perfect good-humour, and he would join in the laugh as he wiped the mud out of his eyes. Owing to these aquatic habits, it was dangerous to entrust to his care either cartridges or lunch. On Christmas Day he produced the haversack full of sandwiches, made extra good in honour of the occasion, in the condition of very muddy trifle, he himself covered from head to foot with the blackest mud. The state of his person he explained by the fact that he had been acting as an amateur diver in quest of the whisky bottle, at the bottom of a deep and slimy ditch into which he had dropped the precious liquid, and without which he knew better than to appear.

The camel which carried my belongings took a most particular dislike to Mana Singh, and made his life miserable by snapping ferociously at him whenever he came within reach while it was being loaded. This dislike on the camel's part was reciprocated by the orderly, combined with the most sincere terror for the animal, and what loading-up he did was very skirmishingly effected from the rear. But when the beast was safely on the road with my tent and bedding on its back, and the cord of bondage in its nostril, then he had his revenge as he walked airily along beside it, digging it in the ribs with his rifle, exhorting it to *chalo*, and generally behaving unkindly to it.

One day, when my bearer was ill, I entrusted to him the onerous duty of brewing my morning tea; and after a careful demonstration of the uses of the teapot, &c., I thought he might possibly succeed in preparing that beverage without a blunder. So the next morning, he stumbled into my tent in the dark at *réveille*, and after some mysterious evolutions with rattling cups and spoons, announced that the tea was ready. Then I shiveringly turned out into the freezing air, to find a cup half filled with a mixture of dry tea and sugar, with a teapot of hot water standing beside it. Great was his regret and profuse his promises to do better next time, when I explained to him that although this might be the best method of making tea according to Sikh ideas, yet it did not accord with the inscrutable customs of the Sahib-log.

In cantonments he had a great friend—a brother orderly who lived in the next compound. These two used to vie with each other as to whose house

would be most beautifully decorated with all the scraps of coloured paper and pictures they could lay their hands on. Mana Singh's dwelling was a dark little mud hut about ten feet square, with a narrow low door, in my servant's lines, and of this abode he was as proud as any rajah of his palace. Its walls were covered with advertisement sheets from the *Queen*, pictures from *Punch* and other papers, as often upside down as not, and in the place of honour a big chromo from some Christmas Number. I was often called on to admire when any new work of art was added to this gallery, and sometimes a joint request would be made to me, with much nudging and giggling between the disputants, that I should inspect Amar Singh's house as well, and give an impartial opinion as to which was the most artistic and beautiful. Besides the pictures, Mana Singh's house contained a *charpoy* or bedstead, half a dozen brass cooking vessels, highly polished and shining like gold, and a little mud fireplace in one corner. On the wall hung a diminutive mirror, an article in very frequent use, for our friend was exceedingly vain, and would spend hours sitting in the sun trimming his beard and combing his long hair, which he wore screwed into a knot and fastened on the top of his head with a little comb, in the usual Sikh fashion.

In spite of his stupidity, he had many good points, and I never could find the heart to relegate him to the lines. He was so proud of his position, and seemed to consider the bungalow and all it contained his own especial property, as he walked smilingly about the compound dazzling the eye in his garments and prodigious *pagri* of spotless white and his funny little scarlet waistcoat. Many a laugh we had over him and his ways, and I often wish that my present staid and proper little Goorkha possessed a little of the absurdity of honest Mana Singh.

STOWAWAYS.

A PARTY of us were seated in the smoking-room of the screw steamer *Vancouver* late one evening, engaged in filling the cabin with smoke and diminishing the ship's supply of rye whisky. Incidentally the conversation turned upon a somewhat curious character we had among the usual consignment of stowaways, and Captain S—, who formed one of the party, thereupon proceeded to relate some of his experiences in this connection. The captain was an excellent *raconteur*, and his style was true blue and quite inimitable. I have only retained the gist of his story, and will therefore make no attempt to give it in the language he used.

Hardly an ocean steamer bound for America leaves a port in Great Britain but it has four or five of these unfortunate creatures stowed away somewhere. Many captains make the discovery that they have twenty or even thirty of these undesirable passengers aboard, and that they have as many more mouths to feed. This makes some skippers pretty savage, as when they sail they have stores only proportionate to their crew, with due provisions for delays from stress of weather, will of God, &c.

The stowaways are recruited from all sorts and conditions of men, but as a general rule they are

mostly incapables and the scum of the streets of London and other great cities. It can be truthfully said of them as a class that their leaving their country is usually for their country's good. They hang around the docks until an opportune moment arrives for shipping aboard, and they usually select ships which are taking in a cargo of pipes or bricks or some other material in which they can make a comfortable hiding-place. As a general rule, they are assisted by the 'bumpers' or ship labourers, with whom they are leagued, and who, while loading a ship with brick, can easily build it up leaving a square room in a dark corner in which a dozen or two of stowaways can be accommodated with comparative comfort. When the cargo consists of pipes, the stowaways simply creep inside them, and wait patiently until they think the pilot has gone off and the vessel is well away from land. This plan has its little inconveniences, as, directly a ship leaves port, the officers start upon a tour of investigation, and often throw bricks and other material awakeners into the pipes. When they hear an appreciative howl, they make the stowaway crawl out. The majority of the men, however, either escape the bricks or bear the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune with Spartan fortitude, because it often happens that after the officers are satisfied that they have escaped this scourge, a dozen or so of stowaways come from below and begin to inhale the ozone in safety.

One officer in a Glasgow steamer, while looking through a consignment of bricks, suddenly discovered a nest in which eight men were seated in contemplative silence with their knees drawn up to their chins. They were all marched up on deck, and immediate preparations made for putting them on shore. Before the boat was lowered, two more came up on deck. These latter had divided their food in portions in order to last them until they were well out from shore; but in the darkness, they had apparently miscalculated the time and eaten too many meals. Their food had run out, and the ship was still in the Firth of Clyde. The whole party was then safely landed on the Cumbræ More, an island which only boasts of one town, and was sufficiently distant from Glasgow to give them considerable trouble to accomplish their return in the destitute condition they were in. The officer of the ship was therefore somewhat surprised, upon arriving at Montreal on his next voyage, to find some of these same men working on the wharfs.

Captains generally endeavour to land their stowaways as far as possible from any settlement, in order to make their ships unpopular with this class of passengers. The sufferings which some of these unfortunates endure under such circumstances are more easy to imagine than describe. They often have to walk a dozen miles or so in bad weather with insufficient clothing and without food or drink, after having passed through the horrors of being cooped up in a ship's hold two or three days.

When a ship is too far out from land to send a boat ashore, the captain is reduced to the necessity of taking all the work he can get out of the men, and he generally does this pretty effectually if there is only a moderate consignment of them. But it is hard for any captain to find work for twenty extra men, and in such a case, the smartest

of them are put to work as deck hands, and the rest are treated as steerage passengers and handed over to the police on arrival.

Captain S—— gave a rather ludicrous account of the experiences of a *confrère* some few years ago. His ship was hardly well out on the ocean when two stowaways made their appearance, and later in the day five more. The next morning six more came up; and during the two following days they kept coming up in twos and threes until they numbered twenty-five all told. The ship seemed to be teeming with stowaways, and the officer on watch was fairly bewildered. There was a plaintive pleading in his voice as he said to the last comer, 'Say, hadn't you better send the rest up at once.'—'They are all up now, sir,' replied the stowaway with repressed cheerfulness, and the officer gave a sigh of relief. When the vessel arrived at Quebec, the captain sent a despatch ashore with the pilot-boat to be forwarded to Montreal, asking that a detachment of the harbour police be at hand when the vessel came alongside, to arrest the men. The police were in readiness on the wharf; but the steamer stranded in mid-stream, and lighters had to be sent off to relieve her of part of the cargo. One of the lighters was alongside when darkness came on, and she had to lie-to until sunrise. When the lighter was fully loaded, she drew in to the wharf to discharge; but hardly was she moored, when there was a movement among some sacks, and a stowaway leaped out and made a break for the wharf. Another immediately sprang out from the other side; and in another instant the whole deck of the lighter was alive with stowaways, running up the wharfs and leaping over the obstacles that came in their way. The captain was powerless with amazement, and did nothing but stand and look on in a dazed sort of a way. When the last of them had cleared the vessel's side and things had quieted down a bit, he recovered himself, and walking over to the sacks, he poked carefully about among them, but finding nothing, he resumed his former position. Suddenly, another stowaway, who had been unable to get out with the rest, jumped up and cleared. This was too much, and the captain shouted: 'If there's any more passengers going ashore, they had better go now.' But the whole consignment had escaped free of duty.

AFTER HARVEST.

THE harvest now is over, and the sheaves

Lie dusky-bounden on the granary floor:

Across the breezy meadow-lands no more

The gleaners wander out on golden eves

To gather fallen ears; but forest leaves

Are fiery crimson that were green before,

And squirrels gather in their winter store

Where here and there a breath of Autumn grieves.

Thus as I wander o'er the lonely scene,

And stop to listen for hushed melodies—

(Only the fitful wailing of the breeze

Where birds have carolled 'mid their cloisters green)—

I ask the meadow-lands and forest trees

If they are sad at thought of what has been.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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A SHAKESPEAREAN SHRINE.

It is a far cry from Stratford-on-Avon to Brighthelmstone-on-Sea; and the association of two such opposite places is not at first sight very apparent: the one a comparatively remote, quiet, old-world, midland little town; and the other a modern, noisy, overgrown, fashionable watering-place. Yet, within the last twenty years a link has been forged which has for a time certainly established a distinct relationship between them. For, to the seaboard of the South Downs were conveyed from the valley of the Avon what it is not too much to call the rarest and choicest collection of Shakespearean relics ever brought together, scarcely excepting that at the birthplace.

It is a somewhat old story now; but as its interest is abiding, it may at least claim a reference when the anniversary of the divine poet's birth and death comes round. Moreover, the recent lamented decease of the owner of these rare treasures, Mr J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, adds another reason for reverently and affectionately touching on the subject. It is sufficient to say here that the collection consists of every variety of object—from pictures, engravings, original drawings, portraits, maps, plans, books, manuscripts, rare editions of the plays, down to the minutest items and articles which can have any bearing, or throw any light, on the life and writings of the Great Master. Their authenticity is amply guaranteed by the well-known and recognised position held by Mr Phillipps as the most learned authority on Shakespearean lore which the present or, indeed, any generation has known.

An able and appreciative commentator on his work speaks of Mr Phillipps' exhaustive book, *The Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, as 'a monument of zealous, devoted, intelligent labour;' and he further adds: 'The labour has indeed been one of love, and no pains have been spared to ascertain every fact, to record every tradition, and to trace out every inference which could directly or indirectly increase our knowledge and stir our fancies in connection with the life of the man of

the greatest intellect and the highest imagination that the world has yet seen.'

The relics in the Museum are the direct evidence, the *pièces de conviction*, as it were, which go far to establish our deductions from Shakespearean biography, notwithstanding their 'perplexing suggestions.' Many of them, however, carry us far beyond hypothesis, and prove beyond dispute the validity of 'our minimum of certain knowledge,' as recorded in *The Outlines* and elsewhere. 'Very few authentic personal relics of the great dramatist,' writes Mr Phillipps in the preface to his catalogue—'that is to say, "articles" that were at one time indubitably in Shakespeare's own possession, are known to be in existence. They are, in fact, restricted to the will now preserved in Somerset House and to a small number of title-deeds; for there is not a single other domestic memorial of any description the genuineness of which is not open to either doubt or suspicion. But that the title-deeds of his unmortgaged estate, those that are dated previously to the 23d of April 1616, were once in his own hands, does not admit of rational question; documents of this kind having been in his day jealously guarded by their owners, never being entrusted, as now, to the custody of solicitors. Of these title-deeds, there are no fewer than six in the present collection—the four New Place indentures, and the two original indentures of a fine between the poet and Hercules Underhill, that was levied in the year 1602.

'To these may, in all probability, though not with absolute certainty, be added the original conveyance of Shakespeare's Blackfriars estate, 1613, which was unquestionably on the table when the poet executed the concurrent mortgage; and as it must have been formally passed over to him, it is altogether most unlikely that he did not touch it with his own hands.'

This extract is sufficient to show the reliability to be placed on the various items, and the determined method adopted to reject everything of questionable authenticity. There is also a copy of the Dreshut portrait, the earliest engraved

likeness of the great dramatist in its original proof state, before it was altered by an inferior hand into the vitiated form in which it has been so long familiar to the public.

But our object is not to give an enumeration of the relics, so much as to remind those who may be interested in such matters, that a pilgrimage to the almost suburban hills behind Brighton, will, in a poetical and antiquarian sense, answer the purpose of a visit to the rural Warwickshire town. We have no concern with the motives which induced Mr Halliwell-Phillipps to establish his antiquarian Museum in what would seem to be a locality entirely out of harmony with such possessions; for nothing can be well conceived in greater contrast than is the aspect of Stratford-on-Avon and its surrounding scenery, and that of the villa-bedecked, cockneyfied environs of Babylon-by-the-Sea. At the same time, it must not be thought that the position of the fir-girt pile of buildings known as 'Hollingbury Copse' is entirely devoid of attraction. It lies about a mile and a half along the Ditchling Road as approached from the rear of Brighton; and the steep ascent which has to be made all the way is sufficient to prove that it must command a fine view of Down-land, town and sea. The weather-worn belt of trees enshrouding it is similar to many a 'spinney' here and there to be met with on the face of these wind-swept uplands. The house itself is described as being 'on the plan of a farmhouse at Stratford.' It is erected entirely of wood, cased in galvanised iron, and painted in imitation of the half-timbered style of the Elizabethan period. The rooms being all on the same floor are open to the roof. The corridors leading from one part of the building to another bear Shakespearean names, and are denominated 'lanes;' whilst in and around the house are apt quotations, painted by friends of the owner, and selected from the works of the great dramatist whose genius he worshipped. Although he is now gone from amongst us, it is gratifying to learn from his own statement that the invaluable contents will in all probability be kept together, and allowed to remain beneath the roof he loved so well, and where the last hours of his peaceful well-spent life were passed.

Therefore, for a while at least our suggestion may hold good; and the mere fact that so much of what was associated with the poet has found its *Walhalla* on the rolling Sussex Downs, is sufficient to convert the spot into a sacred shrine. Nay, it might be conceded by all save the hardened sceptic and matter-of-fact scientist, that there is enough and to spare within Hollingbury Copse to warrant the belief that the immortal spirit may at least once a year 'revisit the glimpses of the moon,' and wander from the banks of Avon across the combs and hollows of these southern hills—itsself to hallow by its presence the loving care and reverent regard there bestowed on everything which bears an earthly trace of that stupendous mind.

The worthy Stratford folks willingly acknowledge that on the 23d of April every year the nightingales salute with their first notes the advent of the phantom form. For not until that day, it is said, do the sweet birds deign to make

their presence known by song; but that with its coming, sure as the very date, each copse and brake, and every gray-leaved willow fringing the silver stream, is alive with their woodland melody. Only in this one way will the good burghers of the Warwickshire town account for this coincidence. The gifted songsters recognise their master's presence, and hail it with their own especial joyous strains, desiring mankind at large to share in their delight. This being so, shall we deny a similar privilege to those who dwell upon the southern seaboard? True, there are no nightingales to do the spirit homage, but it would be hard on that account to forbid indulgence in the pretty fancy to those whose lines are cast on a soil of chalk instead of loam. They may at least be allowed to take the cue from the Midlands, and admit that if their Sussex Downs could claim a band of equally melodious choristers, the expanses of the turf-clad knolls would echo equally with this same choral service. A sacred shrine is erected there, and we may be sure that for a brief twenty-four hours annually some glimpses could be caught of the great Immortal in whose honour it was reared, were we but gifted with the far-reaching sight of Philomel, albeit she is not on the spot *in propria persona*, to warble her signal of 'The Presence.'

To give imagination wings wherewith to soar to such a height may not be easy, yet the quaint conceit might justify the effort, remembering how wholesome it is sometimes to let it take its flight, if only to bear us above the sordid cares and meaner ambitions of this workaday world. In such a cause, too, there is every excuse for letting loose the curb on fancy; and if it refuse to carry us to the length of accepting the Stratford tradition about the birds in its integrity, it may at least stir our memories, and induce us not to let the poet's birthday slip by without a passing thought. Any who in the sweet spring-time have sought for some cause the bracing air of the great seaside town, might with advantage, as many do, find a change from the monotony of its long parade by a pilgrimage up to its neighbouring Downs. They do not offer those rural beauties for the nature-loving rambler in any way resembling those which meet his eye in the valley of the Avon; still, it will not be forgotten that they possess an intrinsic beauty of their own; and albeit the recent efforts to bring portions of their surface into cultivation have destroyed many of their peculiar characteristics, there are yet plenty of these left to render them highly attractive. There is a sufficient abundance still of the short, springy, verdant, thyme-scented turf to make them an unexampled playground for the pedestrian and horseman, whilst the magnificent and far extending prospects either landwards or seawards to be gained from their highest ridges are unrivalled in the south of England.

Only on this Shakespearean point, however, can the 'unshrubb'd down' claim the slightest affinity with the Warwickshire hills; but that may suffice on an emergency to keep our memory green. Earnest students of the bard, as well as those who have but a slight, and yet a conscientiously affectionate acquaintance with his majestic thoughts and noble words, will be inclined henceforth to invest the locality with an interest and a poetry not dreamt of until the establishment of Hollingbury Copse—that quaint wigwam on the

Sussex Downs 'which has the honour of sheltering more record and artistic evidences connected with the personal history of the great dramatist than are to be found in any other of the world's libraries.'

This sentence, extracted from the title-page of the catalogue of rarities compiled by their lamented owner, is followed by another, alas! now, only too significantly applicable to himself, and to all who can reverence and appreciate such labour and devotion as his. Truly must we each individually exclaim:

But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy
Must sanctify his relics.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER VI.

THE Blue Room into which Mr Tom Starkie had been shown was at the back of the house, and its windows looked into a quaint old-fashioned garden with clipped hedges and shady alleys. In order to reach this room, visitors had to cross the entrance hall, then proceed along a wide corridor which intersected the house, with doors opening on either hand, after which they found themselves in a second hall almost as large as the first. An archway, from which depended a heavy *portière*, divided this hall from the Blue Room. This second hall, which was lighted by a cupola, was hung with a few family portraits, some arms pertaining to various countries and various epochs, together with sundry trophies of the chase.

A broad, shallow, oaken staircase, black with age, led to an upper floor, at the foot of which, on either hand, stood a man in armour with his visor down, grasping in his mailed right hand a lance half as tall again as himself. Tropical plants in tubs were disposed here and there.

Gerald Brooke, pushing aside the *portière*, advanced and shook hands with his visitor. Mrs Brooke and her aunt had remained behind. It was just possible that Mr Starkie might have something of a private nature to communicate to Gerald. 'Brooke, what's this confounded mess you seem to have got yourself into?' he began, without a word of preface. He was a red-haired, open-faced, good-natured-looking young fellow of three or four and twenty. 'Have you heard that Von Rosenberg is dead, and that you are accused of having murdered him?'

'Yes, I have heard,' answered the other quietly. 'Is that the affair about which you have come to see me?'

Mr Starkie looked thunderstruck. 'As if, by Jove! it wasn't enough! But, unfortunately, there's more behind.'

Gerald touched the bell. 'There is no reason why my wife and her aunt should not hear anything you have to say,' he remarked. 'They know already of what I am accused.'

When the ladies came in, they shook hands with Mr Starkie. Clara and he had known each other for years.

Gerald having explained the nature of their visitor's errand as far as he knew it, turned to the young man and said: 'And now for your

narrative, dear boy; we won't interrupt you oftener than is absolutely necessary.'

'I'll cut what I've got to say as short as I can,' rejoined the other, 'because, don't you know, there's no time to lose.' He cleared his voice and drew his chair a few inches nearer Gerald. 'About three-quarters of an hour ago,' he began, 'I happened to be with my dad in his office talking over some private matters, when Drumley, our new superintendent of police, was ushered into the room. He horrified both my dad and me by telling us that the Baron von Rosenberg had been found murdered—shot through the heart in the little *châlet* which stands in the grounds about a hundred yards from the house; and he shocked us still more by telling us that he had come to apply to my father, as the nearest J.P., for a warrant authorising the arrest of Mr Gerald Brooke as being the supposed murderer. As soon as my father could command himself, he demanded to know the nature of the evidence which tended to implicate a gentleman like Mr Brooke in a crime so heinous. Then Drumley, to whom every credit is due for the smart way in which he has done what he conceived to be his duty, adduced his evidence item by item. Item the first was the finding of a curious pistol, inlaid with gold and ivory, which was picked up a few yards from the *châlet*. It had been recently discharged, and was recognised by some one at Beaulieu as being, or having been, your property.'

'There can be no dispute on that point,' said Gerald. 'The pistol in question is mine. I lent it to the Baron the last time he was here, ten weeks ago. He wanted it for a certain purpose, and promised to return it in the course of four or five days. As it happened, he was summoned by telegram next day to Berlin, and, as you may or may not know, he only returned to Beaulieu yesterday. Hence the reason why my pistol was still in his possession.'

'How unfortunate!' answered Starkie. 'But perhaps you had some witness, perhaps some one was there at the time who saw you give the pistol to the Baron?'

Gerald considered for a moment. 'No,' he said; 'we were alone—the Baron and I; no one else was in the room when I gave him the pistol. He would not let me send it over by a servant, but persisted in taking it himself.'

'That is more unfortunate still,' said the young man. 'The next item of evidence was that of two of the Baron's men, who deposed to having seen you making your way through the plantation in the direction of Beaulieu; and to having seen you returning by the same way some twenty minutes or half an hour later, and not many minutes after they had heard the sound of a gun or pistol shot.'

'That fact also will admit of no dispute,' answered Gerald. 'I left home with the intention of calling on the Baron on a matter of importance; but at the last moment I changed my mind and determined to write to him instead. I, too, heard a shot; but as the Baron has a range for pistol-practice in his grounds, I thought nothing of it.'

Very glum indeed looked Mr Starkie. 'And now we come to the last item of evidence, which is perhaps the most singular of all. Had you

not, a little while ago, a groom in your service of the name of Pedley?"

'I had. About two months ago, I had occasion to discharge him for insolence and insubordination.'

'And a few days later he came to you for a character, telling you that he had a chance of getting into the employ of the Baron von Rosenberg?'

'He did; and as I thought he was sorry for his behaviour, I gave him a note to the Baron's man, whose name I don't just now remember.'

'The day Pedley came to see you, do you recollect whether you left him alone in the room where the interview between you took place?'

'Now you mention it, I believe I did leave him alone for a couple of minutes while I went into the next room to write the note I had promised him.'

'He seems to be a dangerous sort of customer. According to his account, it would appear that during your absence from the room, observing a half-burnt piece of paper in the fender, he took it up and carefully opened it. He had only just time to glance at its contents before you returned; but what he saw was sufficient to induce him to take the paper away with him so as to enable him to decipher it at his leisure.'

'May I ask the nature of the contents of the paper in question?' said Gerald, who had turned a shade or two paler in spite of himself.

'When Pedley heard that you were suspected, he spoke to Drumley, and came along with him to see my father. There he produced the half-burnt piece of paper, the contents of which he stated to be in your writing, though how he should be able to speak so positively on the point is more than I can understand. Anyhow, Brooke, if the document should prove to be in your handwriting, it seems a somewhat singular composition, to say the least of it. I had only time to glance hurriedly over it; but from what I could make out, it appears to be a sort of warning addressed to Von Rosenberg, telling him that his life is in great and imminent danger, and that he has been condemned to death; and then there was something about escaping while there was yet time; but the whole thing was so fragmentary, and here and there there were such gaps in the sequence of the sentences, that I may perhaps scarcely have gathered the right sense of what I read. As there seemed to be no time to lose, I did not wait to hear more, but had my mare saddled at once, and rode straight across country, taking everything as it came, in order that I might be the first to bring you the news, bad as it is, and so put you on your guard.'

Gerald grasped his hand. 'You are a true friend, Starkie, and I thank you from my heart,' he said. Then he added: 'I trust you will take my word when I say that, however black the evidence may at present seem against me, I am as innocent of this man's death as you are.'

'I believe it, Brooke—with all my heart I believe it!'

'Now for an explanation of the half-burnt letter. That it is in my writing I don't for one moment doubt.' Mr Starkie gave vent to a little whistle under his breath. 'It is perfectly

true that Von Rosenberg's life was in imminent danger. His enemies were powerful and implacable, and nothing short of his death would satisfy them. He was to be assassinated—murdered in cold blood. In what way I came to know all this I am not at liberty to say. The half-burnt paper picked up by Pedley was a letter of warning to the Baron which I never finished, and afterwards, as I thought, burnt to ashes. Von Rosenberg was at Berlin at the time, and I knew that the danger which menaced him lay here, and not there. Finally, I decided not to write to him, but to await his return and seek a personal interview. He reached Beaulieu last night, and this afternoon I made up my mind to call upon him. I had nearly reached the house, when, coward that I was, my heart failed me, and I came back determined that, after all, I would break my news by letter. And now it is too late!'

'But,' exclaimed the other, 'don't you see that what you have just told me, if told in a court of justice, would only serve to make the case seem a hundredfold blacker against you?'

'I can quite understand that,' answered Gerald sadly. 'Nevertheless, the truth is the truth, and nothing can alter it.'

Mr Starkie looked at his watch. 'I have not a moment to lose,' he said. 'The police may arrive at any minute, and it would never do for them to find that my father's son had been here before them and given you the "tip."'

'Oh, Mr Starkie, what would you advise Gerald to do? What a horrible accusation to have brought against him!' exclaimed Clara.

'It is that, and no mistake; but it is scarcely in my province, Mrs Brooke, to advise your husband what to do.'

'Supposing you were in his place, Mr Starkie, what would you do?'

'Upon my word, I hardly know. On the face of it one must admit that the case looks very black against him, so many bits of circumstantial evidence being piled one on the top of another; but I have no doubt in my own mind that further inquiry will in the course of a few hours go far to substantiate his innocence. In fact, I think it most likely that before this time to-morrow the real murderer will have been arrested.'

'Then you would advise?— She paused, and looked at him with eyes full of entreaty.

'Well, Mrs Brooke, I think—mind you, I only say I think—that if I were in Brooke's place I would make tracks for a little while.—I beg your pardon,' he resumed in some confusion; 'what I mean is, that I would be suddenly called from home on business, or pleasure, or what not, so that when the police arrived I should be *non est*. Only, if you decide to do as I suggest, it must be done without a minute's loss of time. In the course of a day or two, or even earlier, the mystery will no doubt be cleared up, and in the meantime Brooke will escape the unpleasantness of being in quod.—I beg your pardon, Mrs Brooke; I mean in prison.'

'You hear, Gerald—you hear!' cried his wife.

Mr Starkie took Gerald aside and said something to him rapidly in a low voice, to which the other replied by an emphatic shake of his head. 'No—no,' he said; 'I cannot consent to anything of the kind.'

'Well, you know best, of course,' replied Mr Tom; 'but I think I would if I were you. In any case, I'll not fail to be on the lookout; only, don't forget the directions.' Two minutes later he had said his hurried adieus and had ridden rapidly away.

No one spoke till the noise of his horse's hoofs was lost in the distance. A sort of stupor of dismay had settled on the little party. Gerald felt as if he were shut in by a net of steel, which was being slowly drawn round him closer and closer. The mental anguish he had undergone since Karovsky's visit, combined with all the varied and fluctuating emotions of the last few hours, were beginning to tell upon him. It seemed to him as if some hinge in his brain were being gradually loosened—as if the fine line which divides the real from the imaginary and fact from fantasy were in his case being strained to tenuity.

Mrs Brooke was the first to break the silence. She crossed and sat down by her husband and took one of his hands in hers. 'Gerald, dearest, you must fly,' she said with a sob in her voice. The eyes he turned on her caused passionate tears to surge from her heart, but with all her might she forced them back.

'Why should an innocent man fly?' he asked.

'You heard what Mr Starkie said. For a little while it may not be possible for you to prove your innocence, and in the meantime you will escape the ignominy of a jail.'

'But if I do not stay and face this vile charge, all the world will believe me guilty.'

'No one who knows you can possibly believe that.—O Gerald—husband—my dearest and best—listen to me!'

'Clara, you would make a coward of me.'

'Oh, no, no! But consider how strong the evidence is against you. Less than that has brought innocent men to the scaffold before now.'

'Come what may, I must stay and face this out.'

'Again I say no. A few days, perhaps a few hours even, may bring the real criminal to light. As Mr Starkie said, you must go on a little journey—a journey where no one can trace you. For my sake, Gerald—for your wife's sake!'

'Oh, my dear boy, do, pray, listen to her,' put in Miss Primby, who up to the present had scarcely uttered a word.

'To-morrow will prove my innocence.'

'How devoutly I hope so! But can we be sure of it? Days, weeks even, may elapse before the murderer is discovered, and meanwhile what will become of you! Gerald—dear one, think—think!'

'I have thought, Clara. You are asking an impossibility.'

'I am asking you to save your life. You must fly—you must hide, but only for a little while, I trust. You must leave me here to help to hunt down the murderer—to fight for you while you are away.'

'She speaks the truth, Gerald. Oh, do listen to her!' pleaded Miss Primby with quivering lips.

'Again I say, you would persuade me to act like a coward.'

'Let the world call you what it will. While

you are in hiding, your life will be safe. Will it be safe if you stay here?'

Before more could be said, Margery burst without ceremony into the room. 'O mum, they're coming!' she cried; 'the polis is coming! There's five or six of 'em in two gigs.'

'It is too late—we are lost!' cried Clara in anguished accents.

'I ran down to the little hill in the park, 'cos it's getting too dark to see very fer,' continued Margery; 'and when I see 'em come round the corner of the road, a quarter of a mile away, I bolted like a hare, and got the old woman at the lodge to lock the gate, and told her not to open it to anybody for her life. It'll take 'em seven or eight minutes longer to drive round by the other gate,' concluded Margery with a burst of witch-like laughter.

'Good girl! brave girl!' ejaculated Miss Primby.

'Then there may yet be time,' said Clara. She dropped on one knee, and clasping one of her husband's hands, pressed it passionately to her lips. 'O Gerald—if you love me—for my sake!' she cried again.

'You are persuading me to this against my will and against my conscience.'

'I am persuading you to save your life, which to me is more than all the world besides.'

'Be it as you wish,' he answered with a sigh. 'I feel as if whatever may happen now cannot greatly matter.'

Clara rose, and as she did so, a strange eager light leapt into her eyes. 'Come with me—quick, quick!' she exclaimed. 'I have thought of a plan. Even now there may be time.' Then turning to Miss Primby: 'You will stay here, aunt, will you not? I shall not be more than a few minutes away.'

The spinster nodded; her heart was too full for speech. Then Clara, passing an arm through her husband's, lifted the *portière*, and they went out together.

Margery had already disappeared.

FERN FREAKS.

IN many respects, the family of Ferns forms one of the most interesting sections of the vegetable kingdom, yet, popularly, remarkably little is known of the special peculiarities by which ferns are distinguished from the hosts of plants with which they are associated, and from many of which, such as palms, cycads, &c., they often differ but little in appearance. The lack of flowers is undoubtedly their chief negative characteristic; but as many plants with conspicuously beautiful foliage bear either insignificant blooms or flower but rarely, this absence does not strike one as the essential difference which it really constitutes. On consideration, however, it is manifest that in some form or other the equivalents of flowers must exist, or reproduction could not be effected; and obviously the best way to find out what this substitute may be is to seek for something in the fern which is never found in the flowering plant. A careful examination of most adult ferns will result in the discovery of this in the shape of brown, or sometimes olive-green, dots, lines, patches, layers, or clusters of microscopic bodies

at the backs or tips of the fronds. These are the reproductive spores in their receptacles; and a microscopic examination reveals the fact of their existence literally in millions upon every frond, the spore capsules—themselves microscopically small—numbering hundreds, or even thousands, in every patch visible, and yet containing each a considerable number of the, of course, much minuter reproductive spores. In the existence of these spores we find at once a broad line of demarcation between ferns and seed-bearing, that is, flowering plants, not merely in respect of their enormous numbers, but also in the fact that the direct product of these spores is not a fern, but a small green scale (prothallus) like a liverwort, upon the under surface of which eventually the equivalents of flowers are produced, a germ (or germs) is fertilised, and a fern proper appears in due course in the second generation. In the tree ferns, which rival the most majestic palms in size, the spores are as small as in the minutest members of the family, the difference between the spore and its results being thus extreme. A teaspoonful of spores would suffice, indeed, to form a forest of no mean extent.

This, however, is the normal course of fern-life, and is merely introductory to the 'freaks' of which it is our business to treat. As a rule, of course the offspring of ferns, like those of other organisms, resemble their parents so closely as to be generally undistinguishable from them in their specific characters; but it has been found that this is by no means always the case, since here, there, and yonder, on a careful examination of wild plants growing under perfectly natural conditions, very extraordinary departures from the normal forms are found under circumstances which leave no doubt whatever that they have originated with their widely marked peculiarities fully developed, direct from a spore off the surrounding common plants.

To such a wonderful extent has this freakishness been exhibited, that at the present moment, our British species, few as they are, numbering only forty odd in all, have yielded several thousand absolutely distinct forms. It must not be imagined for a moment that these varieties are merely finely drawn differences only appreciable by the eye of an expert; they represent differences in form often far greater than those between separate families altogether, and ranging in a single species so widely, that a long narrow strap at one end of the scale and a round ball of moss at the other constitute the extremes of form assumed. The common Hartstongue (*Scolopendrium vulgare*), for instance, is represented by hundreds of forms, of which the two just cited form the extremes.

The commonest shape in which these 'freaks' appear is quite peculiar to the Fern family, and has no parallel at all amongst the freaks which other plants, and indeed all forms of organic life, display. This peculiarity consists in the terminal points of the fronds and their divisions being more or less forked or divided, in the shape of tassels or crests, which enhance immensely their ornamental character. This splitting-up or tasselling, from a simple forking of the tip of the frond, sometimes extends even to the tertiary divisions, the end of the frond bearing then a heavy tassel, the main side-divi-

sions (pinne) lighter ones, and the smaller side-divisions of these (pinnules) very minute crests, the *tout ensemble* being very charming indeed. Nearly all our native species have yielded forms of this tasselled character, some of the Lastreas, the Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix femina*) and the Shield Ferns (*Polystichum*) especially, having yielded scores of different types, in many of which this cresting is associated with other marked and abnormal characters. In numerous instances, the occult influence which induces this tasselling is not confined to the terminal points, but pervades the whole system of the plant; the fronds in these extreme cases commence to split up immediately they begin to unroll, and by continuing this process *ad infinitum*, lose all trace of resemblance to fronds, and form a ball-like mass of finely comminuted vegetation. A Lady Fern (*A. f. f. acrocladon*) of this character was found many years ago on a Yorkshire moor, and has not only remained quite constant, but has yielded numerous offspring, in which this branching 'freak' is even more strongly developed than in the parents.

Another form of variation which has been found in several of the species is an excessive development of the leafy portion of the frond, resulting in the case of the hartstongue in the transformation of a plain, flat, narrow, strap-like frond into a broad, deep, double frill, with, in some cases, beautifully cut edges. The Welsh Polypody (*Polypodium vulg. cambricum*) is the same sport from the common polypody, the simple once divided frond being transformed altogether by the redundant growth of its parts. This form of 'freak' is usually accompanied by partial or entire barrenness, and is supposed to be an analogous phenomenon to the doubling of flowers, which is accompanied by a similar lack of fertility.

Besides these two forms of variation, which belong to the symmetrical class, and which may be conjoined in one and the same plant, there are innumerable others to which the term 'freak' is even more applicable. In the Hartstongue family, for instance, there are several forms in which the leafy part abruptly terminates an inch or so up the stem, and there forms a sort of pouch or pocket, the midrib continuing for another inch in the shape of a thorn. Odd as this form is, it is an absolutely constant one, the offspring only varying in minor details. Possibly, however, the most extraordinary freak yet discovered is displayed in one of the Lady Ferns (*A. f. f. Victoria*), found wild by the roadside some thirty years ago on the Duke of Montrose's estate in Scotland. This plant has all the divisions, both primary and secondary, in duplicate, and sets on at about right angles to each other, so that a series of crosses is formed along the midribs of the pinne and pinnules. The pinne are also very slender, and, like the tip of the frond itself, are terminated by beautifully elongated tassels, of which the slender strands are again tufted. As the fronds and all their divisions display this slender character, a pendent habit is induced, which renders the plant a very charming one indeed. The offspring of this display the same characters, but are usually coarser in make.

Another form of freakishness arises apparently from a constitutional struggle in the plants against the abnormal element within them, the result

being all shades of inconstancy. Extremely marked forms of the most thoroughly symmetrical character have sometimes reverted entirely and permanently to the normal form, the mere act of removal sufficing to obliterate the eccentricity. Others under cultivation do this for a time only, resuming their abnormal character when again established. Numerous good forms of the Polystichum tribe, though otherwise constant and producing characteristic offspring through their spores, revert, immediately they are allowed to get out of condition. Others have a habit of reverting piecemeal, throwing sometimes fronds of both kinds; or it may be that a single frond bears intermingled pinnae, or even pinnules, of two characters. *Polypodium vulg. var. Cornubiense* is a constant example of this peculiar form of inconstancy, throwing, indeed, three sorts of fronds—some absolutely normal, some even triply divided, and some of an intermediate character; the normal fronds furthermore frequently bearing isolated pinnae or pinnules of both the other forms. The creeping root of this variety also occasionally runs out and reverts altogether to the normal. In the higher plants, freaks of this sort are usually associated with hybridisation; but that is not the case here.

Space-limits preclude us in this article from enlarging upon this capacity of sporting; but as within the last twelve months the collection at Kew has been immensely enriched by gifts and bequests representing many hundreds of the finest forms, a visit thither is recommended to those who care to investigate the subject more thoroughly. We must not, however, dismiss this portion of our article without reference to a form of freak which would otherwise escape attention—namely, freaks in the method of reproduction. Quite recently, it has been discovered that one form of Lady Fern (*A. f. f. Clarissima*) and two forms of Shield Fern (*P. aug. pulcherrimum* Padley and Wills) have acquired the faculty of forming the small green scale (prothallus) aforesaid upon the fronds themselves without the agency of the spore, the offspring then resulting in the usual way, if the fronds are pegged down. In the lady fern these bodies are produced upon the frond-backs on the usual site of the spore-heaps, the spore-cases themselves, according to Professor F. O. Bower, who has thoroughly investigated the matter, being transformed into prothalli. In the case of the two shield ferns, however, the case is even stronger, the extreme tips of the frond divisions running out into prothalli suspended at the ends of short threads, and being thus produced altogether independently even of the spore-heaps. This phenomenon, termed apospory, constitutes the latest discovery in the sphere of reproductive freaks.

In the vast majority of cases these varieties are found quite solitary in their peculiarities, a single plant appearing amid the mass of normal ones surrounding it, no intermediate types being discoverable. Occasionally, however, large numbers are associated together in a limited area, owing either to the original sport having multiplied itself, or, it may be, through a number of affected spores having been originally shed from the normal parent. Thus the writer found, some years ago, a wall on Dartmoor covered for many feet with a peculiar long-tailed form

of *Asplenium adiantum nigrum*, characterised also by short yellow lobes (*A. a. n. caudifolium*). In this case there were some hundreds of plants thickly clustered together, and actually ousting the normal form which covered the rest of the wall. As an example of the converse kind may be cited a recent find on the side of a stream on the same moor of a finely crested form of *Lastrea montana*, which had no fewer than thirty-three crowns all adherent to one root-stock, the fronds numbering considerably over two hundred, and measuring over a yard long. Manifestly, this plant must have stood there for many years shedding its myriads of spores time after time; yet amongst the thousands of seedlings around it not one of its offspring could be found.

The British Isles, judging from the immense number of sports which have been found wild, as compared with exotic forms of like character, would appear to be especially favoured in this respect; but a glance at the map of the world on the one hand and a full list of exotic species on the other leads to the inevitable assumption that the comparative paucity of exotic varieties is solely or mainly due to the greater attention the variation of these plants has received in this country. Here, as we have said, there are only some forty odd indigenous species; while between three and four thousand exotic species are recorded. Amongst these exotics, especially in the Maidenhair (*Adiantum*) families, numerous very marked varieties, tasselled, congested, plumose, &c., have originated under cultivation, *Adiantum Farleyense*, a reputed sport from *A. tenerum*, occupying first rank among them. In the Azores, several very beautiful tasselled forms—among these *Woodwardia radicans cristata*—were found by one man, Mr Brown, who evidently had an eye for varieties as well as for species, a distinction which implies a decided difference, and which probably is the key to the puzzle.

The search for varieties and for species differs in this respect, that where a species grows in profusion, a general glance of the botanical eye suffices to satisfy the mind that no new species is there. But the variety-hunter must go farther, and examine each individual, since in many cases a new find is only distinguishable among the host of its fellows by a small portion being visible, the abnormal nature of which it is the province of the variety-hunter to 'spot' at a glance. In the case cited of the *L. montana*, the species required no second glance even at a distance of twenty yards; but the eye on the lookout for tassels was needed to 'spot' an indication of those at that distance.

To our mind, there is absolutely no reason why even the majestic tree ferns should not be subject to similar influences as their humbler brethren, and we may reasonably anticipate that in time our conservatories may be graced by lovely tasselled forms of these so soon as a persistent variety-hunter turns his attention in their direction, or some species-hunter in a favoured locality catches the 'fever' of variety-hunting, which is often induced in amateurs by the accidental discovery of a good thing.

Considering the undoubtedly greater beauty of many of these 'freaks' as compared with the normal forms from which they spring, it is a great pity that they are not better known. In

hundreds of gardens, so-called *ferneries* are found on examination to contain nothing but some three or four common species repeated *ad nauseam*, while the same space devoted to a collection of the choice forms would be a hundred times more interesting and beautiful. Among the 'freaks' in most of the families are beautiful dwarf forms, in which reduction of size is accompanied by the other attributes of tasselling, congestion, &c. Here is a field for the ladies, who, in the limited space of a single north window, could have a pet collection of veritable gems of verdure demanding a minimum of attention, and affording a maximum of pleasure under circumstances where flowers would perish for lack of sun. In fine, this capacity of growing in the shade (not in the dark, remember, for the more light the better, barring direct sunshine), coupled with the great range of form with which Nature has endowed them, affords the dwellers in cities and towns an opportunity of study and pleasure which at present is practically ignored, but which only needs to be made known to be appreciated and utilised.

A TERROR TO EVIL-DOERS.

By CATHERINE G. FURLEY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE town of Picton stands on the high-road between Melbourne and the gold-fields of Victoria. It is now the centre of a large pastoral district, with railway communication with the capital, and a growing population that divides itself into castes in the orthodox old-country style.

But twenty years ago it was a small place, important chiefly because it was the only township within thirty miles, and because inside its walls—such as they were—all the organisation of civilisation was concentrated. There were churches in Picton—an Episcopal church and a Baptist chapel; there was a store and a court-house; and a doctor had lately set up in practice. Being an energetic young fellow, who believed that skill and earnestness are worth as much in a new country as capital is in an old one, he was doing well; though his patients paid their fees in gold-dust and sheep and grain as often as in coin of the realm. Yet he was not a happy man this mild March day, as he stood in the veranda of the vicarage, looking with irritated admiration at a girl whose yellow dress and tawny brown hair and eyes harmonised with the brilliant autumn tints of the creepers that twined around the posts and hung in long trails from the roof.

Madge Renton, the vicar's daughter, was not the belle of Picton; that pre-eminence was claimed by Jenny Birch, the innkeeper's only child, who had golden hair, and a pink and white complexion, and three times as many new gowns as Miss Renton. But tastes differ, and though the miners from up the country and the occasional travellers who for any reason, or none, stopped at Picton, all admired Miss Birch, Dr Philip Sewell did not think her worth looking at when Madge was by. He would have been well content to

have had this eccentric taste all to himself; but, unfortunately, it was shared by another member of the small community, and that the most important one in it. The Law by common consent ranks above Medicine in our social organisation—the newspaper which spoke of 'the value of life and the sacredness of property' only echoed the public sentiment which has fixed the respective status of the professions—and though the Church is supposed to rank above either, it is to be feared that the lawyer, above all when he is magistrate as well, bulks more largely in popular esteem than the parson. At least that was the case in Picton, where Captain Frere, the 'police magistrate,' was decidedly the greatest man in the place.

He had been in the army before he came to Australia, and had been invalided after the Crimean War, which at once made him something of a hero. He was, moreover, a distant cousin of a peer who had once been Governor of Victoria; and it was to this connection that he owed his present appointment, given him when his health seemed so shattered as to make active service impossible. The Australian climate had restored him to strength, and, if one might judge from expression as well as looks, to more hope and energy than he had seemed capable of when he came to Picton, two years before the day when Dr Sewell—a later arrival still—lost his temper with Madge Renton after having already lost his heart to her.

The girl sat rocking herself in a light cane-chair, as if trying by the motion to keep some inward vexation from finding vent in words. A faint flush stained her usually pale cheeks, and her tawny eyes looked darker with anger. Miss Jenny Birch, who had been known to describe Madge as 'a red-haired, white-faced thing,' had never seen her look so beautiful; for it was Miss Renton's wont to go about the world rather coldly, except when love or pity or anger roused her soul and her features to some excitement.

There was considerable excuse for the indignation she was now showing. Dr Sewell had the habit of candour, and he had been indulging in it to the full, under circumstances when reticence would have been especially advisable. He had just asked Miss Renton to marry him; and his request being refused, he had demanded the reason of her negative reply, and begged her to reconsider it. At first Madge had merely reiterated her assurance that she could never accept him; but she liked him just well enough to hate wounding him, and in order that she might not seem to be doing so without cause, she at last explained that she was engaged—privately, not even her father knew of it—to Captain Lewis Frere. At this point the rejected suitor's duty was clearly to bow to the hand of destiny and retire from the contest with as much dignity as he could muster.

This, which he ought to have done, was exactly what Philip did not do. He looked aghast, shocked, indignant, and ejaculated almost unconsciously: 'Engaged to that old—fogey!'

Madge felt certain that a harsher word than fogey was in his mind, though he managed to restrain it; and fogey was bad enough. A girl who is thoroughly in love with a man considerably her senior can laugh at the surprise of her

friends ; but when she is not quite sure that he is the one man in the world for her, when she has been carried away by the novelty of wooing, and by the knowledge that a man who has been all round the world and has tried all life's flavours for five-and-forty years, seeks as the best gift it can give him her untutored self—when vanity has dictated her acceptance more than love, she is apt to resent very deeply any insinuation that, after all, her prize is not so very well worth winning. She must prove that it is a pearl of price ; she requires to convince herself of it as much as any one else ; and she is very indignant when another gives utterance to the doubt that has been lurking, half-suspected, in her own mind.

Fogey, indeed ! How dare Philip Sewell hint at such a word ! It is true that Lewis was a little bald, and had a few crow's-feet about the eyes, and that there were white streaks in that beautiful beard of his. She was sure Philip would have been only too proud if he had had a beard as long and flowing, instead of a miserable little moustache. Still, she would make Lewis shave it off ; it certainly did make him look older, and there was no need to do that. But he wasn't a fogey !

'You are very courteous !' she exclaimed in tones that made Philip feel how lacking in courtesy he had been.

'I beg your pardon, Miss Renton ; I had no right to speak as I did ; but—but—you know'—

'O yes, I know ! I know that boys of four or five and twenty' (Philip was twenty-six, and this was as near it as she dared venture) 'always try to disparage men who have reached the age of wisdom. They are jealous of them, I suppose.'

'No, they're not,' said Philip bluntly ; 'except—that is—except when—when'—

'Pray, don't make exceptions out of consideration for me. I am quite prepared to admit that very young men don't appreciate the qualities of those who have more experience than themselves ; but women, fortunately, are different,' said Miss Madge, who had just passed her nineteenth birthday, with a grand air.

'I hope they are ! That is, I hope you are in love with this fellow Frere, though I don't see how you can be. And I don't believe you are.'

'Dr Sewell, how dare you speak in such a fashion !'

'I beg your pardon ; I am very stupid. I know I have no right to criticise your choice. I am mad—jealous, I suppose. But when a man has his best hope taken away from him, he'—The words ceased, a certain husky feeling that had been in Philip's throat since the moment Madge said 'No' having suddenly become so marked as to prevent articulation.

The girl grew softer when she saw how moved he was. 'I am very sorry, Philip, very sorry,' she said gently ; 'but you see I am not free, and you will find somebody else who will suit you better.'

'Never !' he exclaimed stoutly. 'Even a boy may know his own mind, when he is a boy of twenty-six, and I knew that I shall never love any one but you.'

She was about to combat this opinion, which would probably have resulted in a new develop-

ment of the original quarrel between them, when her father appeared. The Rev. Mr Renton was an anxious-looking man, who seemed to feel how little his Oxford training was adapted to his Australian environment. He had come to the antipodes first because his health was weak ; and when the pure soft air had healed his feeble lungs, he began to look for some sphere of work in the new land. It was in the purest missionary spirit that he had come to Picton ten years before ; and it was in a missionary spirit sublimed to a forlorn-hope that he clung to his post in spite of the bitter consciousness of failure. A few, the more aristocratic portion of the Picton community, came to his church ; but the majority of those who cared for religious exercises at all went to the chapel. This consciousness of failure in his life-work gave the parson an apologetic air, even before those who, like Dr Sewell, were loyal members of his flock. Philip did not indeed see that Mr Renton was nervous in his presence ; but he perceived, and confided to himself—having no other confidant whom he could trust with a disparaging judgment of Miss Renton's father—that the vicar almost cringed to Captain Frere ; and at this moment he glared at his inoffending pastor, being suddenly struck with the idea that he had forced his daughter to accept the captain.

Fortunately, Mr Renton did not perceive the frown on the young doctor's face ; neither did he notice his daughter's flushed cheeks, nor any of the subtle tokens of a disturbed moral atmosphere. He had news of his own to communicate, and that excited him, to the detriment of his faculty of observation.

'What a dreadful affair !' he exclaimed.

Madge thought of Philip's proposal ; Philip thought of Madge's engagement, and both asked, 'What affair ?' with more embarrassment than curiosity.

'That murder of the policemen down the river.'

'The murder !' They were both sufficiently curious now, and for once in his life Mr Renton had two attentive listeners. 'You know,' he explained, 'that a month ago the police escort took a load of gold and dust to the bank at Melbourne. I suppose they left most of it there ; but they were bringing back a considerable sum in bank-notes to the miners up the country. Bank-notes are light, so there were only two men sent on the return journey.'

'I know all that,' said Philip, with a touch of impatience. 'We expected them to stop at Picton last night. When they didn't come, I concluded that the roads were bad, and that they had got along slower than they expected.'

'The roads *were* bad, and they could not reach Picton before nightfall ; at least, so I suppose, for they camped about ten miles away on the bank of the river, and there they were found murdered this morning.'

'Who can have done it ?'

'Some bushranger, I suppose. Of course the object was theft ; all the notes are gone.'

'It won't profit the thief much, I fancy ; for doubtless the numbers of the notes are set down in the bank at Melbourne ; and as soon as he presents one he will be caught—that is, if he is rash enough to present it himself. If he gets

a dupe to do it for him, it may take a longer time, but not much: he is a fool as well as a rogue.'

'It is funny that we should not have heard of bushrangers being in the neighbourhood,' said Madge. 'Captain Frere was out all the night before last looking about on the route the policemen were to take, in order to make sure that all was right; and he told me the coast was clear. If there had been any dangerous characters about, he would have sent an escort to meet the men, I suppose.'

'Ah! the bushrangers must keep a better lookout than the police magistrate,' said Mr Renton. 'They have brought the bodies to the inn; and I suppose Captain Frere will hold an inquiry, though it is hardly likely that anything will come of it besides a verdict against "person or persons unknown."'

'To the inn!' exclaimed Philip with some irritation. 'I hope not; noise or excitement may injure my patient greatly, poor woman.'

'Oh, you have a patient at the inn,' remarked Madge, faintly piqued. 'Is the fair Miss Jenny ill?'

'Not she; Miss Jenny is the goddess Hygeia. But they have a guest there, a woman who has once been beautiful, but has, if one may judge by appearances, had a hard life. I suppose she was going up to the mines. But I know nothing about her, beyond the fact that she fainted after going out for a walk yesterday morning, and that she is now in a very weak and feverish condition.'

'Poor thing! Is she young?' asked Madge.

'Not very. About forty, I should think from her appearance. I think I ought to go and see her. The bustle may have injured her. Miss Jenny—I know her!—would go rushing up to the invalid's room to tell her of "the murder," as if it were really a great treat. Besides, they'll probably want me to diagnose the nature of these two poor fellows' wounds.'

So Philip, glad of the excuse for a graceful departure, went away, his sore heart—such is human nature, with its troubles balanced by strange and fantastic compensations—fretting him a little less because of the exciting news.

He went down to the inn, partly to see his patient, partly to ask if his services were to be called upon in connection with the inquiry on the murder of the two policemen. He was interested in the matter, and when one has a curiosity to gratify, it is well to have the excuse of official duties to justify its gratification. The innkeeper's daughter met him at the door. Her eyes were not dim, nor was her natural colour abated; but, nevertheless, when she saw Philip, she leant up against the doorpost and gasped out: 'O doctor, I am glad to see you. Isn't this a terrible business! It has made me quite faint.' For the goddess Hygeia, probably because she had never had a day's illness in her life, had a great ambition to be considered an invalid—a weakness which had become more pronounced since Dr Sewell came to Picton.

'The air will do you good, then,' said the doctor coolly, passing her with a nod.—'Is your father about? I want him to take me to see the poor fellows.'

'He is in the coach-house. They're there, and

father is with Captain Frere, who is looking at them.'

Philip Sewell was not particularly desirous of meeting Captain Frere at this moment; but having expressed a desire to see the bodies, he could hardly turn round in a moment and profess indifference to the matter; besides, it was inevitable, if any investigation of the murder was to be made, that the doctor and the magistrate should meet in connection with it.

He went to the coach-house, where the two dead men lay. They had been stalwart fellows, apparently of a more active habit than the blue-coated guardians of the peace at home—rough-riders, who could find their way across an almost trackless country, and perhaps were not very scrupulous whether they took a bushranger alive or dead—men who have no place in a fully civilised community, and in a semi-barbarous one are a protection or a terror to the inhabitants according as some chance wind of circumstance may move them towards good or evil; but brave men, who, having undertaken a task, discharge it at any cost. These two had died in the fulfilment of their duty, and apparently had died hard. The discharged pistol taken from the cold nerveless hand of one proved that he had tried, however vainly, to prevent the theft. It was just possible that the thief had got more than the bank-notes in that midnight robbery.

Dr Sewell nodded silently to the innkeeper and Captain Frere as he entered the coach-house. A scant greeting suffices for the living when we are in the presence of the dead, and besides, Philip was not in the mood to lavish courtesy on Madge Renton's lover. Madge Renton's lover! What on earth could she see in that withered old stick? Philip asked himself, eyeing the captain with vigorous disfavour. The contempt was decidedly unjust. Lewis Frere was a picturesque-looking, if not a handsome man. His face was indeed lined and weather-beaten, and his hair was decidedly thin at the temples; but his dark eyes had that melancholy look which has a certain attraction for girls who have never known trouble themselves; and his long silky pointed beard was in itself a feature, giving him something of the aspect of the high-bred gentlemen whose portraits Van Dyck painted for all time.

'This is a sad sight, doctor,' said the innkeeper, after Philip had looked silently at the bodies for a minute or two. 'These two poor fellows, full of health and strength only yesterday, and murdered last night when we were fast asleep in our beds!'

'Not quite,' said Philip, whose professional eye noted more than that of an ordinary observer.

'Not quite what? Not murdered?'

'O yes, murdered. But they were not murdered last night. From all appearances, I should judge that they have been dead more than twenty-four hours.'

'Nonsense! How can you tell that?' exclaimed Captain Frere sharply.

'Oh! the study of medical jurisprudence is not exactly a waste of time; one learns a good deal by it,' answered Philip, in a tone which, without obvious discourtesy, indicated the sentiment, 'Mind your own business, and don't interfere with mine.'—'These two men must have been killed the night before last,' he went on in a more

amiable tone; 'and, by-the-by, it's funny, as you were out on scout-duty that night, that you didn't see a sign of the murderer. He must have been somewhere in the neighbourhood.'

'I wasn't out the night before last,' said Frere, hastily; 'I was in my bed, like the rest of you.'

'I beg your pardon. It was Miss Renton who said you were out, and I took it for granted she had learned the fact from you.'

'Miss Renton is not my guardian.'

'No; but I took it for granted that as your *fiancée*, she did not speak without authority, or at least knowledge.'

Frere muttered an imprecation, which Philip took to be an expression of anger at his stupidity in thus abruptly announcing an engagement which was supposed to be still secret, and the words which the captain at last addressed to him—'You are a good gossip-monger, Dr Sewell'—confirmed the notion in his mind.

'I suppose I ought to apologise,' said Philip; 'but as a marriage is a thing for all the world to know, doubtless I am anticipating your announcement only by a very short time. I can only say that I hope you will be worthy of Miss Renton's love.—Now, Birch, I think I will go and see my patient. Her heart is weak, and this fuss and excitement in the house may have injured her.'

He went out; and Birch, turning to offer surprised congratulations to the captain, saw that he was very pale. 'You look bad, captain,' he exclaimed. 'This sight does make a man feel a bit queer. Come into the house and get a drop of brandy.'

'I confess I would be glad of it,' said Frere, and they left the coach-house. But the captain would not enter the inn. He threw himself down on a bench near the door, saying that the air revived him; and while Birch hurried away to bring the brandy, Miss Jenny, who was still leaning against the doorpost, pouting a little that the doctor had wasted so few words on her, entered into conversation with him.

'You do look ill, captain. Of course that sight would give you a turn; and you've got a cold too, haven't you?'

'No; I haven't. How could I catch cold?' he said irritably, as if the idea of a cold annoyed him.

'Oh, I don't know,' she returned, offended at his tone. 'But seeing you've had your throat wrapped for two days, it wasn't such a strange idea to get into my head, was it?' And she pointed to a silk handkerchief, which the captain wore folded closely around his neck.

Captain Frere had apparently recovered his temper. 'You're right, Miss Jenny,' he admitted; 'I have a cold; but you see I'm very touchy about confessing to such an old woman's complaint.'

Philip Sewell meanwhile was sitting holding his patient's wrist with his fingers on her pulse. He had been pleased to note when he first took it that it was calm and steady. But the voices of the two speakers outside floated up to the open window of the room where the unknown woman lay, and at the sound of the captain's, the pulse suddenly leapt into a quick fluttering irregular beat.

'Now, this is very funny,' said Philip to him-

self, preserving an immovable countenance the while. 'I wonder if it was Frere she came to Picton to see? It is evident that his vicinity excites her.'

SUN-DIALS AND HOURGLASSES.

EVERYBODY nowadays knows the value of time, and the necessity of marking its swift flight by clocks and watches of such exact work and measurement as to let not a single moment pass unnoted. We are far too busy and too clever to permit of any such neglect; yet, for all that, it may be doubted whether we are a whit more alive to the value of the golden hours than when many a workman good and true was content to mark their flight by the shadow of a homely Dial. 'Doubtless,' says honest old Izaak Walton, in one of his charming pages of the joys and pleasures of country life—'doubtless, the dweller among the quiet meads and streams may carry with him his well-contrived horologe, of silver or gold—yet as he wanders by the river-side, he will gladly note the rise and fall of day by the opening and shutting of flowers that deck the mead, or by the sweet music of the birds at morn or eve; by the shadow on the mossy dial, in the sunny garden of the farm, or hard by the tower of the village church.'

In his time, such dials were plentiful enough. Mr Pepys, in his *Diary* (1670) tells us of one in his famous garden at Clapham; while his friend, John Evelyn, talks still more pleasantly of the moss-grown dial, among his flowers at Sayes Court. They were, in fact, all the fashion among those who prided themselves on well-ordered gardens. We hear of them at Hampton Court and at Royal Windsor; as also, of a certain Nicholas Stone, who became so famous in designing and building them up—after many a quaint fashion—that the king employed him to set up one in the courtyard of the Palace of St James—which cost six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence, exclusive of payment for stones and work; and of a still rarer and more elaborate dial in the private gardens at Whitehall, for which forty-six pounds were paid out of the royal pocket. They were known, too, long before these days of King James; and to say nothing of the famous one of Ahaz and Hezekiah, there is a mention of them in Homer (probably a contemporary of the prophet); while at a later date, when Rome was the great city of the world, among her many wonders was the huge sun-dial in the Campus Martius. Augustus, when he came in triumph from Egypt, had brought with him a towering Obelisk—a twin-brother, it may be, of Cleopatra's Needle—and set it up as the gnomon of a vast sun-dial among the stately arches and porticoes where the Roman citizens were wont to assemble at the public games. Round about it the hours were marked out by a circle of gigantic golden figures, so arranged that they might catch the earliest and latest rays of sunlight, and mark the dawn and close of day with a mighty bar of shadow.

But this, like many another wonder of the great city, has long since passed away; and not a trace of it but the obelisk is to be found. Century after century rolled by, and by degrees the custom of setting up dials in public places

fell into disuse, not to be revived until the time came for building Christian churches in widely scattered lands, and then by many a lonely village tower, where the Cross gave man hope of eternity, the shadow on the dial reminded him of the flight of time. And still, in many a quiet country churchyard, and in many a trim manor-house garden, there is yet to be found some quaint little memorial of bygone simple days, old-fashioned rustic folk—in the moss-grown dial, though the hands that framed it are now but dust. One such happy garden I know in the pleasant county of Sussex, where such a dial stands.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or marriage bells;
And sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock.

The manor-house itself, round which the garden lies stretched, is a fair and stately mansion of ruddy tone, with many a quaint turret and pinnacle along its tall roof, and has for several generations borne the dainty name of Summer's Place, a title that well befits it, not merely because of the air of sunshine which welcomes all comers to the goodly house, but that the whole place is crowned and crowded with flowers. It abounds with winding paths, snatches of grassy lawn, clumps of rare shrubs and trees, and above all, with roses of every hue, and choicest fragrance. Follow the broad walk from the house, down between tall hedges of yew, and you come upon a little sunny open space; and there, in the midst of blooming flower-beds scattered over the soft, close-shaven, turf, stands the dial. Built after the simplest fashion, it has no pretence to any charm but that of being old-fashioned, and after the pattern of a still older one in another Sussex garden not far away. Round the four sides of the plate of the dial are cut the following four mottoes, each for its own season: After Darkness, Light; Alas! how swift. I warn whilst I move; So passes Life.

As you stand by the old dial, look where you will, the view is charming. All round lie wide open champaign, meadow, ruddy ploughed land, and sloping upland; dotted here and there with clumps of trees, gray old church towers, and goodly farmhouses, each nestling quietly down under the shade of wych-els, as if it had been there for ever. Not, however, for so lasting a possession. For the proudest towers decay; 'All things do wax and wane,' 'The longest day must end,' and 'Tempus' is still 'edax rerum,' as many a dial still warns us.

'Time makes hay,' says the motto to the lazy Spaniard who relies on to-morrow; more practically to us English folk, 'Make hay while the sun shines;' for, says cheerful Master Herrick:

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he is getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

But among all the countless mottoes set up for dials, perhaps the wisest and wittiest is that which once stood in the old Temple Gardens, at the word of the great Lord Chancellor Bacon. He was hard at work in his chambers one day, when an idle student dropped in to ask his

lordship for a motto for the new sun-dial then being built. Twice, he humbly made his request; but the grave chancellor gave no reply or sign of having heard it. At last, as the petitioner began again for the third time, my lord looks up and says angrily: 'Sirrah, Be gone, about your business.'—'A thousand thanks, my lord,' replies the suitor; 'the very thing for the dial; nothing could be better.'

Yet, if this be the sagest of mottoes, and worthy of so grave a godfather, the brightest and happiest surely was that, once at Paul's Cross: 'Horas non numero nisi Serenas' (I number none but sunny hours); not only a word of warning to all comers, but of dainty reproof to the whole generation of grumblers and malcontents, who altogether leave the sunshine out of their daily record of things, and give us but a catalogue of cloud, dark days, and evil. Not so with the sun-dial. Not a gleam of sunshine, not a golden grain in Time's hourglass passes unnoted; and though the recording finger is a line of shadow, it tells of light—light that must wane, and time that is ever flying, and, once gone, is gone for ever. So much for to-day.

As for to-morrow, we all know the stern truth about it, and that in fact it may never be ours. The sages and moralists of all ages have told us, and warned us, so often that no texts are more common or less heeded. With one special one among these proverbs the wits have dared to take great liberties. 'Never put off till to-morrow,' said Grimaldi's mother to her witty son, 'what can be done to-day.'—'Very well, mother,' replies Joe; 'then let us have the plum-pudding to-night.' Clearly, he regarded to-morrow as a doubtful possession.

'This proverb about to-morrow,' says Talleyrand, is badly rendered; it ought to read thus: 'Never do to-day what you can possibly put off until to-morrow.' 'This plan,' says sage old Benjamin Franklin, 'I once tried for a month; but, easy as it seems, the plan was an utter failure, and at the end I suddenly found that to-morrow was always a day beyond my reach.'

But 'time flies,' as we linger among the wits, and there is but brief space for a few words on the second heading of this little paper, Hour-glasses, which, far more than sun-dials, are now all but things of the past; though time was, and that not so very far remote, when they were to be found in almost every parish church in the land. Here and there, as early as the third century, mention of them is to be found; and so onwards increasingly to the time of the Reformation, when one was usually set in the pulpit as a guide to the preacher. At Hurst, in Berkshire, one was set up with the legend: 'As this glass runneth, so fadeth man's life.' At St Dunstan's, Fleet Street, London, were once a couple of hourglasses, with fittings of silver which, in aftertimes of trouble, were melted down and made into heads for the beadle's staves. In the parish book of Saint Katharine's, Aldgate (1564), is an entry which runs thus: 'Item, for one hourglass hanging by pulpit where the preacher doth make his sermon, that he may know how the hour passeth, one shilling.'

An hour, or even less—for some glasses were made to run for half an hour—was then counted enough and more than enough both by priest

and people for the preacher's discourse; and the glass, in fact, was for warning him to get ready for Finis. But onward from Martin Luther's time the preacher's office grew to be more and more magnified; and in the days of the Puritan divines even two hours were not thought too much for a 'right godly admonition.' Hence it fell out at Hadleigh, where a certain Independent had come to take the place of a 'back-sliding' vicar, that on a special Sunday the preacher had already got through half of the second glass, and there appeared no sign of his coming to a conclusion. It was sultry summer weather, and the audience, one by one, were creeping out of church, when, at a sudden pause in the minister's discourse, up rose the old parish clerk, after long watching for a chance—'When your reverence,' said he, 'hath finished, be pleased, honoured sir, to close the church door and put the key under it.'

Those were the days when Hezekiah Poundtext had it all his own way, 'could go on for ever,' as Roger Willdrake profanely put it, 'and then begin again;' and when 'Finally, lastly, and to conclude' might be a long way off from the desired haven of Finis.

Indeed, if the preacher failed to make out his full hour, he was counted lazy, 'a slothful shepherd, a dumb dog,' an unprofitable member; and many a dull discourse passed muster by reason, mainly, of its intolerable length. Yet some of the lengthiest of these expounders were not without a grain of wit which, though grim enough in its way, helped to season the long-drawn, weary, outpouring with a spark of salt. Thus, one Hugh Peters, a well-known and lengthy expounder of knotty points, on a certain special occasion, finding at the end of the first hour that he was not half-way through his subject, cried out, as he turned the hourglass for another spell: 'Beloved, I know you to be right good fellows; so, let us have one more glass together before we part.' And small as it is, the joke seems to have been a favourite one: for much about the same time we find his friend and fellow-labourer, the notorious Daniel Burgess, making use of the very same image. He was preaching, at Westminster, on what would now be called the Total Abstinence question, and having thundered with great violence and at prodigious length against the perils, sin, and shame of 'Drink, drinking, and drunkards,' accursed, and 'to be accursed ever among Christian men,' the impartial hourglass suddenly ran down. Whereupon Daniel, calmly turning it, went boldly on: 'Brethren, of this damnable custom of drinking, there is yet more to be said, nay much more; let us then have the other glass, and then, if need be, another, &c.'

'If,' said honest old Martin Luther, 'I had my time to go over again, my sermons should be much shorter, and fit for children and poor folk, &c.' But having one's time over again is just what is in nobody's power; the very lesson which the learned Doctor himself had doubtless enforced in many a long discourse, of which, many a sundial and many an hourglass had been warning him for half a century, and in vain, until in his old age he grew to be merciful, as he thought of how many people he had sent to sleep, when he meant to awaken them.

'Time,' says an Italian proverb, 'brings roses.'

'Time,' says another sage, of wider ambition, 'brings all things to them who wait.' Possibly so; if by 'all' we are content to mean 'a good many,' but not 'all' in any other sense; for not one of the wasted hours of the past, and not one of the lost opportunities and neglected duties that lie buried under them, may ever come back. Hogarth, when he drew his picture of 'The Sleeping Congregation,' meant more than a joke when he set up an hourglass before the preacher with the laughing scroll on it, 'Omnia fumus erunt,' as an elegy of the past. As well try to gather the puff of smoke that has vanished into thin air, as to call back a grain of sand that has once fallen from the glass. It is a greater artist than Hogarth who in his own inimitable fashion sums up the whole truth in a single line:

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

OLD SALLY.

SHE was one of the accepted facts of my childhood, taken as a matter of course with the unquestioning stolidity of most children. It never struck me as strange that Sally's wrinkled countenance should be of a dark coffee colour when all the other faces round me were white; or that while she spoke in curious negro jargon, the other servants used broad Devon. I accepted her, and never speculated concerning her.

She was a relic of the days of West Indian slave-holding, and was born a slave, but gained her freedom by coming to England long before the days of the general emancipation. She never in the least realised the fact, being in her own opinion 'missus's' property; and she would have been much offended if any one had tried to prove the contrary. She came with missus (my grandmother) as her maid from her father's estate, and never left her till she died, crossing and recrossing the Atlantic several times in the discharge of her faithful service. She often told us, in the quaint negro jargon that never sounded strange in our ears, of those long monotonous voyages in the vast sailing-ships of the day. Of the constant watchfulness, for fear of privateers, and the sharp orders of the protecting frigates to 'close up' if any of the unwieldy merchantmen showed signs of straggling. Of the delighted relief which spread over every heart when the commanding officer signalled, 'Bonaparte is taken! Shift for yourselves!' Of how the ship in gaining port almost scraped sides with a great man-of-war outward bound; and passengers flew to the side and sailors to the rigging when it became known that the little man pacing the quarter-deck with folded arms and sallow face was 'Bony' himself on board the *Billy-ruffian*.

Her youth had been passed in earthquake-shaken Guiana. 'Dere it was hot, chillen! And de ground did walk and de ground did talk!' was her graphic account of the continuous earthquakes. Her anecdotes of her fellow-servants were full of contempt, and generally intended to point their inferiority to herself. When my great-grandfather, an easy soul, much ruled by his so-called slaves, died, he was succeeded by his son, a just but stern man. 'Ole massa were bery kind, and young massa not bad; he gave us plenty roast beef, but he ran us troo wid de spit!'

I seem to see her now sitting in her own armchair, close to the window of the servants' hall, and leisurely darning granny's black silk stockings. She wore a turban of linen, stiffly starched, and nearly a foot high above her dark keen face. Her figure was spare and active, though her groans and complaints about her 'lumba-ager' were incessant. Her dress was a straight and scanty garment of either lilac print or black merino, with elbow sleeves and a coloured handkerchief pinned around her shoulders. In the morning she tied a gay bandana across her forehead, knotting it behind, Malay fashion; but her turban was the chief pride of her toilet, and she spent hours washing and starching the folds of white fine linen which composed it. A pair of spectacles were perched far down her nose—such spectacles! with round glasses and broad flat silver rims. On the window-seat beside her, her Bible was generally spread open, and she mingled texts and apostrophes to 'de Lard' with groans about her 'lumba-ager' and constant admonitions to the 'chillen.'

The servants' hall was a paradise of delight to us. It contained a cupboard full of dusty toys, the playthings of children long grown up or dead and gone. There were rosy apples stored in rows on the top of the linen press; and a family of fascinating china cats on the mantel-shelf. The walls were papered with lilac roses on a buff ground, and the centre table covered with a cotton cloth of lively blue-and-red check. The old mulatto sat in her armchair, drawn close to the window, across which the Devon roses clambered, and a great bush of fuchsia touched the panes with its bright slender red blossoms. In the corner opposite Sally, 'Anne' generally sat, a faded plaintive little woman, with a light brown front artlessly arranged (how often I wondered why the skin of Anne's head grew in a ridge above her forehead!), and a chronic whitlow. Her 'front' was crowned by a high bandeau of gray blond, interspersed with bows of purple ribbon, and the back of her head was encased in a sort of black silk bag. She was the 'young ladies' maid' (my aunts were spinsters considerably over forty). She was as silent as Sally was voluble, and generally assented to her remarks in monosyllables. On the subject of theology alone these two friends disputed, and their contentions were sharp and bitter on such points. Each attended a different Bethesda, and considered her minister as the one unfailing light, and her fellow-congregation the only elect handful sure of ultimate salvation. 'I prove it you—I prove it you in de Word, Anne!' Sally would exclaim, slapping her Bible in great excitement. But Anne always held to her point with Saxon persistence and a depressed air.

Sally went to chapel every Sunday morning in great state, and we generally escorted her to the gate to see her start. She wore a black llama shawl, and a huge 'drawn' silk bonnet of tunnel-like depth, with deep borders of crimped muslin round her dark old face. She went slowly, leaning on a cane of ebony, mounted in silver; and in wet weather one of the younger maids held unfurled over her a green cotton umbrella with brass tips. Her bath-chair was drawn bodily by the owner himself, a mouldy man, with a bent back and a perspiring neck, of whom Sally entertained the lowest possible opinion, and always

spoke to him with a mixture of contempt and condescension on account of his making himself 'a beast of burden—no better dan a donkey.'—'It am a maracle to me how he does it,' she often remarked, with a coloured slave's instinctive wonder that even the meanest of mean whites could so debase himself.

In the discharge of her easy duties as personal attendant on my grandmother Sally was a very dragon, demanding an amount of attention for missus that that meek lady would never have dreamt of claiming for herself. Her daughters were sharply called to account if they failed to return anything borrowed from their mother. 'Now, Missy Lulu, where am my missus's boxes, and where am de straps and de bag dat you took away?' And 'Missy Lulu' (my Aunt Lucy, an untidy, short-sighted spinster of mature age) was obliged to search for and produce the missing articles under Sally's persistent inquisition.

My three aunts slept in two large communicating rooms, retaining the custom of their childish days. Sometimes my grandmother would send a message to them while dressing, and occasionally Sally found them all on their knees at their morning prayers. Regardless of the fact, she made her communication in a loud clear voice and departed. 'You must not do that, Sally,' my grandmother once urged mildly, after her daughters had complained to her of the old woman's irreverent disturbance of their devotions. 'You must wait until the young ladies have finished their prayers, and then speak.'

'Why mus' I wait?' returned Sally, much injured. 'It would interruckt your dressin'.'

'Never mind that, Sally; the delay will not hurt me.'

'Umph! 'Cause so dat de Lard am not dressin', and it cannot matter to Him dat one little minute dat de young ladies leave off 'peakin'.'

And in spite of her fervent and genuine piety, the old mulatto steadily refused to keep her mistress waiting even for 'de Lard.' In fact, she considered my grandmother to be a being apart and above considerations that weighed on other folks. I heard a friend, who was trying to combat some of her very brimstone theories concerning the hereafter, say to her, long after my grandmother's death: 'Why, Sally, according to that, only a few members of your own persuasion would be saved! Now, your mistress was a staunch Churchwoman, I know. What do you think about her?'

Sally drew up with an offended air. 'My missus had no call to tink of such things,' she said with conviction; 'she was better than the angels.'

The old woman had a Scotch dislike to answer any question that committed her to a direct assertion. I remember hearing my grandmother ask her one morning if 'Miss Lucy' had eaten an egg at breakfast. 'Can't say, missus; but I saw de shell,' she replied cautiously.—'Sally, are those clothes aired?' 'Can't say, missus; but I saw dem befo' de fire.'

As years went by, Sally had to abdicate her throne in the servants' hall, and cease her admonitions of the younger maids and 'Massa John's chillen.' She retired to her own room and nursed her lumba-ager by the fire, ruling the maid detailed to wait on her with a rod of iron.

She expected to receive daily visits from all the members of the family, and any visitors who might be staying in the house, and always upbraided any one who, she considered, had failed in this duty.

Quiet little Anne faded away long before the old mulatto, though she was much her junior. 'I trus' dat she hab foun' grace, dat Anne,' Sally remarked of her, shaking her turban mournfully. 'But I dunno. She just rampaged against grace, did dat Anne.' And she always referred to Anne as a person of fiery and headstrong temper, with whom she feared that her own meek ministrations had failed.

When 'my missus' died, the poor old woman's grief was painful to witness, and she scarcely left the body night or day till the funeral, sitting beside the bed while tears rolled down her withered cheeks. 'O my missus! My dear ole missus! What she do widout me? Why didnen I go too!' she moaned, rocking herself to and fro, crouched in the shadow of the curtains, a very type of old-world service and devotion.

Lying awake one night not long before her death, her keen old ears—she was never the least deaf—caught the sound of movement in the house below. She rose; and arming herself with a flat candle-stick, popped on her head her discarded turban, and prepared to reconnoitre. She crept out, and peeped over the balustrade of the well staircase into the hall below. Dim forms with shaded lights were moving about softly. 'De wicked fleeth when no man pursooeth,' roared Sally, furious at the sight, and banged her brass candlestick with an appalling clatter against the handrail. One of the marauders looking up, saw the dark face, white turban, and gleaming eyes of the mulatto. With a yell of terror he literally fulfilled her statement, taking to his heels with his companions behind him before they had had time even to secure the silver tops of the cruet-stand.

Sally had a touch of oriental magnificence in her nature, and never condescended to minute detail. Her linen she bought by the piece, not the yard, and made all her underclothes in 'sets' of a dozen, even beginning a new dozen when she must have been about ninety-five. Occasionally she would send a 'piece' of linen or calico print to importunate relatives in the West Indies, who often sent the quaintest begging letters to 'Aunt Sally,' and evidently considered her as a person of great wealth. Her wages were paid from the moment she first set foot in England till her death, more than seventy years after. She left all her savings to my aunts, and some curious old gold rings which had descended to her from her grandmother, to whom they had been given by her owner early in the eighteenth century. Sally always kept a missionary box in her room, adorned with a picture of a palm-tree and a kneeling negro of inky blackness, and expected contributions for the purpose of sending 'de Bible to de poor niggurs.' Having secured her sixpence or shilling, she would pass to more worldly matters, and loved to hear all the gossip, and the soldier and sailor stories of her younger male visitors, for whom she did not disguise her partiality.

'Now Mars' George!' she would chuckle till double with mirth, 'I know dat aren't quite true;

but it am bery funny. Oh, Mars' George, my lumba-ager am bery bad, bery bad. De Lard is bery marciful; but I cannot tink why He made de lumba-ager!—And did the Cappen say dat? Oh, Mars' George, what a whippin' you did want! Jus' like your poo' great-great uncle, who nebbber "duck his shot," as A'miral Hood wrote my ole missus with his lef' hand jus' after battle. She did cry and kiss de letter!—You like him, Mars' George, always de peartest limb!—Oh, my lumba-ager!—Well, good-bye, Mars' George. Don't you be lon' comin' to see ole Sally again.—Dat Cappen mus' hab been de blin'est fool!—Lard bress you, Mars' George!'

Sally died at the ripe age of ninety-seven, and we buried her in the same grave as 'dat Anne.' The years of their united service were nearly one hundred and fifty.

WEST-OF-IRELAND SUPERSTITIONS AND CUSTOMS.

THE railway has annihilated more than distance in the west of Ireland. Fairies and ghosts have vanished as rapidly as if they had been put to flight with a witch's wand. It would seem that truth is indeed stranger than fiction, and the marvellous is expelled by the more marvellous. Doubtless the steam-engine, with its train of carriages and wagons, dashing across the country in its headlong speed, has far surpassed anything conjured up by the most extravagant Celtic imagination. Be that as it may, a ghost, a fairy, or a witch will soon be as rare in the west of Ireland as the magnificent deer that once bounded over the plains of my native province.

The hill of Knockmaa, in the county of Galway, was the headquarters of the fairies of Connaught. They went forth thence to garrison the raths scattered over the country; from the raths they sallied out in companies and legions on the summer and autumn winds to perplex or frighten the belated traveller; and many a prank they played with the silly peasant who remained too long out at wake or fair. These were just the things to predispose him for a visit from the children of the air; the former made him drowsy enough to lie down on some grassy knoll and sleep a few hours before his day's work began; the latter had furnished him with spirits prolific enough to create a thousand phantasms. But the wake and the fair were occasions of experiences widely differing: he who came from the wake was 'moved with the concord of sweet sounds,' and was borne lightly through charming realms of romance; but he of the fair was hag-ridden and pulled and dragged through the long night; the briers and the brambles were stained with the blood of his torn hands, and the hedges were garnished with the shreds of his torn clothes.

One of the most beautiful of all the fairies has, alas! long since passed away. Tall, slim, graceful, with large dark lustrous eyes, she used to watch beside the stile, in the gloaming, for her comely peasant lover; and woe to the youth who gazed into the depths of her dreamy eyes! One gaze, and the spell was upon him, and he pined away till his spirit fled to the fairy region where his fairy love claimed him for her own.

There was a cure for hydrophobia, which was due to fairy kindness. One of the monks of

the old monastery of Ballintubber, in County Mayo, was one day out boating on a lake in the abbey grounds; a small black dog swam after the boat; the poor creature seemed exhausted and about to sink; the monk, pitying it, took it into the boat. It remained quiet for a while; then suddenly springing up, it bit its sympathetic friend and plunged again into the water. The poor monk soon grew ill; in his melancholy, he wandered out into the fields to bewail alone the sad mishap that threatened his young life with a terrible death. Casting his eyes wearily around, he saw a book lying before him in the grass; taking it up and opening it, he found therein a charm for the fell contagion. The charm became hereditary. When dying, he bequeathed it to one of his nearest relatives, who bequeathed it to another; and thus it was handed down through the lapse of centuries. I saw the last of the race that had the gift of the supposed charm, and certainly he had something about him of the weird appearance of those who are thought to be connected by some link with the mystic world.

But all the children of the air were not equally benevolent. There was one remarkable only for mischievous pranks and the nightly annoyance he gave to a quiet industrious family. This troublesome gentleman was known as the 'Buck o' the Mill.' The mill was a small rickety concern, and was owned or tenanted by Michael Conville. The miller, too, was a remarkable man; his head was a lumber-room of miscellaneous items of history and fiction, strangely and incongruously mixed. The history of Ireland and England, a knowledge of mechanics, a harmless smattering of the black art, a taste for medicine, and for profane and religious controversy, all found a place in Mick's roomy head. But the Buck o' the Mill did not indulge in learned discussions with Mick. He was a cowardly fellow; he never ventured his molestations in the open day, but always waited for the night, when he would tear the mortar off the walls and hurl it at the members of this inoffensive family. Nothing was 'too hot or too heavy' for him; every night, jugs, saucepans, glasses, kettles, and pots, tables and chairs, doors and windows, were clashed and banged. Still, Mick, to his credit be it spoken, did not give in; he stuck bravely to his mill; and the Buck, wearied with his fruitless efforts at eviction, at last disappeared.

With the exception of a little lingering witchcraft there is now but scant token of the marvellous creations of long ago. The blacksmith's anvil is the most potent spell-worker now. About twenty years since, a blacksmith went through the ceremony of 'turning the anvil,' and there came a fierce storm, which tumbled houses, tore up trees by the roots, and made strong men grow pale and pray. With the calm of the next day fear disappeared, and men laughed at the passing folly of believing that any son of Vulcan, even if aided by all the Cyclops, could raise such a storm. The ceremony of 'turning the anvil' is, according to an old smith, who may have been drawing on his imagination, performed as follows: The smith rises before the sun, goes naked to his forge, turns the anvil, and strikes it four or five terrific blows with his sledge. This he repeats for nine mornings, and then the desired result is produced. Happily, a strict fast of nine days is a *conditio*

sine quâ non, so there is nothing cheering or invigorating enough to make the performance of the ceremony easy or agreeable.

Taking oath upon a skull used to be a dreadfully solemn affair. I remember only one instance. A very fearless but very honest woman was accused of stealing. She was so indignant at the charge, she procured a skull, brought it with her to the chapel, and when the congregation came out, she produced the skull and 'cleared' herself. What gives sanction to this strange oath is the belief that the spirit to whom the skull belongs will haunt not only the perjurer but the family of the perjurer for generations.

Other strange things are done by the Western peasantry; but I should rather call them by the simple name of custom than by the less agreeable name of superstition. When a cow gets unwell, it is by no means an uncommon practice to devote it to Saint Martin. The ceremony is performed by letting a few drops of blood from the poor creature in honour of the saint. The cow so devoted cannot be sold or killed; if it recover, it would be dishonouring the saint to suffer it to die any but a natural death.

A custom that attends the last agonies of the dying is the strangest of all. In the moment of dissolution, the dying person is lifted from the bed and laid on a little straw spread over a coverlet on the floor. This is, I believe, still very generally done. I have been unable to ascertain why it is done.

The Western peasantry may have had strange ways, the disuse of which may be no disadvantage; a state, however, of original simplicity is not to be lamented, since to be in keeping with this age of enlightenment so often means to have learned its vices.

UNFORGOTTEN.

You stepped awhile outside with me;
The night was magical with stars,
And through the curtains fitfully
Came the last waltz's dying bars;
You paler than your dainty lace,
Or that camellia in your hair—
There seemed a spell upon the place,
And nothing but the night was there.

I knelt upon the garden-ground;
Caprice or pity made you stay;
But still my heart ran o'er and drowned
The foolish words I tried to say:
One moment, one, I held your hand,
Ah! fair cold hand! and made my moan;
And then I grew to understand
How men seek bread and find a stone.

But still that waltz is in my head,
Now high, now low, it ebbs and flows,
And still the stars are overhead,
And still I see your scentless rose:
The record rests within my soul
Like lines upon the granite traced;
Though no man's eyes behold the scroll,
It keeps its legend undefaced.

EDWARD SYDNEY TYLEE.

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SOLEMN TRIFLING.

'It seems,' says Johnson in his *Life of Sir Thomas Browne*, 'to have been in all ages the pride of art to show how it could exalt the low and amplify the little.' To this ambition we perhaps owe the Frogs of Homer, the Gnat and the Bees of Virgil, the Butterfly of Spenser, and Coleridge's lines to a young Ass. Although the subject in each of these cases is comparatively trifling, the halo of genius is thrown around it, and we now regard it with more interest and infinitely more consideration than we otherwise should have done. If for no other reason, therefore, the ambition has been productive of great and lasting contributions to the world's literature, and mankind would doubtless have been richer if art had concerned itself more with exalting the low and less with amplifying the little. The result in the latter case is, indeed, simply ludicrous.

Isaac D'Israeli has an interesting chapter on some forms in which a love of amplifying trifles has found vent. From an early period a weakness was manifested for composing works in which one letter of the alphabet was omitted; and when the rage for this species of misdirected energy had somewhat subsided, it became fashionable to compose verses in the forms of hearts, wings, altars, &c.—a practice which, by the way, has been revived of late in America. Some grave trifler is said to have written one hundred sonnets on his mistress's eyebrows; while another composed a collection of poems on a flea. Quite as absurd, perhaps, were those who devoted their hair-splitting energies to less secular themes.

Most of these follies occurred at a period of the world's history when life was not taken so seriously as it now is, when elegance in little things was considered an essential part of the qualifications of a gentleman, and when, as Macaulay said of Horace Walpole, 'trifles were his serious business.' But we have still with us those whose conformation of mind is such that whatever is little seems to them great, and whatever is great seems to them little. Such people, if they are given to sober

reading, worry themselves to death almost over the authorship of the *Letters of Junius*, or the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask, and so altogether miss the true lessons of history, just as much as a reviewer misses the aim and spirit of a novel when he devotes his whole attention to hunting out purely literal errors, and to discovering whether the heroine's eyes are spoken of as blue in one volume and black in another. The one is a trifler just as much as the other, though Carlyle's refusal to read *Adam Bede* because an amazing ignorance of carpentry is displayed in the first chapter, may lend a certain authority to the reviewer's trifling. In other directions the disregard for proportion is equally as great.

Much has been said of the solemn trifling of the antiquary, who has often been held up as the personification of misdirected energy. A glance through the old volumes of the *Gentleman's Magazine* will show that much can be said to warrant such a conclusion. From them, Monk-barns's paper upon the inscription of *CElia Lelia*—a contribution which, as we all know, 'attracted considerable notice at the time'—can easily be paralleled, if not surpassed; and in the early issues of the *Annual Register* there are some stories which justify the boisterous fun in *Pickwick* when Mr Tupman makes 'that immortal discovery which has been the pride and boast of his friends and the envy of every antiquarian in this or any other country.' But, after all, Dryasdust is not the greatest offender in the art of magnifying trifles. Other learned men have surpassed his wildest freaks. If it be really necessary to select one particularly glaring example of solemn trifling, it might perhaps be difficult to cite a better instance than Bentley's ludicrous edition of Milton.

Parliamentary annals contain many instances of grave trifling. When Steele was returned for Boroughbridge, he wittily described the House of Commons as consisting very much of silent people oppressed by the choice of a great deal to say, and of eloquent people ignorant that what they said was nothing to the purpose. It was one of the

latter class who, during the debate on the Hares and Rabbits Bill, astounded the House by what was known at the time as the 'great egg theory.' Notwithstanding that the honourable member was promptly reminded that hares and rabbits do not lay eggs, he insisted on beginning with the egg; and begin with the egg he did, laying before the House a volume of encyclopædic lore remotely connected with the matter in hand. Another trifler, an Irish member, once confidentially informed the House that he had an uncle who regularly took six tumblers of whisky-toddy daily. This fact, he said, troubled him greatly; and as a proof of his solicitude for his uncle's welfare, he read a family correspondence delightful in itself, but which gained infinitely from the manner in which he delivered it. Another Irish member gladdened the heart of the Speaker by a description of the personal charms of a cousin of his.

Ludicrous as individual trifling often is, it is nothing as compared with collective trifling. Many a haggling Highway Board has talked for days and spent thousands of pounds over a few yards of land; and there is a tradition that the Convocation of Canterbury once debated for three-quarters of an hour whether a semicolon should not be substituted for a comma in a document which was under consideration—a subtle distinction which, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, would not in the least affect the sense. The collective wisdom of the House of Lords, too, was once bent for some little time to the task of discovering a definition of the word 'archbishop.' Best of all, however, is the following piece of solemn trifling, which is actually to be found in one of the volumes of the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of London: 'Procure an earthen pot or jar that will come on upon your head so as to cover it completely; cut two holes in it for the advantage of seeing; and then, fastening it about your neck with a bandage, take off your clothes and walk into the river where the [wild] ducks are. Take care to enter above them in the stream, and to stalk down in such a manner that only your head, thus covered with the pot, be above water, as if carried by the current, and they will only take the jar for something floating on the water. When you are among the thickest of them, take one by the legs and pull it under water, then seize upon another in the same manner, and so on till you have taken the whole covey; and then march out again!'

'Red-tapeism' also is responsible for many extraordinary instances of solemn trifling. One will suffice: it is quite a masterpiece in its way. In 1877 a Chancery clerk left with the Paymaster-general directions for the sale of a certain amount in consols, which sale should have taken place three days after the deposit of the notice. In the meantime, however, a letter was received, stating that the officials wished to see the principal of the firm with respect to the sale. On attending at the office, the clerk was informed that the printed order directing the sale did not accurately describe the account as it stood in the Paymaster-general's books. Will it be believed that the 'error' consisted in spelling 'honourable' without the *u*? In consequence of this absurdly trifling discrepancy, the order had to pass through

four departments to be set right, and the sale did not take place for more than a week.

'Trifles light as air' are 'confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ' to others than the jealous, and in most cases it is certainly unwise to underestimate the importance of them, since not a little of the world's wisdom is the result of attention in days gone by to apparent nothings. Still, it may fairly be questioned whether the world has not lost quite as much as it has gained by the undue prominence which has been given to them. Who can tell—to take one striking example—how the progress of the human mind has been retarded by the scholastic philosophy, the acutest disciples of which for more than one century debated such a question as this: 'When a hog is carried to market with a rope tied about its neck, which is held at the other end by a man, whether is the hog carried to market by the rope or the man?' In our own days, it is to be feared that many, like the dog in the fable, grasp the shadow and miss the substance; by a sort of mental obliquity such people magnify trifles until they assume, in their eyes, Brobdingnagian proportions, thus completely dwarfing things of far greater importance.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER VII.

LEFT alone, Miss Primby mechanically reverted to her embroidery; but it is to be feared that her doing so was little better than a pretence. She bit her under-lip very hard to help her in controlling the nervous emotion which she had much ado not to give way to.

True to her promise, Clara was not more than a few minutes away. When she came back she looked paler than before, but her eyes were extraordinarily bright and luminous.

'Is he safe, Clara? Oh, tell me that he is safe!'

'I hope and trust so; more than that I cannot say. The police may arrive at any moment. You must try to look brave and unconcerned, aunty, dear. You need not speak unless you like, but leave everything to me.'

'Very well, dear. I know that I shall be too nervous to say a word.—But what are you going to tell the police?'

'I am going to deceive them.—But oh, aunty, surely in such a cause I shall be forgiven!'

Suddenly Margery's unkempt head was protruded through the archway. 'They've come, mum,' she said in a stage whisper.—'They've stuck three men in front of the house and two at the back.'

Mrs Brooke nodded, and the head vanished.

'Now, aunty,' said Clara, 'let us both try to look as if nothing was the matter.' So saying she sat down to the piano and began to play a waltz in a minor key.

Presently in came Bunce, looking very white and scared, carrying a salver with a card on it.

Mrs Brooke took the card and read aloud: "Mr J. Drumley, Superintendent of Police."—What can he want here at this hour of the evening? she said.—'You had better show him in, Bunce.' And with that she resumed her playing.

She ceased playing, however, when the *portière* was pushed aside and two men came forward, one a little in advance of the other.

As Mrs Brooke rose and confronted them, the first man made a stiff military bow, while the second carried a couple of fingers to his forehead.

'To what may I attribute the honour of this visit?' asked Clara in her most gracious tones.

Both the men were evidently disconcerted. This pale beautiful apparition with its great shining eyes was something they had not expected to meet.

'You are Mrs Brooke, I suppose, ma'am?' said the first man after an awkward pause.

Clara smiled assent.

'I am Superintendent Drumley of the King's Harold police, and this is one of my sergeants. But our business is with Mr Brooke, and not with you, ma'am.'

'Quite so. But I hope your errand is not an unpleasant one?'

'I am sorry to say it is a very unpleasant one.'

'May I ask the nature of it?'

'If you will excuse me, ma'am, I would rather not enter into particulars—at least not just now. As I said before, our business is with Mr Brooke. May I ask whether he is at home?'

'He is *not* at home,' answered Clara. 'It is a pity you did not arrive a little earlier.' She consulted her watch. 'My husband left home about five-and-twenty minutes ago. His intention was to walk across the fields to Woodberry Station and catch the up-train to London.'

The two men stared at each other for a moment or two and then began to talk in eager whispers. Clara, who was close by the piano, turned over a leaf of music and struck a chord or two in an absent-minded way.

In rushed Margery, panting once more, and to all appearance breathless. She made-believe not to see the two constables. 'O mum,' she cried, 'what do you think? He let me carry his bag all the way through the park, and at the gate he gave me a bright new sixpence. I wanted to carry it to the station; but he wouldn't let me. I wish he had—he'd got more'n a mile to walk. But a new silver sixpence! O crumbs!' Margery ended with one of her most eldritch and uncanny laughs. The sergeant of police, who was rather a nervous man, jumped in his shoes; he had never heard anything like it before.

For a moment Mrs Brooke stared at the girl in blank astonishment; then a look flashed from Margery's eyes into hers and she understood.

'Of whom are you speaking, girl?' asked Drumley sternly.

'O lor! I didn't see you, sir.—Why, who should I be speaking of but Muster Geril?'

'She refers to my husband, Mr Gerald Brooke,' remarked Clara.

The two men retired from the room a little way and talked together in low tones. 'I ain't so sure that this is anything more than a clever dodge,' said Drumley, 'and that the gent we want isn't still somewhere about. However, you had better take Tomlinson with you and drive as hard as you can to Woodberry Station. The London train will be gone before you get there; but you can set the telegraph to work and make

whatever inquiries you may think necessary. You've got the description?'—The sergeant nodded.—'Of course you've got to bear in mind that he may be disguised. Do the best you can, and then hurry back.—Send Simcox to me. I'll have the house thoroughly searched while you are away.'

The man saluted and went; and presently Simcox appeared in his stead.

Drumley drew a little nearer Mrs Brooke. 'Without wishing in the least, ma'am, to doubt what you have told me about Mr Brooke's departure,' he said, 'I consider it my duty to search the premises.'

The piece of music Clara was holding fell to the ground. 'To search the premises!' she exclaimed as she stooped to pick it up. She deliberately replaced the music on the piano before she spoke again. Then turning to Drumley with her most dignified air, she said: 'You forget, sir, that you have not yet enlightened me as to the nature of your business at Beechley Towers.'

'It is my painful duty to inform you, ma'am, that the Baron von Rosenberg was murdered this afternoon in his own grounds at Beaulieu.'

'Murdered! The Baron von Rosenberg!' exclaimed both the ladies in a breath.

'O aunty, that was a capital bit of make-believe on your part!' thought Clara to herself. Then, after a pause, to Drumley: 'We are excessively shocked, sir, at your tidings. The Baron was a visitor at the Towers, and was highly esteemed both by my husband and myself. Still, you must excuse me for saying that I fail to see in what way this dreadful tragedy connects itself with Mr Brooke.'

'It's a very disagreeable thing for me to have to break it to you, ma'am; but the fact is that Mr Brooke is suspected of having shot the Baron. The evidence against him is very strong, and—and, in fact, I hold a warrant for his arrest.'

'A warrant—for—the arrest of—my husband! You must be dreaming—or—or—'

'Not at all, ma'am. As I said before, the evidence against Mr Brooke—circumstantial, of course—is very strong. If you would like to see the document'—

'I will take your word for it.—My husband the murderer of the Baron von Rosenberg! Impossible! There is some incomprehensible mistake somewhere.'

'I hope so, with all my heart,' answered the superintendent drily. 'Still, I have my duty to perform.'

'Of course. I don't blame you for one moment; I only say there is a grievous mistake somewhere. You wish to go over the house—I think that is what I understood you to imply?'

'By your leave, ma'am.'

Without another word Mrs Brooke rang the bell; then, crossing the room, with her own hands she drew aside the *portière* that shrouded the archway and fastened it back by means of a silver chain. The hall beyond was now lighted up by three or four lamps which shed a chastened radiance over the scene. More lamps lighted up the gallery. The portraits of the dead and gone Croftons, male and female, seemed to have retired further into the solitude of their frames, as though the lamplight were distasteful to them. The leaves of the tropical plants massed here and

there shone glossy green; in that softened sheen the helmets and cuirasses of the men-at-arms who kept watch and ward at the foot of the staircase gleamed like burnished silver.

'Bunce,' said Mrs Brooke, when that functionary responded to the summons, 'you will be good enough to take a light and show these gentlemen over the whole of the house. You will allow them to enter every room without exception that they may wish to examine. Nothing must be kept back from them.' She made a little bow to Mr Drumley, as dismissing him and his companion, and then composedly re-entered the room.

'Hang me, if I ain't half inclined to think she's humbugging me, after all!' said Mr Drumley to himself as he followed the majordomo.

Oh, the slow exquisite torture of the half-hour that followed, which seemed, indeed, to lengthen itself out, to several hours. To this day, Clara never thinks of it without a shudder. From where she was seated she could see straight across the hall to the staircase beyond; no one could go up or come down without her cognisance.

'Clara, dear, I had no idea you had half so much nerve,' said Miss Primby in a whisper.

'Don't speak to me, aunty, please,' she whispered back, 'or I shall break down.' Then to herself: 'Will this torture never come to an end!'

It did come to an end by-and-by. Mr Drumley and his man, preceded by Bunce, came slowly down the staircase. They were met in the hall by two other men who had searched the ground-floor and cellars. It was evident that in both cases their perquisition had been unsuccessful.

A minute or two later in marched the sergeant. His journey to the station had been equally fruitless of results, except in so far as setting the telegraph to work was concerned.

Mrs Brooke went forward to the group where they stood in the centre of the hall. 'Well?' she said interrogatively and with a faint smile. 'Have you succeeded in finding Mr Brooke?'

'No, ma'am; I am bound to say that we have not.'

'I hope you have not forgotten what I told you when you first asked for him,' was the quiet reply. 'But can I not offer you a little refreshment after your arduous duties?'

Mr Drumley laughed the laugh of discomfiture. 'I think not, Mrs Brooke—much obliged to you, all the same.—Come, lads; it's no use wasting our time here any longer.—Mrs Brooke, ma'am, I had a very disagreeable duty to perform; I trust you will bear me out in saying that I have tried to carry it out with as little annoyance to you as possible.'

'You have been most considerate, Mr Drumley, and my thanks are due to you.'

A minute later the men were gone. Then Mrs Brooke rang the bell and ordered all the lamps in the hall except one to be extinguished: that one but served, as it were, to make the darkness visible. No sooner was this done and the servant gone, than Margery once more put in an appearance.

'They're gone, mum, every man-jack of 'em; and ain't Muster Drummle in a rare wax 'cos he couldn't find Muster Geril!'

Scarcely had the girl finished speaking, when

one of the men in armour at the foot of the staircase stepped down from his pedestal and came slowly forward. Margery fell back with a cry of terror, for not even she had been in the secret.

But Clara, rushing to her husband, pushed up his visor and clasped him in her arms. 'Saved! saved!' she cried in a voice choked with the emotion she could no longer restrain.

'For a little while, my darling, perchance only for a little while,' was the mournful response.

CHAPTER VIII.

We are at Linden Villa, a pretty little detached house, standing in its own grounds, in one of the north-western suburbs of London, and the time is the morning of the day after the murder of the Baron von Rosenberg. Two people are seated at breakfast—George Crofton and his wife Stephanie. For, Mr Crofton's protestations and oburgations notwithstanding at the interview between himself and Clara Brooke, he had thought fit within a month after that date to make an offer of his hand and heart to Mademoiselle Stephanie Lagrange, an offer which had been duly accepted. And, in truth, the ex-queen of the *Haute Ecole* was a far more suitable wife for a man like George Crofton than Clara Brooke could possibly have been.

Mr Crofton presented a somewhat seedy appearance this morning; there was a worn look about his eyes, and his hand was scarcely as steady as it might have been. His breakfast consisted of a tumbler of brandy-and-soda and a rusk: it was his usual matutinal repast. Mrs Crofton, who was one of those persons who are always blessed with a hearty appetite, having disposed of her cutlet and her egg, was now leaning back in an easy-chair, feeding a green and gold parakeet with tiny lumps of sugar, and sipping at her chocolate between times. She was attired in a loose morning wrapper of quilted pale blue satin, with a quantity of soft lace round her throat, and looked exceedingly handsome.

'Steph, I think I have told you before,' said Mr Crofton in a grumbling tone, 'that I don't care to have any of your old circus acquaintances calling upon you here. I thought you had broken off the connection for good when you became my wife.'

'Que voulez-vous, cher enfant?' answered Steph without the least trace of temper. 'You introduce me to no society; you scarcely ever take me anywhere; four or five times a week you don't get home till past midnight—this morning it was three o'clock when you crept up-stairs as quietly as a burglar. What would you have?'

George Crofton moved uneasily in his chair, but did not reply. 'Besides,' resumed his wife, 'it was only dear old Euphrosyne Smith who came to see me. She looks eighteen when she is on the *corde*, but she's thirty-four if she's a day. I've known her for five years, and many a little kindness she has done me. And then, although, of course, I shall never want to go back to the old life, I must say that I like to hear about it now and again and to know how everybody is getting on. Can you wonder at it, now that you leave me so much alone?'

'For all that, Steph, I wish you would break off the connection.' Then, after a pause: 'I

know that of late I have seemed to neglect you a little; but if I have done so, it has been as much for your sake as my own.'

'Ah, yes, I know: cards, cards, always cards.'

'What would you have?—as a certain person sometimes says. I know a little about cards; I know nothing about anything else that will bring grist to the mill. I bought my experience in the dearest of all schools, and if I try to profit by it, who shall blame me?'

'Which means, that you are teaching others to buy their experience in the same way.'

'Why not?' he answered with a laugh. 'It is a law of the universe that one set of creatures shall prey on another. I was very nice picking for the kites once on a time; now I am a kite myself. The law of metempsychosis in such cases is a very curious one.'

'I don't know what you mean when you make use of such outlandish words,' said Stephanie with a pout.

'So much the better; learned women are an abomination.'

At this juncture a servant brought in the morning papers. Crofton seized one of them, a sporting journal, and pushed the other across the table. He was deep in the mysteries of the latest odds, when a low cry from his wife caused him to glance sharply at her. 'What's up now, Steph?' he asked. 'It would be a libel to say you had touched the rouge-pot this morning, because there isn't a bit of colour in your cheeks.'

'What is the name of that place in the country where your uncle used to live?' she asked.

'Beechley Towers.'

'And the name of that cousin to whom your uncle left his property?'

'Gerald Brooke—confound him!—But why do you ask?'

For sole reply she handed him the newspaper, marking a certain passage with her finger as she did so. If Mrs Crofton was startled by something which caught her eye in the paper, her feelings were as nothing in comparison with those of her husband as his keen glance took in the purport of the paragraph in question. It was, in fact, little more than a paragraph in the form of a brief telegram, forwarded at a late hour by a country correspondent.

What the public were told in the telegram was that the Baron von Rosenberg had been found in his own grounds, shot through the heart, about seven o'clock in the evening; that strong circumstantial evidence pointed to the supposition that Mr Gerald Brooke, a near neighbour of the Baron, was the murderer; that he had disappeared immediately after the perpetration of the crime, and that, although he was still at large, the police had little doubt they would succeed in arresting him in the course of the next few hours.

For a little while, speech seemed powerless to express a tithe of what George Crofton felt when the words of the telegram had burned themselves into his brain. What a sea of conflicting emotions surged round his heart as his mind drank in the full purport of the message and all the possibilities therein implied! What a vista of the future it opened out!

'A little rouge, *mon cher*, would improve your complexion,' said his wife at length, who had been

watching him curiously out of her half-veiled eyes. 'If one were to judge by your looks, you might have committed the crime yourself.'

Her words served to rouse him. 'Stephanie, the day of my revenge is dawning at last!' He ground out the words between his set teeth. 'This Gerald Brooke—this well-beloved cousin of mine—is the man who came between my uncle and me and defrauded me out of my inheritance.'

'And the man who robbed you of the woman you loved, whom you hoped one day to make your wife.'

'How do you know that?' he gasped. 'I never said a syllable to you about it.'

'It matters not how I know it, so long as I do know it,' she answered, looking him steadily in the face as she did so, and beginning to tap her teeth with her long pointed nails.

'Well, whoever told you, told you no more than the truth. I did love Clara Danby, and I hoped to make her my wife. But all that was past and gone long before I met you.'

She did not reply, but only went on tapping her teeth the more.

'Putting aside my own feelings towards Brooke,' went on Crofton presently, 'who has done me all the harm that one man could possibly do to another, don't you see that if he should be arrested and found guilty of this crime, what a vast difference it would make in your fortunes and mine?'

'Expliquez-vous, s'il vous plait.'

'Should Gerald Brooke die without issue, by the terms of my uncle's will Beechley Towers and all the estates pertaining to it, including a rent-roll of close on six thousand a year, come absolutely to me—to me—comprenez-vous? Ah, what a sweet revenge mine will be!'

'Yes; I should think it would be rather nice to live at a grand place like Beechley Towers and have an income of six thousand a year,' answered Mrs Crofton quietly. 'So, if this cousin of yours is really guilty, let us hope for our own sakes that he will be duly caught and hanged.'

Crofton turned to the table, and having poured out nearly half a tumbler of brandy, he drank it off at a draught. Excitement had so far unnerved him that the glass rattled against his teeth as he drank.

'But what could possibly induce a man in Mr Brooke's position to commit such a crime?' asked Stephanie presently.

'That's more than we know at present; we must wait for further particulars.—By the way, I wonder who and what the murdered man was? The Baron von Rosenberg they call him. I never heard the name before.'

'I knew the Baron von Rosenberg some years ago—in Paris,' answered Stephanie with just a trace of heightened colour in her cheeks. 'He was a man between forty and fifty years old, and said to be very rich.—I never liked him. Indeed, I may say that I had every reason to hate him. And now he's dead! C'est bien—c'est très bien.'

Her husband was only half heeding her. 'Stephanie,' he said, 'I never hated any one as I hate that man. Should the evidence at the inquest, which will no doubt be held in the course of to-day, go to prove, or go far to prove, that Brooke is the assassin, and should the police not

succeed in arresting him in the course of the next forty-eight hours, do you know what I have made up my mind to do?'

'How is it possible that I should know?'

'I have made up my mind not to trust to what the regular police may or may not be able to do in this matter, but to employ a private detective on my own account. I happen to be acquainted with a man who is nothing less than a sleuth-hound in such a case as this. He has succeeded more than once when Scotland Yard has failed ignominiously. His services I shall secure; and if it cost me the last sovereign I have in the world, I will do all that man can do to bring Gerald Brooke to the bar of justice.'

He spoke with a concentrated malignity of purpose such as he had never exhibited in his wife's presence before. There was an eager, cruel gleam in his eyes, like that of some carnivorous animal which scents its prey from afar. He set his teeth hard when he had done speaking, so that the gash in his lip showed with startling distinctness, and leant to his features an unmistakably wolfish expression.

Stephanie looked at him and wondered. She had flattered herself, as many wives do, that she had read and thoroughly understood her husband; but in this man there were evidently smouldering volcanic forces which might burst into activity at any moment, chained tempests of rage and ferocity which might not always be kept in check, the existence of which she had never suspected before. From that day forward, although her husband knew it not, she regarded him with somewhat different eyes.

He rose abruptly and rang the bell. 'Let a hansom be fetched at once,' he said to the servant.

'For what purpose do you require a hansom?' asked his wife.

'To drive me to the terminus. I shall go down to King's Harold by the first train. I want to hear for myself the evidence at the inquest on the Baron von Rosenberg.'

SARDINIA AND THE SARDES.

BY CHARLES EDWARDES.

SARDINIA is by no means popular touring-ground, although it is situated near France, Italy, and Spain, and is in constant communication with many Levantine seaports. It is not easy to say why it is thus neglected. The proverb about the dog and its bad name has here perhaps some parallel application. In Julius Cæsar's time, Sardinia was reviled and doubly reviled by Cicero and many another Roman, who did but follow the fashion in this respect, and had never set foot in the island. And in our day it is equally the fashion to condemn it for its fevers, the tameness of its scenery, and its barbaric condition, upon grounds no less unfair.

Now, a hundred years ago, it is probable that Sardinia could really have matched any country in Europe for its barbarism. The feudal system was then still in force in the island, nor was it totally abolished by government until 1856. A rich baron walking in his fields and feeling tired would think nothing of calling to one of his labourers and bidding him make himself into

a bench by going on all-fours for his lordship to sit upon. Brigands defied the authorities, and lived, married, and died at their ease in a state of outlawry, leaving their male children to follow in their steps. Their mode of life was esteemed so much more honourable than the slow tedium of honest agricultural life, that the average Sarde maiden preferred to have a bandit for a husband. The Sardes were then full to the throat of the most grotesque and even horrible superstitions. In times of trouble they sacrificed hens in sequestered places to propitiate the saints; precisely after the manner of their Pagan forefathers when these on the like occasions appealed to their heathen gods. Much more detestable habits had then only in comparatively recent times been abandoned and interdicted. It is notorious that it was customary in Sardinia for sons to put their parents to death when they were old; for it was esteemed an absurd thing that a man in his dotage should drag on existence at a time of life when he is readily seduced into roguery and misconduct. Such was their very singular view of the matter! And, incredible as it may seem, even in the last century there were Sarde sons who upon this pretext deprived their sires of life and did it with impunity.

But a century has made an immense difference in Sardinia. Those strong factors in the enlightenment of a people, good roads, now traverse the island in all directions. They even ascend about four thousand feet high into the mountains of Barbagia, winding circuitously round the long thighs of the greater peaks, viewed from which they have the appearance of so many broad white ribbons, linking plateau to plateau. Bold indeed are the brigands who exist in the face of good roads, or close is the intimacy between them and the local police. But in Sardinia there is no such intimacy. The 'gendarmérie' are fine fellows. One meets them everywhere about the island: between village and village, on the plains, and riding gaily through the umbrageous cork-woods of the interior, miles away from human habitations. For obvious reasons, they always go in couples; and their martial bearing pleases the eye as much as the consciousness of their presence is a solace to the mind.

In fact, it is in Sardinia as it is in Corsica: what goes by the name of brigandage is as a rule rather the result of the vendetta. But even the vendetta spirit is here far less vigorous than it was fifty years ago, when, in the Barbagia district, the annual mortality from this cause alone was one in two hundred and seventy-nine; and the man who died in his bed disgraced himself and his relations.

Yet it must be confessed that to the eye the Sarde mountaineers are ideal banditti. Their long greasy black hair, their hard faces, corrugated with wrinkles, their guns and long knives, quite apart from their attire of sheepskins, worn with the wool outside (the *mastruca*), the Phrygian cap, and their sly expression—all suggest an unorthodox form of livelihood. But the poor fellows live laboriously enough, in spite of the braggish air of their guns, which, by-the-bye, are sometimes very singular weapons, inlaid with silver and ivory, and of great antiquity. Maybe they have been at work for twelve hours of the day felling timber on the steeper

slopes and burning it to charcoal. The gun is for a wild boar or a deer, if they chance to meet either or both on their way home. If they come across a stranger like the writer among their solitudes, they are glad to drink from his gourd, giving him at the time a gruff 'Saluté,' and afterwards a hearty 'Bon viaggio!' Naturally, they are curious about his personality. But no sooner do they understand that he is from the continent or 'terra firma'—as they call Italy and the whole world outside their island—than they assume that he is an 'engineer;' that is, a mining engineer, in search of mineral. They cannot be coaxed to imagine that any other kind of mortal would come among them. The writer believes he was regarded as a harmless kind of madman by all the more intelligent natives of the two or three villages in the neighbourhood of Sardinia's highest peak, when it transpired that he was not an engineer, and that he intended to climb the mountain for æsthetic purposes solely.

The character of the Sardes has ever been a puzzle to other Europeans. After but a few weeks' acquaintance, we are mystified by them. They have drawn their disposition from so many different sources, that there is no saying what characteristic predominates in them. The guide who was our companion for several days in Barbagia—a reputable man of high standing, and a graybeard, was alternately obsequious, haughty, insolent, very sensitive, most careful of our interests, eager to plunder us: now cordial, now vindictive, and now insincere. Like most of his fellow-countrymen, he was a great wine-bibber. In the course of our travels he fell ill, and we did all we could for him. But he was not at all grateful; and when our journeying was at an end, he requited us by demanding twice the sum of money we had beforehand agreed to pay him for his services, and by showering maledictions and menaces upon us until we left him to himself.

We do not think this man was an uncommon type of Sarde. In Roman times, when thousands of the islanders were sent yearly to Rome in chains, the saying, 'Sardes to sell!' was current as much because of the intractable and difficult nature of the people—which made them an unmarketable commodity—as because of the abundance of such captives offered for sale. The few English who are settled in Sardinia as mining engineers dislike their workmen. The Italians who cross the water, also to work in the mines, detest their comrades. 'Tutti traditori!' said one of the latter to us, in talking about them. 'They are a treacherous lot!' and he wished himself again in Calabria, which, one would suppose, does not rear the most trustworthy people in the world.

One may form some idea of national character from the way in which individuals of the nation treat their animal, assuming, of course, that such treatment is not solely regulated by religious injunctions. Well, strange to say, the Sardes seem to have little or none of that tenderness, and even affection, for their horses which one might expect from the Moorish blood in their veins. Much is implied in a name. An Englishman would as soon think of leaving his child unchristened as his horse. In Sardinia, however, the term 'horse' or 'mare' is the distinctive name given to these good beasts.

If religious festivals make a people religious, the Sardes are among the most religious of nations. Seldom did we enter a town or village without finding the place either in the midst of a festa, anticipating a coming festa, or discussing the festa just ended. Scattered over the island are a multitude of small chapels, dedicated to obscure saints, and to which the villagers for miles round flock with provisions and bedding once or twice a year. They camp out in the open or sleep in adjacent caves: a priest says mass in their midst; and they all eat and drink as if they had never before had a good meal, or as if the rest of their lives was to be one long fast. A disagreeable litter of ox bones, ribs of sheep, orange-peel, beam-skins, and stones of olives, strewn amid the grass near the hermitage, or on the level earth at the very church door, bears constant witness to the traveller of this sort of religious junketing up and down the land. The following statistics of food consumed at a traditional gathering, merely to celebrate the ordination of a priest in the district of Mamojada, shadows forth the magnitude of the Sarde festas in general. Two thousand five hundred people were present, and between them they ate twenty-two cows; twenty-six calves; twenty-eight deer and wild-boars; seven hundred and forty sheep; three hundred lambs, kidlings, and sucking-pigs; six hundred fowls; sixty-five measures—of what size indeterminate—of sugar; fifty pounds of pepper and spices; two hundred and eighty measures of corn; a hundredweight of rice; a hundredweight of dates; fifty sugared cakes; three thousand eggs; twenty-five large barrels of wine; three thousand fish; and a vast quantity of confectionery.

Until one gets well into the mountains, the scenery of Sardinia is somewhat disappointing. Its broad western flats, green enough in spring, but a parched dun colour under the summer skies, are far from thrilling. They are good for the railway, which runs down the length of the island; and for that reason, the traveller sees too much of them. They serve admirably for the breeding-ground of countless head of cattle, and the famous Sarde horses, which have much of the Arab in them. If malaria be rampant anywhere, it will be here; for the occasional *stagni* which break the monotony of the level meads or cornfields near the coast are notorious plague-spots. They have also one other characteristic: they are studded with the objects which have given Sardinia its individuality with antiquaries for all time. Whether we are in the olive or oak woods which vary the grassy flats, or groaning up to a new watershed between one flat and another, we repeatedly pass a building like a martello tower, or a windmill shorn of its top. The buildings are all dilapidated, and their lichened stones are overgrown with ivy and a thicket of scrub. For the most part they stand remote from villages or inhabited houses. Often they cap rocky knolls, or rise like a lighthouse on the edge of a bluff. Or they are set simply in the plain, with modern cinctures of meadow-land or grain-fields. These are the renowned *nuraghe*, or round towers, of Sardinia, about which volumes have been written. Their number is said to exceed three thousand. Their authors and their original purpose are alike conjectural. Some say they were built by the first natives of the soil as dwelling-

places, or towers of refuge. Others trace them to the Carthaginians, and regard them as altars upon which living children were sacrificed to Moloch and other gods of the Phœnicians. The peasants of our day shrug their shoulders if they are interrogated about them. 'How should we know what they are?' they ask. 'They were built before the Deluge by another kind of men.' Among the various other uses ascribed to the *nuraghe* there is space to mention only the following: they are tombs of the heroes of Sardinia or of the first inhabitants, temples, granaries, shrines, treasure-houses, &c. But whatever they were—and of the various theories about them, that which ascribes them to the earliest inhabitants for towers of refuge is intrinsically the most satisfactory—they give a unique interest to this island.

We have already mentioned the Barbagia province of Sardinia. Here the mountains rise concentrically to Gennargentu (6266 feet), the highest peak in the land, confessedly rather tame in its broad swelling hump shape. But the dolomitic rocks (*tacchi*, as they are called) of Perdaliana, near Gennargentu, are extremely picturesque. These isolated crags are wooded to their crests, and the haunt of the moufflon and the eagle, which are well protected by their precipices. Elsewhere in Sardinia are other *tacchi*, culminating in similar castellated piles, and as difficult of access. But more engaging even than the *tacchi* are the glorious woods of oaks and cork trees which still clothe much of the mountain slopes. There has been a terrible amount of denudation by fires, reckless felling, and mutilation. The island is not now the magnificent timber-yard it was in the days of Bonaparte, who at one time was as eager to secure it for the sake of its ship-material as was Nelson for the sake of its harbours. Nevertheless, the relics of its forests are still very charming.

Among the mountain villages the traveller is a distinct curiosity, and he must look to be treated as such. Little of sweet tranquillity will he be allowed to enjoy in the evening after a hard day's work. While the tedious hours drag on and seem to bring him no nearer to the supper he sighs for, he must hold continuous levee; meet the formal smiles and salutations of the village notables, as one by one they come to pay their respects to him, with smiles and salutations in kind; be ready to answer offhand questions the most inquisitorial; and disposed to make light of the grime, the tobacco-smoke, and the free expectoration about the boards of the room in which he is to pass the night. From the most civil motives, the worthy folks will try to intoxicate him ere bedtime, and he will be lucky if he defeat their intentions. As a rule, indeed, the Sarde wine is excellent; but in the mountains it is not so.

As a health-resort, indeed, Sardinia cannot, upon the whole, be praised during the summer months. As years go by, doubtless it will become less malarious; but vast areas of marsh will have to be drained and forests of eucalypti planted ere it can be pronounced safe. Not here, as in the United States, does one see unpleasant advertisements of coffins and ague-cures upon the tree trunks, to warn the wayfarer of his fate; but there is a something in the air, especially at sunrise and sundown, which no less effectually

arouses his suspicions. This sensation in certain places eventuates in a headache, which of course may develop into worse things. The Romans, with their wonted acuteness, knew how to utilise the bad air of Sardinia. The island was their haven for troublesome criminals and prisoners. Tacitus mentions a body of four thousand superfluous Jews and Egyptians who were settled here, and he observes that it would be thought no great matter if they perished in the ungenial clime.

It is almost impossible to assign specific reasons for the malaria in districts so diverse. If in the plains it may be due to the miasma from the soil, such an explanation will not do for mountainous regions, where the hardest kind of rock is a substitute for soil. A workman in an antimony mine said to us that he thought the water was to blame more than the air. The miners drink recklessly from stagnant pools or discoloured brooks. All over Sardinia, the villagers are equally careless. And as the peculiar conformation of the country forces its rivers to drain through a variety of soils, and the sewage of the various villages at different elevations flows freely into the streams, it must be admitted that the water cannot be very wholesome. The wiser Sardes therefore drink wine at all times, guard against chills by wearing sheepskins, and eat neither fruit, fish, flesh, nor fowl from malarious parts of the land.

This, then, is a precaution to be taken by the traveller in Sardinia; and, with ordinary prudence in other respects, it will suffice to carry him unharmed through the island. The many curious and pleasant memories with which a country still vacillating between barbarism and civilisation will assuredly afford him, will then be unadulterated.

A TERROR TO EVIL-DOERS.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

THE inquest was duly held. Captain Frere examined the witnesses—the shepherds who had found the dead bodies lying near the extinguished fire, and Dr Sewell, who certified that the men had died from wounds caused by a pistol bullet; and everybody looked upon the affair as over. It was a regrettable accident, a thing for which somebody ought to be hanged, if one only knew who that somebody was; but it was over, and the excitement it had caused died away. Within even twenty-four hours of the discovery of the dead men, most people had found something else to talk about.

To many people, Captain Frere's engagement offered a more inviting topic—to Miss Jenny Birch, for example. Whether gentleness of temperament be the cause or not, most women, dearly as they love sensation, would rather hear of a single marriage than of half-a-dozen deaths; and though Miss Birch felt annoyed, and in a sense ill-used, that Madge Renton, who was five years her junior, and was, besides—she considered—absolutely plain, was to be married, she could not keep the objectionable topic from her mind and tongue. She questioned her father minutely

about the manner in which 'the doctor' had announced and 'the captain' received the news; and made him repeat the story so often that at last he exclaimed irritably that he wished he had never said a word about it. There was no question of keeping the engagement a secret now; Miss Jenny made that quite impossible by telling every one who entered the inn to talk about the murder. The effect of this on minds which were fundamentally sanguinary was to confuse therein the clear and lucid—howbeit imaginary—picture of the murder they had held, by superimposing the love-story upon it; a process which resulted in one of those incongruous unions of people and events which mark our dreams, and find a physical exemplification at times in those scrap-work screens, the result of domestic genius, where Her Majesty in full court costume is represented against a background of kitchen dresser, rich in willow-pattern plates.

'If you go mixing up the marriage and the murder in that fashion, lass,' said old Birch to his daughter, 'people'll go away thinking that the captain murdered the policeman in order to marry Miss Renton.'

'Well, father, you are a donkey!' exclaimed Miss Jenny with great candour. 'Who on earth would think that!'

'Why, any one would, from the way you're chattering. Is there a single person who has been in the house to-day whom you have not told?'

Miss Jenny laughed. 'O yes; there is—you didn't expect that, now! I haven't told the sick lady up-stairs.'

'It's because you haven't had a chance, then.'

'Well, maybe. The doctor said I wasn't to go up, for fear of exciting her, and gave old Margaret orders to look after her. Perhaps he thought like would draw to like,' said Miss Birch with some irritation; for she resented being excluded from the stranger's room, and tried to soothe herself by pretending that Dr Sewell wished to spare her the indignity of waiting on one who was very probably a fitter companion for old Margaret—the maid-of-all-work of the establishment and an ex-convict.

Miss Jenny did not mind escaping the task of waiting on the invalid; but she felt wronged at not having the opportunity of retailing her news. It almost spoiled her sleep that night, to feel that she had thus failed in her duty.

With the morning, however, opportunity came. Miss Birch was lounging at her favourite post at the front door, when the strange lady came downstairs, dressed for walking. She walked slowly, with one hand pressed to her side, as if she feared that any exertion would cause her pain; and the lines round her mouth and between her eyebrows told of suffering already endured and the expectation of more. She had once had a delicate prettiness of flaxen hair and blue eyes, the sort of beauty which seldom outlasts youth, and which in her, disease, and probably enough hardships of another kind, had destroyed sooner than usual. Her clothes were poor and worn, and she seemed conscious of their meanness; yet she had that air of refinement which no woman ever wholly loses who has once possessed it, and which made even Jenny Birch, who preferred to judge people and things by their surface aspect, treat her with respect.

'Are you going out, ma'am?' she asked in surprise, seeing the stranger's feeble steps.

'I am going away,' was the answer. 'Will you ask the groom to get me a carriage to take me to the next station?'

'A carriage!' thought Miss Jenny. 'You don't look one that can afford that; I'd have said from your appearance that the stage-fare was as much as you could manage.' Not being, however, destitute of good-feeling of a pachydermatous kind, she said: 'Hadh't you better wait till to-morrow? The stagecoach passes then, and you'd be the better of another day's rest. The doctor won't be pleased at your running away like this.'

The invalid shook her head. 'I want to get back to Melbourne as soon as I can,' she said; 'so I am going to evade the doctor, for fear he should forbid me.—Will you, however, give him my most grateful thanks for his kindness, and ask him to accept this?' She handed the girl a sealed envelope, and proceeded to ask for her bill.

'It's father who manages that part of the business,' said Miss Jenny; and she disappeared for a moment to bid him prepare the account and order the carriage.

'You liked the doctor, didn't you?' she asked when she returned to the guest, who had now seated herself on the bench Captain Frere had occupied the previous day, and seemed to be gratefully inhaling the fresh autumn air.

'I did indeed; he was so kind to me, a stranger, and apparently a poor one. He is in every respect a gentleman.'

'Isn't he, now!' exclaimed Miss Jenny. 'More so than Captain Frere, to my mind; though, of course, the captain's very well connected. But he's not up to Dr Sewell. And if, as they say, Miss Renton could have had either of them—I don't believe it myself—I can't understand how she accepted the captain.'

'What do you mean? What are you saying?' The lady had started from her seat and caught Jenny's hand. Her body was swaying with weakness, but her voice was firm and imperious. 'Tell me what you mean?' she cried again.

'Why! that Miss Renton, the parson's daughter, is going to marry Captain Frere.—There's nothing so wonderful in that, is there?'

But apparently there was, for the lady's grasp relaxed, and if Miss Jenny had not caught her in her strong round arms, she would have fallen to the ground.

Jenny carried her back to her room and laid her on the bed she had lately quitted, then calling old Margaret to attend to her, she ran herself for the doctor.

'It's all my fault!' she said penitently, when she had explained what had occurred. 'Though I don't see yet why Miss Renton's marriage should upset her so. But it seems to be upsetting everybody,' she added with a glance at Philip, who had winced a little when she spoke of Madge; for even in her distress at the strange lady's danger, Miss Jenny was woman enough to feel annoyed—'riled,' as she phrased it—at Miss Renton having won the hearts of both the most desirable men in Picton.

Philip hurried to his patient, and having forbidden her to leave her bed for several days, went off on his rounds, which this time were to include

a journey into the bush that would take two days.

'I'll see you as soon as I come back to-morrow evening,' he promised; 'meanwhile, you must not be guilty of any more such rashness as this morning's work.'

She smiled, but did not answer, perhaps because she was too weak. But when he was going, she caught his hand and detained him a moment. 'You have been very kind to me,' she said. 'Women like kindness; not girls, perhaps—they have never felt trouble, and like a man whose manner masters them. But as life goes on and sorrows come, one learns to appreciate a man who is strong and tender too. You are both, and I wish you all happiness. This morning, when I meant to go away, I left some money for you; but money isn't happiness, is it? If I could only do something to secure that!'

'My dear lady!' exclaimed Philip, bewildered and embarrassed at her words, and so taking refuge in professionalism, 'give me the happiness of seeing you much stronger when I come back, and I'll ask nothing better. I suppose success in our vocation is the best happiness we can look for in this life.'

The touch of bitterness in his words did not escape her; but she said nothing, and he went away.

'As soon as he is gone, I shall get up and do the work that has fallen upon me, and then go away.' This was her thought; but she was tired and languid, and unconsciously let the minutes slip away into hours without doing anything. Miss Jenny, remorseful and tender, brought her first soup and afterwards tea; and as she took each she said to herself, 'I must get up as soon as I have finished this;' and yet lay down again as she put aside the empty cup. At length the rays of the sun streamed, yellow as bright amber, into her room, and she knew that it was waning afternoon. Then, with a great effort she rose and put on her shabby garments—very slowly, because it fatigued her so; and when she was dressed, looked and listened from the top of the stair, to be sure that no one was about, to intercept her escape. As it chanced, Miss Jenny was out, gone to talk over recent events with a friend; old Margaret was in the kitchen; and Birch himself was sleeping the afternoon sleep of the well-fed and portly within the bar; so she was able to leave the house unseen.

Once outside, she hurried—or thought she hurried, struggling along at a snail's pace—to Captain Frere's house. He was not at home, she was told in answer to her inquiry; he was at the vicarage; so she went on there.

There was no longer any secrecy about Lewis Frere's engagement; Philip Sewell had put an end to that. 'And, my dear,' said Mr Renton to his daughter, 'I don't see why it need ever have been concealed. Captain Frere should not have suggested keeping me in ignorance, and I can't think why you consented. Why did you, Madge?'

'Oh!—I don't know.' And indeed Madge did not know why she had been glad to say nothing to any friend of her proposed marriage; and still less could she have explained why, now that it was declared, she felt a little annoyed—with Philip, of course. 'He is so much older than I,' she suggested at last.

'That is true; but it is not a fatal barrier, other things being favourable. His position is satisfactory. I think he deserves the scriptural definition of a ruler, "A terror to evil-doers, and a praise and protection to them that do well." And if you love him, Madge, there's nothing more to be said.'

'I suppose not,' she answered dubiously.

Being thus, to public knowledge, an engaged man, Captain Frere was minded to enjoy the privileges of his position by spending as much time as he could with his betrothed. It is true that her society did not seem to give him much pleasure. He was gloomy; and she, being out of humour herself, though she tried to feel and act as the maiden should whom a good man has chosen as his wife, ventured to complain of his taciturnity. He said that he was thinking of 'those two poor fellows,' which was a very pretty reason, but hardly accounted for his being nervous and irritable as well as grave; still less did it account for his impatient exclamation when she touched on that very subject. 'For heaven's sake, Madge, don't talk of that affair. Every one has been chattering about it till I am sick of hearing of it.'

Madge was bewildered and hurt; but, still striving to do her duty, like the hero of the thirty years' courtship described by Lewis Carroll, 'as she had read in books,' she began a coquettish teasing about her lover's beard. It was quite common in novels for the heroine to find fault with the way her lover parted his hair or with the fashion of his collars and neck-ties; and to ask him to sacrifice moustache or whiskers for her sake was equivalent to the hardest 'quests' of the old chivalrous days. And surely Frere's beard was a safe subject!

But it was not. He nearly lost his temper when she suggested that he should shave it off.

'To please you! Why should I make a fright of myself to please you? You would regret it after I had done it. Besides, I am subject to colds; my throat has been weak ever since that beastly winter in the trenches, and the beard is my best protection.'

'Why did you not tell me that at once?' she asked gently. 'Of course, I would not have you do anything that would hurt you; but I did not know that was why you wore a beard. It was stupid of me, though; I might have noticed that even this mild evening you have your throat wrapped up. You caught cold that night you were out, I suppose?'

'Yes. And that's another thing I want to warn you about. Don't blazon my comings and goings as you have been doing; half my usefulness would be gone if people could calculate where I had been and where I was likely to go. I didn't want people to know I had been out two nights ago, and when Sewell spoke of it I denied having gone. Don't look so con—fearfully shocked; it was my duty, you know. And then he came down on me with your authority. Don't go chattering in that way again; remember that.'

'I'll remember,' said Madge meekly; but she could not help feeling that being 'engaged' was not half so pleasant as her girlish fancy had dreamed. And if this was betrothal what would marriage be like? Husbands are proverbially not more considerate than lovers. She felt depressed,

and sat silent for a moment; and on this silence broke the announcement that a lady wanted to see Captain Frere.

'A lady! What lady? I can't see her!' he exclaimed abruptly in a harsh voice. Madge noticed that his face grew pale, and thought it was with anger at this visitant—doubtless some one with a legal grievance, and as impatient and importunate as claimants mostly are.

'I don't know who she is,' answered the maid who had brought the message, in the tone of independence which the British domestic assumes in the freedom of colonial air; 'but she says she must see you, and won't be put off. She's waiting at the front door.'

'Yes, I must see you,' said a voice behind; and the strange lady from the inn, who had *not* waited at the door, slipped past the astonished maid into the room. 'I wanted to see you alone, Lewis, and to beg you, for honour's sake—not for mine; I expect no grace from you—not to be guilty of the wrong people say you meditate. I would have spared your good name if I could; but I have no time to spare, and perhaps it is just as well that this lady should know the truth. She must never marry you, Lewis, not though I lay dead at your feet, for you are not a man who deserves a good woman's love.'

So far, Captain Frere had let her go on because he could not find voice to interrupt her; he had striven to speak, but the words would not come. Now, however, he exclaimed: 'Be quiet; go away, and I'll see you elsewhere.'

'I will not go; I must speak now.'

He lifted his hand, as if to push her away; but Madge came between them.

'Captain Frere,' she cried, 'you shall not behave so in this house. Why are you afraid of this lady?—for I can see you are afraid of her.—What is it you have to say to him, madam? Is it anything I may hear?'

'It is something you must hear, Miss Renton—you are Miss Renton, I suppose?—if your happiness is to be saved. It is, that I am this man's wife.'

'It's a lie!' protested the captain.

'No lie! It is the truth. I have the certificate here; thank heaven, I was not weak enough to give it up to you when you asked. But I would have kept the promise I made you two days ago, when you gave me the money to take me back to Melbourne, never to trouble you again, if I had not heard that you meant to marry this young lady. I could not be a party to that.—Here is your money, since I have not kept my word.'

She had spoken feebly, with frequent pauses for breath; but Frere had seemed unable to check her words. He read belief in Madge's face, and knew that nothing he could say would win her trust again. But when his wife held out a roll of bank-notes to him, he struck it angrily from her hands. It was not a violent blow, though it came from a reckless and revengeful soul; but it seemed to have more power than mere physical force could account for, for as she received it, Mrs Frere fell to the ground. Madge threw herself beside her and raised her up, only to see the sad eyes grow dull with the film of death.

'You have killed her!' she exclaimed to the man who an hour ago had been her lover. Only an hour?—only a few minutes! It seemed a cen-

tury, or more—a memory of something that had occurred in a past life, fresh only in its power to shame her.

'She was dying; she would have died anyhow—why could she not have kept silence!' he answered with a cold cynicism that sickened her. Then he came and touched her shoulder as she bent over the dead woman. 'Madge,' he said, 'I swear to you that I loved you honestly and truly. I thought to get rid of this—barrier; and if you had never known, it would not have mattered to you.'

She did not answer him; but she withdrew from his touch with a glance of loathing, and rising to her feet, she crossed the room and rang the bell. He saw that all was over for him, and as he heard the footsteps of the maid outside—who, having listened at the door to the scene that had passed, was now slipping away a short distance, in order to return, as from the kitchen, in an ostentatious fashion—he rushed from the room. First, however, he picked up the bundle of notes that lay, half unrolled on the floor, and thrust them in his pocket.

If possible, a deeper scorn came over Madge's face. 'He has time and thought for meanness in the midst of his discovered guilt,' she said to herself.

Certainly Picton was unwontedly rich in sensations just now. The strange lady's death was the climax of all; for though all the circumstances of it were not understood, enough had been grasped by the eavesdropping domestic to show that there was a certain connection between the dead woman and Captain Frere, and every one knew that it had terminated the recently announced engagement between him and Miss Renton.

Miss Birch was full of the theme, with the latest variations, when Philip Sewell came home. He had gathered from the old woman who was supposed to look after his comfort, only that his patient at the inn was dead; for his servant was deaf, and being unamiable as well, had often to go stinted in the matter of news because no one would take the trouble to shout details of local events into her ear. Philip therefore heard the tale from Miss Jenny, who, having an imagination that was shrewd as well as active, and more knowledge of the facts than any one in the town besides Captain Frere and Madge, gave him a not unfair idea of the state of matters.

'There was some connection between that lady and the captain,' said Miss Jenny in conclusion; 'and whatever it was, it has broken off his engagement to Miss Renton—that seems to be certain.'

Philip was silent, filled with many emotions, thankful that Madge was not to marry a man whose past evidently held something he wished hidden, yet uncertain if his thankfulness was not vindictive spite.

'She left a letter for you, doctor, when she meant to go away that morning, before she fainted. I forgot to give it you; here it is.'

Philip took the envelope, and on opening it, found some unsigned words of thanks and a bank-note.

'I don't want her money, poor creature!' he exclaimed. 'If she has prevented Miss Renton'—He stopped, afraid of betraying too much, and added: 'And my fee wouldn't have come near five pounds.'

'Well, doctor, she meant it for you, so you'd best take it, I should say.'

The doctor looked dubious, and stood crumpling the note between his hands. 'Did she pay your father's bill?' he asked finally.

'No; she went out, you know, and died at the vicarage; and it seems there was no money found on her; at least there's been no word of any. And I don't suppose father would get much, if he asked Captain Frere to pay. Besides, under the circumstances, poor thing'—

'Look here, Miss Jenny'—Philip jumped at the idea that had come to him—'you take this towards paying what she owed you. It isn't right that your father should lose by this poor lady; my services were very useless, and besides, they're not solid facts, like the comforts of an inn.'

Jenny protested; but Philip was firm; and old Birch, when appealed to, took a practical view of the matter. 'There was her bed and her food, and brandy when she fainted; and there were things that were bought and had to be paid for; and there was no reason why he should be out of pocket,' he said.

So the five-pound note passed into Mr Birch's keeping; and as this was the time when he usually took a journey down the country to buy in goods for the winter, he took it with a good many others to his bank at Melbourne. And here a strange thing occurred. Mr Birch was arrested for being in possession of one of the notes stolen from the policemen who had been murdered near Picton. Fortunately, the innkeeper was a careful man, who could give an account of all he possessed; and from the entry in his cash-book it was proved that the note in question had been given him by Dr Philip Sewell, and was the one left to the latter by Mrs Frere. Where had she got it? Proof, though not suspicion, might have been at fault here, if Madge Renton had not come forward and told how Mrs Frere had spoken of money given her by her husband to buy her off; and also how Frere, when leaving the room where his wife's dead body lay, had had forethought enough to pick up the notes that had fallen from her hand. It cost Madge much to do this, conscious that thereby she must renew a strain of gossip that was torture to her; conscious, too, of Frere's reproachful eyes, that seemed to plead Gloucester's extenuation of his crimes to Lady Anne—'Twas for thy sake I did it.' But to Madge the plea was worse than useless; she remembered too well the worn anguished face of the deserted wife who had died in her arms.

Then the law laid its hand on Lewis Frere; and he, seeing that all hope of escape was over, even though he had burned the notes he had reclaimed from his wife, made cynical, bitter confession of his sins. 'There aren't many things worth risking one's life for,' he said, 'and a woman's liking isn't among them.' When the jailers were cutting his hair and beard before putting him in convict dress, they found a scar, not yet wholly healed, beneath his chin. When asked how it came there, he told them that it was caused by a bullet which one of the policemen had fired almost at random. 'I thought myself lucky then that it only grazed me; I wish now that it had shot me dead.'

No one was surprised when, soon after this, it appeared that Miss Renton was to go to England for a year or two to visit her mother's relations.

It was felt to be the best thing she could do—to get away from Picton for a time; and friends hoped that she would marry at home, and so get over this sad affair, as they called it.

Philip Sewell, when he heard the news, debated with himself during a sleepless night, and then went up to the vicarage. 'Madge,' he said, 'I am going to repeat a statement that angered you once, and may do so again. I am sure you never loved Frere; but I know that doesn't prove that you love me—I wish it did.'

He paused; but Madge made no reply beyond a blush.

'I had a letter last mail,' he went on, 'from an old friend, who offers me a chance—a good chance—of practice in England. But I like Picton well enough, and I am getting on, so I won't accept, unless—unless, dear, you will make it worth my while to leave Australia by coming with me.'

Still she said nothing; but she looked up with an expression in her eyes which Philip thought justified him in clasping her in his arms; and probably he was right.

UNCOMMON ACCIDENTS.

A SINGULAR action was tried in the Greenwich County Court in March 1888, wherein a widow sued a baker for damages, medical attendance, and loss of time, from the sticking of a pin in her throat. It appeared that the woman purchased a Bath bun at the defendant's shop and went out eating it. When she had got half-way through it, she felt something stick in her throat, and at once went to a house close by and asked for a drink of water; shortly after which the pain became so intense that she went to a doctor, who, after trying various measures for nearly an hour, succeeded in extracting the pin. The baker's counsel submitted that there was no case of negligence; but the judge, after remarking that it was of course an unfortunate accident for both parties, gave a verdict for the plaintiff for the amount claimed and costs.

Though this particular accident fortunately did not prove fatal, others of an equally trivial nature have suddenly severed the thread on which the life of man hangs. At Macclesfield, in February 1889, Isabella O'Grady, wife of Frank O'Grady, died of a punctured wound received in the chest. While playing in *Eviction*, she commenced some knitting while waiting her turn to go on. An actor passed her as she sat in the wings, and in order to allow him to do so, she stooped forward, when the knitting-needle entered her chest. She finished her part; and medical aid was then called, but the case was hopeless from the first.

In August 1768, a harvest labourer went into the *Cock and Bell* at Romford, Essex, to refresh himself after his day's work. He called for a pint of ale; but before he had finished it, his throat began to swell, and in about two hours the poor fellow expired in agony. Upon opening his windpipe, it was found that he had swallowed a wasp, which had stung him, causing his death.

A very similar thing happened in 1760 to a

horse, belonging to a farmer named William Cross, that had been turned out to grass. In the morning he was in perfect health; but at about five in the evening he was observed to give over feeding; and on examination his neck was found to be considerably swollen. It continued to swell until the fourth day, when he died. The owner, anxious to know the reason of the animal's death, caused his neck to be cut open, when, to the great surprise of several spectators, a large adder was found in the throat, and the parts all round mortified.

About midnight on August 15, 1792, two fishermen belonging to Hull were employed near the Spurn. One of them, named Samuel Sallies, having both his hands occupied in drawing the net, caught the head of a sole, which was endeavouring to escape through a hole in the net, between his teeth—a very common practice among fishermen. The fish, making an effort, sprang into the man's throat, who, being thereby rendered incapable of crying out to his companion, went towards him and made him sensible by signs of his melancholy situation. His comrade instantly laid hold of the sole's tail; but not being able to extract the body, the man was suffocated very soon after reaching their boat.

The following should serve as an additional warning to those who are in the habit of balancing themselves on their chair at table. An engraver named Wilkins died at Somers Town on the 28th of May 1814, in consequence of having fractured his skull. He was drinking tea, and, according to his usual practice, balancing himself upon the hinder feet of his chair, when, losing his equilibrium, he fell backward, striking his head upon a marble slab. He was picked up insensible, and died within four days.

Another tea-table accident of an extraordinary nature befell Dr Hoare, Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, and Prebendary of Westminster. As the family were seated at their evening meal, one of them moved the table upon his favourite cat, causing the animal such pain that it flew directly at the doctor, wounding him with its claws. The wounds thus caused brought about the doctor's death.

In May 1769, Mr Amcot, a schoolmaster in Seven Dials, in cutting a quill pen dropped his penknife. He closed his legs to try and catch it, when the penknife pierced his thigh so deeply that it killed him.

In all the cases thus far narrated the cause of death was of the most trifling nature, reminding us forcibly how 'in the midst of life we are in death.' Those that follow, though endorsing the same truth, are remarkable rather for their peculiarity.

On the 17th October 1814, the neighbourhood of St Giles, London, was thrown into consternation by one of the most extraordinary accidents ever recorded. About six o'clock in the evening, one of the vats in the extensive premises of Messrs Henry Meux and Company, in Banbury Street, burst; and in a moment New Street, George Street, and several others in the vicinity, were deluged with the contents, amounting to three thousand five hundred barrels of strong beer. The fluid in its course swept everything before it.

Two houses adjoining the brewery were totally demolished. The neighbouring inhabitants, all of the poorer classes, were nearly all at home. In the first-floor of one house, a mother and daughter were at tea; the mother was killed on the spot, and the daughter swept away by the current. The back-parts of the houses of Mr Goodwin, poulterer, of the *Tavistock Arms*, and of Nos. 24 and 25 Great Russell Street, were wrecked; and a female servant of the *Tavistock Arms* was drowned. In clearing away the debris, nine bodies were found, and one poor creature was dug out alive. Many cellars were completely inundated; and in some houses the inhabitants only saved themselves from drowning by mounting their highest pieces of furniture.

In November 1815, a melancholy accident happened at Waltham Cross. The Boston coach stopped there for a short time, when the horses suddenly turned into a low covered gateway, where there was no headroom for the passengers on the roof. The consequence was that four of them were so completely jammed between the coach and the roof over the gateway as actually to stop the vehicle. When the sufferers were relieved from their unhappy situation, one of them was quite dead, and the others were so crushed that they survived but a short time.

After detailing such a category of disasters, we may make some amends by relating two instances of a more fortunate experience than the last, due to the like force of habit in animals. In the early part of January 1764, the driver of a stagecoach going to Newbury fell dead from his box within three miles of that place, but was not missed by the passengers till after their arrival, the horses having brought them to their inn without any stop or accident; a remarkable instance of the great sagacity and tractableness of that noble animal.

On the night of October 16, 1813, after the Glasgow mail had changed horses at Polmont, the guard and coachman being both intoxicated, the latter having dropped the reins, in endeavouring to recover them fell from his seat, and the coach going over his head, he was killed on the spot. Meanwhile, the horses being at full gallop, the guard was so perfectly incapacitated that he could make no effort to stop them, and they continued at full speed along Linlithgow Bridge, till they came to the post-office in that town, where they stopped without the slightest injury.

Another curious incident of the old coaching days is the following. One day in February 1807, as the Liverpool mailcoach was changing horses at the inn at Monk's Heath, between Congleton, in Cheshire, and Newcastle-under-Lyme, the horses which had performed the stage from Congleton having just been taken off and separated, hearing Sir Peter Warburton's foxhounds in full cry, immediately started after them, with their harness on, and followed the chase until the last. One of them, a blood-mare, kept the track with the whipper-in, and gallantly followed him for about two hours, over every leap he took, until old reynard, who was a cowardly rogue, had led them round in a ring-fence, and ran to ground in a Mr Hibbert's plantation. The sportsmen who witnessed the feat of this gallant mare were, Sir Harry Mainwaring, Messrs Cholmondeley, Layford-Brook, Corbett, Davenport, Townshend, &c.

These spirited animals were led back to the inn at Monk's Heath, and performed their stage back to Congleton the same evening, apparently in higher spirits for having had a brush after the fox.

ENGLISH FOLK-RHYMES.

ENGLISH folk-rhymes are very numerous and curious. Characteristics of persons and places have given rise to not a few which are frequently far from complimentary. Weather-lore is often expressed in rhyme, and the rustic muse has rendered historic events popular, and enabled persons to remember them who are not readers of books. The lines often lack polish, but are seldom without point.

Amongst the more ancient rhymes are those respecting grants of land. The following is a good example, and is from Derbyshire :

Me and mine
Give thee and thine
Millners Hay
And Shining Cliff,
While grass is green,
And holies rough.

The old story of the grant is thus related. Years ago, a member of the ancient family of Lowe had the honour of hunting with the king and his nobles. Lowe rode a splendid horse, and it was the only one in at the death. The king admired the animal very much, and the owner presented it to His Majesty. The horse 'mightily pleased the king.' Some little time afterwards, Lowe waited upon the king to beg a brier-bed and a watering-place, which were Shining Cliff and Millners Hay. The request was at once complied with. The tale does not end here. It is related that 'an envious courtier told the king that he did not know what he was doing, for what he was giving away was a great wood with a large tract of land.' Upon this, Lowe said to His Majesty: 'King or no king?'—'Why, king, Lowe.' Adding with promptitude: 'The brier-bed and watering-place are thine;' the rhyme above quoted being given as the title for the grant.

It is asserted that Athelstan granted the first charter to the ancient borough of Hedon, Yorkshire, in these words :

As free make I thee
As eye see or ear hear.

It is said a similar charter was granted by the same king to the neighbouring town of Beverley.

An old, old Norfolk rhyme says :

Rising was a seaport town,
And Lynn it was a wash;
But now Lynn is a seaport town,
And Rising fares the worst.

It is said at Norwich :

Caistor was a city ere Norwich was none,
And Norwich was built of Caistor stone.

'About half-way between Curbar and Brompton, to the right of the turnpike leading from Barlow to Sheffield,' writes William Wood, 'there is, far on the moor, a very level flat piece of ground, near a mile square, most remarkable for its boggy nature, so much so that it is dangerous to cross, or at times to approach. Here, before the Roman invasion, says the legend, stood a town or village, the inhabitants of which lived, according to

Diodorus Siculus, in small cots or huts built of wood, the walls of stakes or wattles, like hurdles, and covered with rushes or reeds. These dwellings, with their inhabitants, were swallowed up by one of those convulsions of nature so destructive at times to the habitations of mankind.' Respecting Leech Fend and Chesterfield are the following lines current in Derbyshire :

When Chesterfield was heath and broom,
Leech Fend was a market-town;
Now Leech Fend is all heath and broom,
And Chesterfield a market town.

Respecting Nertoun, a Somersetshire village, near Taunton, is this couplet :

Nertoun was a market-town
When Taunton was a fuzzy down.

A Scottish rhyme says :

York was, London is,
And Edinburgh will be
The biggest of the three.

Says a popular English rhyme :

Lincoln was, London is,
And York shall be
The fairest city of the three.

In the days of old it was the practice to allow the wives of the Lord Mayors of York to retain by courtesy the title Lady for life, and this custom gave rise to the following couplet :

The Lord Mayor's a lord but a year and a day;
But his Lady's a lady for ever and aye.

Few English towns have made greater progress than the thriving port of Hull. Its prosperity was predicted long ago :

When Myton is pulled down,
Hull shall become a great town.

As a matter of history, it may be stated that when the town was threatened by Charles I., a number of houses in Myton Lane, as well as the Charterhouse, were laid in ruins by Sir John Hotham, governor of Hull, so that they might not give shelter to the Royalists. Ray refers to this couplet, and, in error, calls Myton, Dighton.

Selling church-bells has given rise to satirical rhymes. Here are three Lincolnshire rhymes on this topic :

The poor Hatton people
Sold the bells to build up the steeple.

The next says :

Owersby's parish,
Wicked people,
Sold their bells to Kelsey
To build a steeple.

It is stated in the third :

Poor Seartho people,
Sold their bells to repair the steeple.

About 1710, the spire of Arlesey Church, Bedfordshire, fell down, and it is believed the bells were broken. The metal was sold to a distant parish to raise money to rebuild the spire, and until the year 1877 only one small bell was suspended in the steeple to call the inhabitants to the house of prayer. The transaction gave rise to the saying :

Arlesey, Arlesey, wicked people,
Sold their bells to build their steeple.

About half a century later, a similar accident occurred at Welstead, and the bishop granted a license to sell three of the bells, to enable the parishioners with the proceeds to restore the tower. It gave rise to a taunting distich similar to the one at Arlesey.

On the walls of the Newington Church, London, in 1793, was written a rhyme anent the rebuilding of the church without a steeple and selling the bells :

Pious parson, pious people,
Sold the bells to build the steeple ;
A very fine trick of the Newington people,
To sell the bells to build a steeple.

Rhymes on steeples are very common ; perhaps the best known is the one on Preston, Lancashire :

Proud Preston, poor people,
High church and low steeple.

In a somewhat similar strain is the one on Bowness-on-Windermere :

New church and old steeple,
Poor town and proud people.

Lincolnshire rhymes are very numerous, and a complete collection would almost fill a book. Here are three :

Gainsbro' proud people
Built a new church to an old steeple.

According to the next :

Luddington poor people
Built a brick church to a stone steeple.

A question is put and answered thus :

Boston ! Boston !
What hast thou to boast on ?
High steeple, proud people,
And shoals that souls are lost on.

The village of Ugley, Essex, supplies a satirical couplet :

Ugley church, Ugley steeple,
Ugley parson, Ugley people.

An old triplet describes the characteristics of three church spires thus :

Bloxham for length,
Adderbury for strength,
King-Sutton for beauty.

Almost every district furnishes examples of bell rhymes. We give one example, and it is from Derbyshire :

Crich two roller-boulders,
Wingfield ting-tangs,
Alfreton kettles,
And Pentrich pans,
Kirk-Hallam candlesticks,
Cossall cow-bells,
Denby cracked puncheons,
And Horsley merry bells.

It is very generally believed in Derbyshire that the town of Alfreton was once the stake at a game of cards—'put,' and that the loser exclaimed on the cards being dealt out :

If I have not an ace, a deuce, and tray,
Farewell, Alfreton, for ever and aye.

There is a similar couplet respecting Carnfield Hall, near to Alfreton. It is related by Mr E. Kirk, a Lancashire folklorist, that the owner of a large farm in Goosnargh, called Landscales, staked

his land at a game of 'put.' He received his three cards, which were a tray, a deuce, and an ace, and he put—that is, struck the table with his fist, in proof of his resolution to abide by the issue of his cards. His opponent had two trays and a deuce. The farm was consequently lost, and its owner exclaimed :

Ace, deuce, and tray,
Landscales, go thy way.

A Derbyshire rhyme refers to the inhabitants of four places as follows :

Ripley ruffians,
Butterly blocks,
Swanwick bulldogs,
Alfreton shacks.

Equally severe is the following on the people of the villages between Norwich and Yarmouth :

Halvergate hares, Reedham rats,
Southwood swine, and Cantley cats,
Acle asses, Moulton mules,
Blighton bears, and Freethorpe fools.

Of Derbyshire folks it is said :

Derbyshire born and Derbyshire bred,
Strong in the arm, but weak in the head.

We next give two Kentish rhymes :

Sutton for mutton,
Kerby for beef,
South Darve for gingerbread,
Dartford for a thief.

This is complimentary :

English lord, German count, and French marquie,
A yeoman of Kent is worth all three.

It is said of Herefordshire :

They who buy a house in Herefordshire
Pay three years' purchase for the air.

Says a Gloucestershire rhyme :

Blest is the eye
Betwixt Severn and Wye.

In the same shire is the next couplet :

Beggarly Birley, strutting Stroud,
Hampton poor, and Painswick proud.

Many more rhymes similar to the foregoing might be given, if space permitted ; but we have only room for a few more examples, and they will relate to the weather. An old distich says :

When clouds are on the hills,
They'll come down by the mills.

Another rhyme states :

When the mist comes from the hill,
Then good weather it doth spill.
When the mist comes from the sea,
Then good weather it will be.

In Worcestershire there is a saying :

When Bredon Hill puts on his hat,
Ye men of the vale, beware of that.

Says a Yorkshire rhyme :

When Oliver's Mount puts on his hat,
Scarbro' town must pay for that.

In the same broad shire is a similar couplet :

When Ingleboro' wears a hat,
Ribblesdale'll hear o' that.

When clouds are observed on Masson, at Matlock, Derbyshire, the people say :

Masson top has got a cap,
And Darley Dale must pay for that.

It is said of Dunkrey, Somersetshire :

When Dunkrey's top cannot be seen,
Horner will have a flooded stream.

DEODAND.

'VERDICT—Accidental death. Deodand 20s., and the gun forfeited.' Thus ran the verdict of the coroner's jury on July 14, 1818, just seventy years ago, on the body of a gardener, named Saunders, who had come by his death through the accidental discharge of a spring-gun at Tottenham ; a common enough verdict even such a short time back ; and yet how few people now living know the word deodand, much less could explain its meaning. The law of deodand, which was an English one, and unknown in Scotland, was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1846. The practices relating to it were sufficiently curious to justify narration.

The derivation of the word is obvious, from the Latin *Deo dandus*, 'given to God,' and was used to denote the particular thing or unreasonable creature which was the immediate cause of a person's death, which had to be forfeited to the king, as God's executor, and sold, the proceeds being applied to pious and charitable uses under the direction of the High Almoner. Its original purpose would seem to have been as an expiation for the souls of those snatched away by sudden death, and for the pacifying of God's wrath in the case of any misfortune by which a Christian came to a violent end without the fault of any reasonable creature.

The first portion of the law, which we may term the statical portion, had reference to deaths caused in some manner by a stationary object ; as, for example, a fall from a haystack or a tree. No deodand was held to be due on account of an infant not yet arrived at years of discretion, as such a one was presumed to be incapable of actual sin, and consequently not in need of propitiatory masses. But in the case of an adult, the hayrick, tree, or whatever else it might have been, was invariably forfeited, as, according to the belief of the founders of the English law, every adult was considered to die in actual sin. One authority puts it thus : 'The deodand is to be sold, and the price distributed to the poor, for the soul of the king, his ancestors, and all faithful people departed this life.' It mattered not whether the owner were concerned in the killing or not. Even if one man shot another with a stranger's pistol, the pistol was looked upon as an accursed thing ; and the grand-jury would find 'that the shot was delivered from Mr So-and-so's pistol, value five shillings and sixpence, and that the king, or his grantee, may claim the deodand ;' and it was no deodand unless presented by such a jury of twelve.

The second or dynamical portion has reference to a person killed by something that was in motion, as, for instance, being run over in the street, 'Omnia quæ movent ad mortem sunt deodanda ;' and in such a case, be the victim infant or adult, both horse and cart would have

been forfeited, in order to punish the owner in some measure for his negligence. Nor is this the only country in which such penalties have been exacted ; for we find, among the various laws laid down by Moses in the twenty-first chapter of Exodus, that 'if an ox gore a man or a woman that they die ; then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten ; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.' Among the Athenians, also, anything that crushed a man to death was either exterminated or cast out of the dominions of the republic ; and another of our ancient laws, which compelled the filling in of a well in which any one had been drowned, in presence of the coroner, has its counterpart in the twenty-first chapter of Exodus, verses thirty-three and thirty-four, where we read, 'And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein ; the owner of the pit shall make it good.'

There is one peculiar distinction between, as we have termed them, the statical and dynamical portions of this law, which is this : In the latter, the thing was forfeited in its entirety, whereas in the former sometimes only in part. A couple of simple illustrations will render this more clear. Suppose a man to be run over and killed by a loaded wagon ; horse, wagon, and load were all held to bear a share in the responsibility, and were consequently forfeited ; but if a child died from falling, say, from the wheel of a standing cart on which it was clambering, that one wheel only was deodand.

The law, moreover, applied only to accidents on land, not to those on the high seas, since these are without the jurisdiction of the common law ; but in a case of drowning from a vessel in fresh water, both vessel and cargo were liable to forfeiture.

There only remains one other peculiarity to mention, and this with regard to ownership, which was undoubtedly unjust. Did a person die from the effects of an accident within a year and a day of such accident—whatever had caused it, ox, horse, cart, pistol, &c., was deodand. Even if in the meantime the article had changed hands, the present owner was forced to give it up.

LAST WORDS.

You can write down sweet words in a letter,
And try to send love by the post ;
You can tell me how vastly 'tis better
To have played the game Love, though we've lost.

You say you are wretched without me ;
Have you ever thought what I endure ?
The sickening pain—ah ! don't doubt me—
Which not even your presence could cure.

For you know that our passionate yearning
Can never be satisfied here ;
In the long lane of Life, there's no turning
That I see, which will bring us more near.

By one act of folly once parted,
We must live out our lives, you and I ;
And though we are both broken-hearted,
Let us whisper, good-bye, love, good-bye.

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AN ISLE OF FARTHEST THULE.

PAPA STOUR.

If you have ever sailed round the west coast of Shetland, you will know that on the north-western extremity of the Mainland, beyond Sandness and beyond the Ness of Melby, there lies the solitary island of Papa Stour. It is not large, being only about two miles in breadth and three in length; and is separated from the Mainland by a strait a little over a mile in width, called Papa Sound. But though the island lies thus close to the Mainland, it is not always easy of approach; for the tides that flow through the Sound are swift and furious, and frequently in certain states of the weather render passage impossible. The name of the island, to strangers, is peculiar. Papa is not an uncommon place-name either in Shetland or the Orkneys, and is said to have been the Icelandic name for the first missionaries who brought Christianity to those islands. Be this as it may, the word Stour means 'big'; so that Papa Stour (pronounced *Pah'-pa Stoor*) is simply Big Papa, to distinguish it from the island of Papa Little, lying about ten miles farther east. Papa Stour is not often visited by the tourist, as it lies out of the conventional tourist-tracks, and is not conveniently accessible; yet the wonderful rock scenery of its western coast is well worth seeing.

Our first visit was made by way of Olna Firth, Swarbacks Minn, and St Magnus Bay, a distance of about sixteen miles; a second and longer visit by crossing Papa Sound. With a favourable breeze the distance by the former route may be covered in two or three hours; but when it is necessary to beat up against a head-wind it may take seven or eight. Yet in sailing through the blue waters and among the green islands of the western Mainland, there is an infinite variety of interest, so numerous are the sea-fowl that crowd these narrow inland voes, or sweep in long and graceful curves round the flapping sails. Groups of 'teisties' or guillemots are seldom absent, carry-

ing out their quick evolutions on the surface of the water, dipping and diving and re-appearing with tireless activity; and when on the wing, displaying their glossy plumage of white and black, with their little web-feet of the brightest vermilion, which look, at first sight, like two red tail-feathers. Or it may be a family of eider ducks following each other in line about the quiet shallows near the shore; or a gathering of big black cormorants, swimming deep in the water, as is their habit, only the head and neck being visible. Or it may be a seal, lifting its gray head above the wave, watching and following the boat afar-off, after the shyly inquisitive fashion of these creatures; or a string of porpoises tumbling past in their wheel-like movements; or even a 'blower'—the local name for the whale—ranging up the firth in the wake of the herring-shoals, showing you for a minute his great back-fin and shoulder, as he empties his lungs of water and re-fills them with air, preparatory to another plunge under the waves in quest of his prey. And then, as you near the headland, and lie out towards St Magnus Bay, you have on one hand the craggy rocks of Vementry, on the other the great red cliffs of Rooe—massive walls of iron ruggedness, scarped and battered by a hundred storms; with solitary stacks of rock, round whose granite feet the billows rave ceaselessly, churning themselves into foam; or dark sea-caves, gloomy as the portals of Avernus, and melancholy with the long-resounding of many waters.

Next to the huge perpendicular walls of rock that girdle the Shetland Isles—at Fitful Head rising to nine hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea—what strikes the stranger most is the entire absence of trees. Where the land slopes up from the edge of the voes or bays, the hillsides are in part covered with the cultivated crofts of the inhabitants, lying like bright bits of patchwork in various shades of green. The pastures between are now brown with the hot July sun, and the black peat-mosses are dotted here and there with natives procuring their winter supply of fuel. But over all is no shadow,

save of the crofter's white hut on the hill-side, or of the crofter himself at work. Nothing growing is to be seen higher than the bere or the burdock. And yet there must have been a great growth of trees or other forms of plant-life in distant ages, for the peat-mosses on the Mainland are deep and abundant, and remains of the mountain-ash and other trees are to be found in them still. Why, then, are there no trees now? Is it that the climate is changed?—or is it due to the unenclosed nature of the country, where, for hundreds of years, geese and sheep, cattle and ponies, have been allowed their own will, eating down everything as it grows? At anyrate, there can be no doubt about the condition of Papa Stour. There is not a single tree or bush upon it, and there probably never has been, for there is not an inch of peat-moss on the whole island. If ever Papa Stour had its native poet—and what place in the North has not?—he must needs have been deprived of much of the permanent stock-in-trade of his silvan brothers. For here there are no 'trees' to be 'fanned by the breeze,' no 'murmuring wood' to rhyme with 'solitude,' no 'leafy shade' for 'whispering lovers made.' The western half of the island is as bare as the palm of one's hand, and has in great portions been skinned of what little turf it has ever had, to help out the want of peat, which can only be obtained by fetching it in boats a distance of eight or ten miles. And not of much value is this turf as fuel, after all; one old woman saying it 'made mair reek dan heat.' On the southern and eastern portions of the island, however, there are bits of fairly good soil, on which were growing excellent crops of bere (a coarse kind of barley), oats, turnips, and potatoes.

The great attraction of the island is its rock scenery. Lying farther out in the Atlantic than the Mainland, Papa Stour acts as a kind of advanced guard, and has to meet the full brunt of the mighty waves, that break on it during storms with the noise of thunder, and with a force to which the artillery of war are but as toys. Besides the creeks and voes which indent the island all round, there are evidences everywhere of the great gaps which the sea is making in the solid volcanic rock of which the island is composed. Its mode of operation is easily understood. The rock first gives way at the foot of the cliff, where it is broken and battered by the huge boulders, tons in weight, which the billows hurl against it. In course of time, a cavity is formed by these monster battering-rams; and the cavity grows and grows until it becomes a huge cave or tunnel, arched over by the superimposed cliff. In storms and high tides, when great volumes of water are driven as by a force-pump into this tunnel, the compressed air of the interior will sometimes burst through the upper rock, blasting it as if with gunpowder, and so giving the waters vent, perhaps a hundred yards inland from the edge of the cliff. Once this opening in the solid land is made—and there are more than one such opening at present on the island—the water, in the winter storms, is driven up through it with terrific force, even to a height of sixty or seventy feet. And still the process goes on; year by year the opening is widened; until all the rock between it and the sea is wrenched and torn away, bit by

bit, and a great and deep ravine is left, through which the fierce tides foam and chafe at will.*

This process, assisted no doubt by chemical decomposition and other agencies, works slowly, and must have taken thousands of years to effect the havoc and devastation we now see. Neither is the result always the same. Sometimes the water that is driven into these tunnelled-out caves never succeeds in making an opening for itself upwards, and so the tunnelling process goes on indefinitely, as in the case of the Bottomless Geo, which penetrates the island at North Ness to a depth unknown. In other cases, where a comparatively narrow neck of land is operated upon, the rock has been bored until daylight is reached on the opposite side. This has occurred at what is called the Hole of Bordie, which runs for nearly half a mile right through a ness on the north-west side of the island; also at Brei Holm, on the east side, and elsewhere. In calm weather, a native pilot will row you through these tunnels from end to end. Some, such as the long one of Bordie, are dark and dismal retreats; others, like those at Brei Holm, being short and well lighted, are exceedingly beautiful, especially when the sunshine strikes the rippling water, throwing myriad reflections upwards to the high arched roof of rock, where they flit and flicker among the shadows of the warm pink felstone like so many butterflies of transparent gold.

Outside Housa Voe—a place of pleasant memories—and near to Brei Holm, stands the Maiden Stack, an isolated and apparently unclimbable rock perhaps fifty or sixty feet in height, and with the remains of a house atop of it, in which it is said a maiden was at one time immured by her father. But love has signals of its own; and her lover in Northmaven discovered her prison-house, and carried her off. In these ancient stories, as is right and proper, it is always the poor old father who gets beaten in the end. Here, in this voe, the banks of seaweed, seen through the pale emerald of the clear water, are extremely beautiful, clinging to every rock and skerry, and fringing the base of the Maiden Stack in clusters of tasselled green. But it is to the west side of the island you must go for the wonders of rock scenery. Here, on the westmost point of land, rises up from the top of a huge cliff a singular rocky projection, called from its form the Horn of Papa. Its outline on the left, as you approach, will be seen to resemble a human profile—like the face of one who, with fixed gaze, looks far out at sea. Here also are Snolda Stack, Lyra Skerry, Fougla Skerry (the Rock of Fowls); here are geos wild and picturesque, lofty arches cut by the sea-waves out of the solid stone, great masses of rock lying rent and broken everywhere—the huge artillery held in readiness for the next great battle between the Titan forces of wind and wave and cliff. There has been a storm at sea but yesternight, and the long sullen heave of the Atlantic is like the slow breathing and uplifting of the chest of some giant in repose after conflict. Yet ever as the slow wave reaches the shore, its hidden force is made manifest by the white rage with which

* A ravine of this kind is called in Shetland a *geo* (pron. *g* hard, *gyro*). A *voe*, on the other hand, is a bay, or an arm of the sea similar to the lochs of the west coast of Scotland.

it breaks upon and lashes the obstructing cliff, sending great flakes of white foam, like aerated snow-balls, windward across the isle. And all above and around is the flight of innumerable sea-birds, whose shrill wailing mingles sadly with the hoarse roar of the waters, as if each pair of white wings bore aloft a mourning spirit—mourning for the dead whom the ocean holds.

This western half of the island is barren as a desert. On the top of the sea-cliffs there are fine stretches of grassy turf, green and smooth as the best kept lawn; but away from the shore, the ground has been so scarified that little turf remains, and the rock is exposed everywhere. Here you may see at all times in summer, bands of women, each with a string of little ponies, carrying home the turf which has been previously cut and piled up in stacks. Panniers, formed of straw network, are slung across the backs of the ponies, and filled with turf; then the large basket of plaited straw, called a 'kishie,' which each woman has on her back, is also filled with turf; upon which the procession—woman and ponies, with the ponies' foals and the inevitable sheep-dog—moves off towards the eastern or southern side of the island, where the houses and crofts are. The younger women when at this work cover their head with a little white or red shawl, and look picturesque; the older women mostly affect large black shawls, which they arrange in such a manner across the brow and under the mouth as to leave only a portion of the face exposed, giving them somewhat the appearance of Moorish women. The men at that season of the year are engaged at the sea-fishing, which is the staple support of the people. Without the fishing, indeed, the island could not maintain its forty families in life.

From an early period Papa Stour must have been inhabited, judging from the numerous traces that exist of brochs, Picts' houses, cairns, and stone circles, with those mysterious lines of short upright stones and boulders that intersect the island almost everywhere. Of the brochs and cairns little is left for the antiquary or the curious; they were too convenient as quarries to remain till now intact. The people are of Scandinavian origin, and they still retain a knowledge of the ancient Norwegian sword-dance referred to by Sir Walter Scott in *The Pirate*.

The houses here are much the same as crofters' houses all over Shetland—with low walls, an arch-shaped roof thatched with straw, and weighted down with heavy stones, to secure it against the hurricanes of winter. The fire is on the floor, a little in front of the end wall farthest from the door, and the smoke finds—or at least is expected to find—its way out at an open chimney in the roof. In some houses there are internal chimneys of wood, which arrangement adds much to the comfort of the occupants. In all, there is the spinning-wheel and the ever-clicking knitting-pins, as also the ancient stone quern for grinding their bere into meal. The meal so prepared is called 'burstin,' small cakes baked of it are 'burstin-broonies,' and, when eaten with cream, it is known as 'burstin-pram'—all which words may exercise the etymologist. Each crofter has, as a rule, one or more cows and ponies, with a number of sheep corresponding to the extent of his holding. Some families are, in their rank,

evidently comfortable and well-to-do; others are as evidently poor.

Upon the whole, however, they are of a cheerful temperament, notwithstanding their numerous privations, and enter heartily into any little jest or merriment. The lover of folklore may even still pick up a few tales about those supernatural creatures the trows—related to the trolls of the Scandinavian mythology—'peerie men with long hats,' and great workers in metal. These trows are no longer believed in, but are still spoken of. For, of an evening, when the inmates are gathered round the glowing peat-fire—the women-folk as usual knitting hard, and listening—you may hear, as we heard from the lips of a fine old Shetlander, some of those old-world tales. It may be of the man who one night, in passing Stack o' Barg, a noted haunt of the trows, heard a great noise inside. When he arrived at his place, and was passing the cowhouse, he said to his folks: 'There's a terrible noise in Stack o' Barg to-night.' Now, it so happened that at that moment a trow-wife, who had left her baby behind her at home, was in the cowhouse stealing milk from the cows, and when she heard what the man said, she sprang up from her stool, and crying out, 'Hivla Tivla!—Fivla has faun i' the finna [fire] and brunt itsel,' fled from the place. After the trow-woman was gone, a copper pan was found, which within the memory of the narrator was still shown at Feal, in the island of Fetlar, as the vessel the trow-woman left behind her on that occasion; and it was said the people who found the pan never wanted for anything so long as they kept it. You may hear also the merry tale of the trow-man and the trow-wife, Shankum and Jinkum, and how one night the miller mischievously scalded Jinkum with his boiling supper as she lay before the mill-fire warming herself.

The memory of these stories is fast dying out, even in Papa Stour. So also is the existence of a usage which at one time prevailed there, as in other places, among the sea-going folk. This was, never, when at sea, to call a thing on land by its right name. The horse, for instance, was called the 'sniggum'; the cow, the 'dron-ye'; the sheep, the 'bleater'; the cat, the 'four-fitter'; the pig, the 'grunter'; the dog, the 'bonny-biter'; the hen, the 'yappie'; a knife was a 'skyoan'; the fire, the 'finna'; and so on. Sea-birds, however, were called by their ordinary names. Superstitions such as these seem, in our modern way of looking at things, difficult to account for. They had their origin, doubtless, in an age when the phenomena of nature were less understood than now; and the sea, to those far-off islanders, must always have been a thing of mystery and of terror. It was at once their chief support and their greatest danger. There was no science, as now, to explain or predict its movements; they only perceived its sudden transitions from calm to storm, its merciless and unmitigable fury when aroused. And reasons sad enough had they for this mysterious awe of the great deep: for the little churchyard in Papa Stour holds not all its dead. That sea of theirs has many a loved one in its secret keeping, and it keeps its secrets well.

As we left Housa Voe for the last time, the island lay like a dark mass against the glowing gold of the northern sky, where the sun was setting

in unclouded splendour; and as each familiar stack and skerry was left behind, and the figures that watched us from the shore grew dim and dimmer in the gray distance, it was not without regret that we bade farewell to Papa Stour, to the simple pleasures of its kindly people, and the sterile beauty of their island home.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER IX.

GERALD BROOKE bade farewell to his wife, and quitted Beechley Towers about an hour after midnight. There was no moon; but the clouds had dispersed after the rain, and the stars shone brightly. His object was to make his way to Penrhyn Court, the seat of Sir John Starkie, the justice of the peace who had signed the warrant for his arrest. It seemed like walking into the lion's den; but it was probably the wisest thing he could have done under the circumstances. Penrhyn Court was one of the last places in the world where anybody would think of looking for him. Mr Tom Starkie had offered to find a secure hiding-place for him for the time being; and after he had once consented to yield to his wife's entreaties and keep out of the way for the present, while awaiting the course of events, it seemed to him that he could not do better than accept his friend's offer. For one thing, he would be on the spot, should anything turn up necessitating his immediate presence; for another, he would be able to communicate with his wife without risk, through the medium of kind-hearted Tom.

Over the parting of husband and wife we need not linger; but it was with a sad heart that Gerald quitted the threshold of the pleasant home where, but such a little time ago, he had looked forward to spending many happy years.

Skirting coppice and hedgerow, and keeping as much as possible in the black shade of the trees, he sped swiftly on his way. The distance from the Towers to the Court was about three miles as the crow flies; and almost as straight as the crow flies went Gerald, taking hedge and ditch and stone wall on his way, and allowing no obstacle to turn him from his course. Once, as he was on the point of emerging from a coppice of nut-trees, he came upon two keepers, armed with guns, who were crossing a meadow not many yards away, evidently on the lookout for poachers. He shrank back on his footsteps as silent as a shadow, and waited for fully ten minutes before he ventured to proceed. Again, at a point where it was necessary for him to cross the high-road, he had a narrow escape from coming face to face with a mounted constable who was riding leisurely along on his solitary round. He had just time to sink back into the hedge-bottom and lie there as motionless as a log till the danger was past.

Mr Tom Starkie had described the position of his rooms to Gerald, so that the latter had no difficulty in making his way to them. He was

to be guided by a lighted window the blind of which showed a transverse bar of a darker shade. As soon as he found this window, Gerald gave utterance to a low whistle. The light was at once withdrawn, as a token that his signal had been heard; and two minutes later he found himself safely in his friend's rooms.

So far all had gone well; but only the preliminary step had been taken as yet. Not a soul in Penrhyn Court but Tom himself must know or even suspect the presence there of Gerald Brooke. But Tom had thought of all this when he first urged his friend to come to the Court, and had in his mind's eye a certain safe hiding-place, known to him and his father alone, where Gerald could lie by and await the course of events. The hiding-place in question was known as 'The Priest's Hole,' and was an integral part of the oldest portion of the house. A sliding panel in the library, held in its place by a concealed spring, gave admission to a narrow passage built in the thickness of one of the outer walls, down from which access was obtained, by means of a steep flight of steps, to two small chambers hollowed out of the very foundations of the house. These rooms were shut out from all daylight, the walls were unplastered, and the floors of hard dry earth. In the larger of the two was a small fireplace, but without any grate in it, the chimney of which opened into one of the main stacks of the Court. In one corner was a tressel bedstead of black worm-eaten oak, which would seem to indicate that the place had not been without an occasional occupant in days gone by.

The first two hours after Gerald's arrival were spent by Tom in victualling and furnishing this place of refuge. Having encased his feet in a pair of list slippers, his first visit was to the larder, where he requisitioned bread, cheese, butter, tea, coffee, sardines, and sundry other comestibles, greatly to the perplexity of the worthy cook when she came to look over her stores next morning. His next raid had for its objects candles, matches, and crockery. Then came a folding-chair and a spirit-lamp from his own rooms; and so on till he possessed himself of as many articles as he required. Tom took immense delight in these stealthy raids during the small-hours of the morning; and more than once he was compelled to come to a stand with his arms full of things and indulge in a silent laugh, which shook him from head to foot, when he thought of worthy Sir John asleep, and of what his feelings would have been could he have seen how his first-born was just then occupied.

The June sun was high above the horizon before Tom's preparations were completed. It was time for Gerald to vanish like a ghost at cockcrow. The two friends shook hands and parted for a little while; but when Gerald heard the click of the sliding panel as it was pushed back into its place, and when he had shut the door at the bottom of the stairs and had glanced once again round the dismal dungeon that was to be his home for he knew not how long a time to come, he felt as if he were buried alive and should never see daylight again. His heart sank lower, if that were possible, than it had sunk before, and for a few moments he felt as if his fortitude must give way. But this mood was not of long duration; he buoyed himself up with the

thought that another day was already here, and that in a few hours more his innocence would doubtless be proved. Presently he lay down on his pallet, utterly worn out in body and mind, and five minutes later was fast asleep.

Of Gerald Brooke's life during the next few weeks it is not needful to speak in detail; indeed, each day that came was so much a repetition of the one that had gone before it, that there would be but little to record. Tom rarely ventured to visit his friend till after his father and the rest of the household had retired for the night. It was a joyful sound to Gerald when he heard the click of the panel and knew that for two or three hours to come he should be a free man. Then through the silent shut-up house the two men would steal like burglars to Tom's room. Once there, they felt safe; for the rest of the family and the servants slept in different wings of the rambling old house. On nights when there was no moon, or when it was overcast, the two friends paced a certain pleached alley of the lower garden for an hour at a time; it was the only exercise Gerald was able to obtain. After that they sat and smoked and talked in Tom's room till the clock struck three, which was the signal for Gerald's return to his dungeon. Twice each week Mr Starkie rode over to the Towers, acting the part of postman between husband and wife, in addition to that of general purveyor of news.

So day after day passed without bringing the murderer of Von Rosenberg to light or tending in anyway to weaken the force of the circumstantial evidence accumulated against Gerald. It seemed, indeed, as if the police had made up their minds that Mr Brooke, and he alone, must be the guilty man, directing all their efforts towards his capture, and listening with incredulous ears to such persons as suggested that, after all, it was just possible he might not be the individual they wanted.

'If he isn't guilty, why don't he show up? Why has he gone and hid himself where nobody can find him?' was Mr Drumley's invariable rejoinder, when any such suggestions happened to be ventilated in his presence. Such questions were difficult to answer.

Many a time during those weeks of slow torture, as he sat brooding in his underground chamber by the dismal light of a couple of candles, did Gerald wish with all his heart that he had not yielded to his wife's entreaties, but had stayed, and braved the thing out to the bitter end.

Clara, meanwhile, was doing all that it was possible for a woman, circumstanced as she was, to do. When a week had passed and nothing tending to prove her husband's innocence had been brought to light, she did that which Mr George Crofton proposed doing, that is to say, she engaged the services of an experienced private detective. The man came, listened respectfully to all she had to say, and promised that his best endeavours should be at her service; but after his visit, day succeeded day without bringing any ray of comfort to the young wife's aching heart. Could it be possible, she sometimes asked herself, a little later on, that this astute individual, while to all appearance falling in with her views, really believed in her husband's guilt as strongly as Mr Drumley did, and while quite willing to humour her and spend her money, was in his

heart impressed with the futility of looking elsewhere for the criminal? It was a weary time, full of heartache in the present, and with a future that began to loom more darkly as day followed day in slow and sad procession.

By-and-by there came a certain night when Tom Starkie met his guest with a very long and gloomy visage. His news was quickly told. His father had suddenly made up his mind to start at once for one of the German spas, and insisted upon Tom's accompanying him. 'And if I go, my dear Brooke—and I'm afraid I can't get out of it—what's to become of you?'

'I must flit,' answered Gerald with a shrug; 'there's no help for it.' He almost hailed the prospect as a relief, so unutterably weary was he becoming of the terrible monotony of his present mode of life; but the question of course was, Whither was he to go? At length, after the two men had smoked some half-dozen pipes each, a happy thought came to Gerald. He called to mind that he had another friend on whose secrecy and good faith he could rely, and who, he felt sure, would befriend him in his present strait, if it were in anyway possible for him to do so. The name of the friend in question was Roger Chamfrey.

A few hours later, Tom Starkie set out for London in search of Mr Chamfrey, whom he fortunately found at his club. The latter had of course read everything that had appeared in the newspapers respecting Von Rosenberg's mysterious death, and Tom found him to be as firm a believer in Gerald's innocence as he himself was.

'I've got the very thing to suit poor Brooke,' he said. 'The situation of second-keeper is vacant on a certain moor which I rent in a wild and lonely part of Yorkshire, and Brooke will be as safe there as he would be in the heart of Africa. I will give him a letter to Timley the head-keeper, who is a very decent sort of fellow, so worded that Brooke shall receive every possible consideration while yet ostensibly filling the part of assistant-keeper. What's more easy than to hint that our friend is a young gentleman of position who has quarrelled with his family, but that in the course of a little time he will come into a large property?' And Mr Chamfrey laughed.

So the letter in question was written and given to Mr Starkie, together with many kind messages for Gerald.

Four days later, Gerald reached his new refuge in safety. What means he adopted to escape recognition by the way, and by what circuitous routes he travelled, need not be specified here. It was indeed a wild and desolate tract of country in which he found himself; but in that fact lay his safety. Timley received him kindly; and when he had read and digested his employer's letter, he at once proceeded to turn himself and his wife out of the best bedroom in his cottage, and allotted the same to his new assistant, greatly to the surprise and disgust of his better-half, until he had pacified her by a few sentences whispered in her ear, after which she became all smiles and graciousness, and seemed as if she could not do enough to make 'Mr Davis' comfortable. When they were alone, or when no one was within earshot, Timley invariably addressed Gerald as 'Sir.'

The free open-air life he now led did much towards improving Gerald's health and spirits. Once a week he wrote to his wife, and once a week he received a long letter in return. His letters to her were addressed under an assumed name to be left till called for at the post-office of a little town some dozen miles from the Towers. From this place they were fetched by Margery, who made the journey by rail, and who at the same time dropped a return letter into the box addressed to 'Mr Davis' the keeper.

So time went on till the 12th of August came round, about which date Timley had notice that in the course of the following week his master would arrive accompanied by a number of friends. At the last minute, however, Mr Chamfrey was detained by important business, and his friends arrived without him. All was now bustle and excitement, and Gerald found quite enough to do. The first and second days' shooting passed off admirably. The weather was perfect, birds were plentiful, and everybody was in high good-humour. Gerald acted his part to perfection—at least Timley told him so. All fear of recognition by any of the visitors had passed away, and on the third morning after their arrival he caught himself humming an air from *Lucia* while cleaning the barrel of his gun outside the cottage door. Hearing a footstep on the garden path, he turned his head quickly, and found himself confronted by a man who had been in his own service only some eight or nine months previously. The two stood staring at each other for a few moments in silence. It was at once evident to Gerald that, despite the change in his appearance, he was recognised. Before either had spoken a word Timley came out of the cottage. Then the man delivered his message, which was from one of the visitors at the Lodge in whose service he now was. Then, after another stare at Gerald, who still went on cleaning his gun, the man turned and went.

Twelve hours later, Gerald Brooke—clean shaven except for a small moustache which was dyed black, and with a black wig over his own closely cropped hair—was flying southward in the night express. Mr Starkie, who had returned from the Continent by this time, and to whom he had telegraphed under an assumed name, previously agreed on, met him at the London terminus. The conference between the two friends was a long one. It resulted in Gerald coming to the decision that he would take up his abode in London itself, at least for some time to come, as being, all things considered, as safe a hiding-place as any for a man circumstanced as he was. It was, besides, becoming requisite that some decision should be arrived at with regard to matters at the Towers. Clara was still there; but although she had cut down the household expenses to the lowest possible limits, her supply of ready-money was dwindling away; and when that was gone, where was more to come from? With Gerald's disappearance his income had disappeared too. It was an impossibility for him to draw a cheque, or receive a shilling of rent from any of his tenants, while matters with him remained as they were. Then, again, Clara's long separation from her husband, and the many weeks of anxiety she had undergone, were wearing away both her health and her spirits. 'Only let

us be together again, darling—that is all I crave,' she wrote to her husband. 'Two little rooms in some back street will seem like a palace if only you are with me.'

Thus it fell out that on a certain afternoon about a week after Gerald's arrival in London, two ladies, both of them closely veiled, who had been hunting for apartments all morning, and were utterly disheartened and tired out by their want of success, stood for a few moments gazing into a pastry-cook's window in Tottenham Court Road. As she did so, the younger lady raised her veil. Next instant she was startled by hearing some one say in French: 'O papa, papa, here is the beautiful lady who gave me the cakes and fruit at that grand house in the country!'

Clara dropped her veil and turned. She recognised the little speaker at once, although he no longer wore his mountebank's dress. There, too, was Picot himself, who had come to a stand a few yards away while he lighted a cigarette.

Tired and anxious though she was, Clara would not go without speaking to the boy. 'So you have not forgotten me, Henri,' she said, 'nor the cakes either? Would you not like some more cakes to-day?'

For answer he lifted one of her hands to his lips and kissed it.

When Mrs Brooke and Henri came out of the shop they found Miss Primby and M. Picot deep in conversation. The mountebank was dressed quite smartly to-day, and had a flower in his button-hole. As Miss Primby said to her niece afterwards: 'Although the poor man may be nothing but a tumbler, he is the essence of gallantry and politeness.'

After a few words had passed between Clara and Picot, some impulse—she could never afterwards have told whence it originated—prompted her to say to him: 'My aunt and I are in London to-day on rather a peculiar errand. We are here to find apartments for—for some dear friends of ours who a little time ago were rich, but who are now very poor. We have been going about all morning, but cannot succeed in finding what we require. It is just possible, monsieur, that you with your knowledge of London may be able to assist us.'

'I am entirely at madame's service,' answered Picot as he raised his hat for a moment. 'Is it furnished apartments that madame requires?'

'Yes—four or five furnished rooms at a moderate rent, and, if possible, not more than a mile from where we are now.'

Picot considered for a moment or two, then he said: 'I remind myself of a place that will, I think, suit madame. The landlord is a compatriot of my own; he is honest man; he will not cheat his lodgers. If madame would like to see the apartments'—

'By all means, if you recommend them, monsieur.'

'Then I will give madame the address.' He tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, pencilled down a couple of lines, and handed the paper to Mrs Brooke with an elaborate bow. At Clara's request he then hailed a passing cab; then both the ladies, having kissed Henri and shaken hands with Picot, were driven away.

Henri, as he stood gazing after the cab, said to

his father: 'Are the angels as beautiful as that lady, papa?'

'That is more than I can say, *mon p'tit*,' replied the mountebank with a laugh. 'When I have seen an angel, I shall be able to tell thee.'

(*To be continued.*)

THE NOVEMBER METEORS.

UNTIL a few years ago, this term was sufficiently precise as applied to that shower of meteoric bodies which appears in abundance in the middle of November at intervals of thirty-three or thirty-four years, being seen for two or three years in succession, after which a few, and a few only, are visible about the same date until another such period has elapsed. That which led to the recognition of their being not terrestrial but cosmical phenomena—belonging to interplanetary regions—was the fact, the first notice of which is due to Humboldt in 1799, that they always emanate from the same place amongst the stars, which of course alters its apparent position regarding the points of the compass as the night advances, in consequence of the earth's rotation. In the year just alluded to, a grand display of these meteors was noticed in South America in the early morning of November 13. An equally fine shower was seen, chiefly on the Atlantic coast of North America, on the same day in 1833, a less striking one having been witnessed in part of Europe and in Arabia in 1832.

It was not, however, until 1864—when another such shower was nearly due—that the subject was taken up by Professor H. A. Newton, of Yale College, Connecticut, who succeeded in showing, by decisive historic evidence, that similar showers had been manifested at these intervals during many centuries, occurring, however, about two days later each century. Account was of course taken in the discussion that the change of style in the sixteenth—in England the eighteenth—century made the progressive greater lateness of date appear more rapid than it really was when only very early and recent observations were compared with each other. This slow alteration of date was shown by Professor Adams to be the effect of perturbations produced by the attraction of the planets, and it became clear that the meteors composed, in fact, a vast shoal revolving in a ring—one portion of which was much thicker than the rest—round the sun in about thirty-three and a quarter years, the earth in its annual orbit passing through this stream about the 13th of the month of November. A recurrence, therefore, of the phenomenon in abundance was confidently predicted for that date in the year 1866; nor did it fail to take place. The display, indeed, on this occasion was especially grand, and formed a sight which none who saw it can ever forget. It was repeated, but in much smaller abundance, in the following year, since which but few meteors have been seen at the time in question, the earth passing through parts of the ring in which those bodies are but sparsely scattered, though in some years they have been more numerous than in others. No one who has examined the subject doubts that brilliant displays will occur towards the end of the century, in 1899 and 1900.

But we commenced by alluding to the fact that more than one fine periodic shower of meteors is now recognised as taking place in the month of November. That of which we have hitherto been speaking forms the stream called the Leonids, because the meteors of which it is composed always appear to radiate from a point in the heavens in the constellation Leo. We must now devote a few words to the other, which appears at intervals of several years very nearly at the end of November, the meteors of which radiate from the constellation Andromeda, and are therefore called Andromedæ. Unlike the former, these manifest themselves a little earlier on each occasion, and were first noticed as taking place early in the month of December. However, the first really grand display took place on the 27th of November 1872. It would seem that they recur at intervals of thirteen years, and another magnificent shower was seen on the evening of the same date in the year 1885. But whereas the periodicity of the other stream was the first thing noticed about it, the periodicity of this was anticipated from a similar circumstance connected with its regular appearance.

Professor Schiaparelli of Milan was the first to call attention to the fact that the meteoric stream of the 9-10th of August—called that of the Perseids because the meteors belonging to it radiate from a point in the constellation Perseus—moves in the same orbit with that of a small comet which was discovered about the end of 1865 and was nearest the sun in January 1866. That comet also revolves in a period of about thirty-three and a quarter years; and it would seem that it is in fact the largest member of the stream of meteors which follow in its wake and are distributed, with more uniformity than the Leonids in their orbit, along the whole length of its elliptic path. The comet is probably undergoing a process of disintegration; and though it will be looked for in 1899, it is not likely that it will be seen as a comet at many more appearances. Shortly after Schiaparelli had made this suggestive discovery, it was remarked that the Leonids or meteors of the middle of November also move in the same orbit as a comet which has only been seen in the year 1862, and appears to occupy about one hundred and twenty-four years in revolving round the sun.

Now, a very interesting comet, as it afterwards proved to be, was discovered in France by Montaigne in the year 1772. Its periodicity, however, was not recognised until after its rediscovery in Bohemia by an Austrian officer named Biela, in the year 1826, when it was found that it was moving in an elliptic orbit with a period which it took only about six and a half years to complete. (It had indeed been observed in 1805, but supposed then also to be a new comet.) Its period being thus known, it was seen again in 1832; and though at the next return it escaped observation, being unfavourably placed, was also observed in the winter of 1845-46. On this occasion it was found to have separated into two companion comets of different and fluctuating brightnesses; and the two portions returned in company, but at a somewhat greater distance from each other, in 1852. Since then, nothing has been seen of this remarkable comet or comets, its particles having apparently too little mutual attrac-

tion to remain united. But it is known that the earth crosses its or their orbit about the end of November, and that bodies moving in that orbit would appear to come from a point in the constellation Andromeda. Meteors, therefore, being seen to radiate from that part of the sky first about the beginning of December, and afterwards at the end of November, it was concluded that they had the same sort of connection with Biela's comet that the meteors of November 13 and of August 9-10 had with the comets of which we have spoken. Hence, as the comet's period was six and a half years in length, it would, at intervals of two periods, or thirteen years, be near that part of its orbit traversed by the earth; and if the meteors were, as was reasonable to suppose, thickest there, a fine display of them would be seen at times separated by that duration. Accordingly, the grand shower of November 27, 1872, led to the expectation of another on the same date in 1885, which, as we have already remarked, did really take place. Another will be looked forward to in 1898; but if the meteors become as time passes on more uniformly distributed through the orbit, a shower will ultimately occur every year about that date. That it is a little earlier each time, whilst the display of November 13 is a little later, carries with it the consequence that the two showers will, about three hundred years hence, take place on the same night—that is, on that of the 20th of November.

It should be noticed before concluding that there is a difference in the direction of motion of the meteors forming the Leonids of the middle and the Andromedes of the end of November. The latter move in the same direction as the earth, and overtake it in consequence of their greater speed when in the part of their orbit nearest the sun; the former move in the reverse direction to the earth and collide with it, as a down-train would with an up-train on the same metals. As a consequence, the relative velocity of the Leonid meteors is much greater than that of the Andromedes. The Perseids, and the comet (1862, iii.) with which they appear to be connected, move, like the Leonids, in the opposite direction to that of the earth.

JAMES PINK'S LAST ILLUSION.

'It is, I suppose, as likely to come to anything as your previous—fascinations. You are certainly an odd person, James.'

'Oh no, Maria: this is quite different. I assure you I have learnt caution with experience; and if the world has taught me no other lesson, it has taught me that the eyes of a man are really the least trustworthy of the faculties with which he has been endowed.'

'What nonsense! As if *you* are ever likely to come to such a pitch of wisdom. Why, it was but last year, at Oban, you remember, that you fell in love with a woman who was a grandmother over and over again. She tricked you as easily as if you had been a babe: what with her paint and powder, false hair and false teeth. And I can't say you did yourself credit when you vowed to me that you were about to offer your hand and

what may remain of your heart to a person who proved to be two-thirds bereft of her wits. I don't know which county asylum she now resides in; but I daresay you know: and indeed, knowing you as I do, it really would not surprise me to be told that you were still in correspondence with her. There's one thing: the letters on either side would have about an equal share of sense in them.'

'You are too monstrous, Maria, to go on in that way,' protested James.

'And now,' continued his sister, 'you come with a fresh story about a siren sitting somewhere at the receipt of custom, with the loveliest complexion you ever beheld, and a demeanour the perfection of modesty, simplicity, and grace. A deal you know about complexions; though I warrant if it is given to men to know the qualities they most excel in, you ought to be a remarkable judge of the creature's simplicity.'

It was in this way. James Pink, who was a country lawyer under no obligation to work for a livelihood, passed three or four months of each year of his life in travelling about the world. During his travels, he periodically fell in love. He was accompanied by his sister Maria, a lady of forty-five to fifty, who sympathised with none of her brother's tastes. Least of all, was she by nature disposed to view charitably his love fancies. In fact, they caused her intense irritation. Why this should have been so, we cannot tell. But the truth was that no sooner did her brother begin, timidly enough, one or other of his stories about a new impression made upon his heart, than she was wont to toss her head, and otherwise manifest a little temper, blamable in a girl of twelve or thirteen, but very singular in a woman of mature age.

Upon this occasion they were at Naples. It was spring; and Easter. They had viewed with complacency the pet lambs which the Neapolitan children are wont to lead about the streets during the latter days of Lent, fattening them upon grass, cabbage leaves, or what not, in readiness for the butcher's knife on Easter eve. Neither the one nor the other of them had grown at all cosmopolitan in the course of their ten or twelve years' travel upon the Continent. Each regarded with horror those customs of a country which differed from the customs of their own small village in the north of England.

'They do not that sort of thing in Carsforth,' was with James or Maria Pink a common sort of condemnation, indicative of the extreme of dispraise.

If either of them was disposed to be at all liberal in his or her estimate of a world which differed from Carsforth, it was James Pink. But he was cautious to keep his opinions to himself.

Thus they had driven to and fro in Naples, with their eyes fixed upon the smoke of Vesuvius, when Vesuvius was in sight, and at other times with expressions of pain upon their honest faces, as they remarked the grime and filth which accompany the colour and vivacity of Neapolitan life. Maria Pink on these occasions journeyed with a small golden smelling-bottle in her hand; and however picturesque was this or that grouping of lads or lasses, ragged men and ragged women, upon the hot pavement of Santa Lucia, which

she was requested by the car-driver to look upon, she never so far forgot herself as to omit to use her salts while she inspected through her glasses the details of the curious scene.

'For any sake, don't let us stay here,' she would remark to her brother. 'There's typhus in the air upon this spot, if typhus exists anywhere!'

Imagine, then, this poor lady's disquietude when one morning her brother announced to her, with sufficient timidity and humility indeed, that he was enamoured afresh—this time of a woman resident in the city which appalled her so much from a social aspect.

The declaration was made while they were at breakfast in the *Hôtel Vesuve*. It did not come out point blank. James had trifled with his egg in a nervous manner, and his sister had asked him what ailed him. She was so positive that the drains of the hotel were out of order, and that her brother's trouble was due to blood-poisoning or fever in its embryonic stage, that he allayed her suspicions by telling her what he would much have preferred to keep to himself. She laughed at first, in a stiff way; but subsequently, when she perceived that the affair had gone too deep to be removed by the first charge of ridicule, she tried satire and informal abuse. And she was not a little astonished when she found that for once her brother was able to stand against all her weapons and all her cajoleries. There was that in the eyes of James Pink which made her darts glance from him and leave him untouched.

'I tell you what, James; I think we had better go to Capri at once. I find Naples quite oppressively hot. We will take the boat to-morrow morning.' She said this as though her suggestion were a decision which could not be contested.

Her brother, however, was equal to the situation. 'It would be inconvenient for me, dear Maria, just at present. Next week would be much better. Then I should be able to place myself entirely at your disposal.'

For reply, Miss Pink rose from the table, and walked out of the breakfast room. This sounds very trivial. But you should have seen the look which she cast upon her brother ere she left him; and you should have seen the lady's demeanour as she turned to go. There was something terribly imperious about one and the other alike. And the other people in the hotel, who were witnesses of the departure, at once assumed that James and his sister were an ill-mated man and wife, and that James deserved the utmost compassion that man or woman may tender to man.

Left alone, however, James Pink showed none of the depression of the man who is in chains to his wife, and who has just had a new bond of pain set upon him. He watched his sister depart as if she were somebody else's sister, and not his Maria. Then, with the same look of elation which had perplexed and disturbed Miss Pink, he challenged the room to convict him of aught akin to misery. Moreover, he called for the waiter, and gave certain orders about the evening's dinner in a tone of resolution that raised him tenfold in the waiter's esteem, and altered the opinion which the other guests in the hotel had casually formed about him.

Nor was this the limit of his metamorphosis. He asked for cigarettes—a pernicious invention

which hitherto he had been content to execrate. And, having allowed the waiter to light one for him, while he held it in his mouth, he left the room with—of course speaking in metaphor—banners flying.

Miss Pink was stupefied to see her brother pass into the hall of the hotel smoking a cigarette. She had left the door of the ladies' room open on purpose that she might estimate exactly the acuteness of the suffering she had caused James by the manifestation of her displeasure; that she might see him in his despondency as soon as possible, and perhaps, there and then, make proposals for reconciliation. And this was what met her eyes! But ere she could recover her equanimity, her brother had disappeared. A whiff of smoke was all that remained of him. It was very delicate aromatic smoke; but did that make the sin any the less flagrant?

In the meantime, James Pink was walking towards the city. He was hailed by countless carmen, who cracked their whips at him and cried 'Di!' (I say!) in the cool way that is characteristic of the Neapolitan jarvey. There was no doubting his nationality. His gait proclaimed it, no less than his broad red innocent face, and his white hat above. And who but an Englishman of James Pink's type, or a German of the burgher class, would have gone about the fashionable part of Naples with a large umbrella of green silk with a white lining? But of this and the kindred distractions of the streets, our friend took no heed. He walked with an air of absorption, looking straight before him, and holding his head rather high. Nor was it possible to misconstrue the light in his eyes. He was the personification of a contented man, going whither he felt assurance of raising his contentment to ecstasy.

It was marvellous to see with what skill this man, ordinarily the perfection of clumsiness, found a safe path between the noses of the horses of the different cars which, at the crossing by the palace and the theatre San Carlo, hotly competed for his patronage. And it was equally wonderful that he could go at the pace he did, with so hot a sun in the heavens. But in truth James Pink had that within him which made him indifferent to externals. There was a fair portrait in his mind, which attracted all his energies, mental and physical, as a lodestone gathers to itself envolving shreds of steel. And the god Cupid, who generally knows what he is about, though some hold him to be blind, protected him through all the dangers which encompassed him.

Where the road widened into a spacious public square, the lawyer abruptly turned west and left it. The sea was again before him, blue and radiant. Beyond was the white fringe of the myriad of houses which bind the Bay of Naples like a snowy marge of sand. And over the houses swelled Vesuvius, clear and entrancing on this bright day; methodically puffing its smoke toward the purple shadow of the island of Capri, a light sketch on the horizon. Closer at hand was to be seen the conventional furniture of a busy port; a maze of masts, with here and there a red or a black funnel in their midst; and a multitude of men and boys lounging against walls and railings, and the stout columns of granite sunk in the piers as convenient tether for the harbour

craft. There was uproar enough, in all conscience. All ports are noisy; but the tumult of the port of Naples may be called transcendent.

A hundred yards or so from the gate of the port there was a little white marble seat under a tree. The seat commanded a view of a low building, of a temporary kind, erected between it and the bay. In the doorway of this building, an orchestral organ was to be seen—and from the coloured posters outside it was evident that here was a show of a kind to be found alike in the cities of Europe and Timbuctoo. It was in fact a circus. From the organ loud harmonies proceeded forth upon the charmed air, and voluble were the rapturous comments of the Neapolitans who enjoyed this gratuitous diversion. The organ was not automatic. A large handle was turned with untiring energy by a woman fit to extort admiration from a traveller to whom no type of beauty is unknown. Such symmetry, lissomeness, and grace of movement! Long black hair! large unblinking eyes, worthy of the land they looked upon! The most bewitching complexion in the world! Teeth, mouth, nose, brow, and chin all conceived by nature as if she had worked by the light of the Book of Beauty!

James Pink sat on the marble seat and contemplated this lovely creature. Middle-aged man that he was, his heart beat as if it were disordered. You would have said he had a touch of palsy, if you could have seen the twitching of his mouth and fingers. And he winked again and again, as if the sun were in his eyes instead of held at a distance by the tree above him. After a time, our hero rose reluctantly, sighed, wiped his face with his silk pocket-handkerchief, and departed. He knew better than to shatter or risk the shatterment of his ideal by an interview, until he was well prepared for the consequences, might they be ever so disastrous. But he was not, therefore, the less liberal in his praise. He lauded her loveliness and her figure until he was again at the portal of the *Hôtel Vesuve*.

It was really absurd to mark Miss Pink's conduct towards her brother during the remainder of that day. She was supercilious, deferential, tender, and commanding, each in succession. But all her moods were powerless to affect her brother. He was as little moved by them as if he had been a rock. His voice was strong and decided when he replied to her questions. And, moreover, Miss Pink was exasperated to find that he was sufficiently changed to be able to treat her with a certain amount of condescension. In effect, her brother behaved towards her as a political minister might behave to a small suitor who pestered him with demands in the midst of his business, but who had a certain claim upon him for civil treatment which he might not repudiate.

'I can bear this no longer, James,' said Maria in the evening, after dinner. She felt some terror lest her brother should go off again with a cigarette in his mouth. Had he repeated this iniquity, she was resolved to cause a scene, in public or private, it did not matter which. But no. With an air of philosophic abstraction that proclaimed his peace of mind, he had followed contentedly at her heels when she had left the table to retire to their private sitting-room. She

had thus the less cause for complaint. Yet she was too aggrieved to perceive this.

'What cannot you bear, Maria? Is not the service of the hotel good enough for you?'

'The service of the fiddlestick! You know that I am concerned about a very different matter. It is your own welfare, James, that is at stake: and, heaven knows, I have not watched over you from the time you were a helpless little babe—I mean, of course, when we were babes together—I say I have not been for twenty years in the position of guardian towards you, without acquiring a strict and conscientious estimate of my responsibility.'

'Yes, yes,' observed James Pink, as if he were, from a sense of duty, encouraging a diffident client to unbosom himself of his troubles.

'Be silent, James—with your Yes, Yeses!' exclaimed Miss Pink. 'I will not be interrupted! Who is she, I say? Tell me at once where I may find the creature, and put an end to the tragedy; for it is tragic, indeed, in its effect upon your heart, James, which I had come to regard as soft, tender, and humane.'

'Maria,' said James Pink benignly, when his sister paused, 'I do not admit that there is reason in your plea; but let that pass. The attachment is of the purest—the most Platonic kind. I have never stood within twenty paces of—of this divine being'—

'And yet you are fool enough to suppose she is one of Nature's beauties,' observed Miss Pink.

'It is my turn to cry "Be silent!" Maria,' replied James Pink. 'It is trifling with the highest, the noblest of human sentiments, thus to cast cold water upon the blossoms of hope. You shall see her for yourself, sister. That will assuage your enmity, if anything will.'

'I can quite believe it,' said Miss Pink. 'Nothing could please me more. The sooner the affair is ended, the sooner we shall return to our earlier and more comfortable condition as an affectionate brother and an affectionate sister, each anxious only to promote the other's happiness.'

'Hum!' murmured the lawyer, stroking his chin, and with, for the moment, a recurrence of the light in his eyes.

'Go to bed, James,' said Miss Pink abruptly; 'we have had enough excitement for one day.'

Without another word and with but a single kiss of salutation, James Pink took up a candle and went off to bed. He dreamed for eight hours of his fair one, and awoke the next morning still with exultation in his heart.

Miss Pink on her part sat and read for an hour and a half after she had wished her brother 'Good-night;' and retired confident that she had the reins of victory once again in her sinewy firm hands.

'Well!' she said, when they sat opposite to each other at breakfast again. 'I see, James, that you are still a little foolish. Let us get the illusion over without loss of time.'

'The illusion, indeed!' said James Pink indignantly. 'I am going there immediately after breakfast. If you choose you may accompany me.'

'I ask for nothing better,' remarked Miss Pink with emphasis. She straightway left the room, and, ere James had rid himself of the fears which came upon him with his sister's words of acquiescence in his impetuous proposal, she had returned,

bonneted and gloved, and carrying in her hand a red parasol with a long stout stick. Humbly, for anxiety oppressed him and a sense of approaching evil, James Pink left the hotel with his sister. They walked in silence. Ere long, the music of the distant orchestra was audible. James held his head up. 'Be patient, Maria,' he pleaded. 'We are nearly there.'

'I am glad to hear it,' was her reply. 'The sun is insufferable; and it is due to your absurdity that we are risking our lives beneath it.'

'And so this is your *innamorata*!' remarked Miss Pink when, at James's invitation, she had seated herself on the marble bench.

'Yes, I confess it; and I am proud of the attachment. It ennobles me,' said James.

Miss Pink put up her glasses, the better to view the action and countenance of the beautiful Italian; then she dropped them, and looked at her brother in a manner he will never forget. 'You must allow me to break my promise,' she said. She rose, approached the show, advanced into the vestibule, where stood the orchestra, the woman who received the money, the *siren* of the music herself. Disregarding the outstretched hand of the one woman who demanded the entrance fee, Miss Pink stepped up to the other woman, examined her closely, touched her, and turned away. 'You are certainly the most consummate fool on the face of the earth, James,' she said frigidly, when she rejoined her brother, who had hurried after her. 'You must take to spectacles: the creature is wax!'

THANKSGIVING DAY IN THE STATES.

'In acknowledgment of all that God has done for us as a nation, and to the end that, on an appointed day, the united prayers and praise of a grateful country may reach the Throne of Grace, I, — —, President of the United States, do hereby designate and set apart Thursday, the — day of November inst., as a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer, to be kept and observed throughout the land.' So runs in part and form the admonition which annually issues from the President to the people of the United States, and is echoed subsequently and more locally by the Governors of the various States to those under their immediate charge. The last Thursday in November is thus observed as a general holiday, a day of national Thanksgiving for the benefits and progress of the past year.

It is a beautiful institution; and round its observance cluster some of the sweetest memories of the past; while through it shines the deep religious instinct which lies beneath the superficial gloss of American social and commercial life. The day has been universally kept through many years, even in a more heartfelt manner and with more genuineness than Christmas; indeed, to certain sections of the nation, notably New England, it has always been the one great family festival of the year.

On the evening preceding the appointed day may be seen in most large cities, and also, though to a less extent, in most country villages, that

pleasant anticipatory activity and excitement that is witnessed in England only at Christmas-time. The merchant, silent and preoccupied in his office during the day, glances frequently with impatient inquiry at the slow-moving hands of the clock, as if, were it not for the evil example to his subordinates, he would gladly anticipate his customary hour for departure, and hurry home to a dwelling made bright by the charms of family life. The clerk behind the shop counter, though he knows that the general holiday will be a cause to detain him past his usual time, moves about his business, and supplies the wants of his unusual crowd of customers with an added cheeriness born of the heartfelt associations of the day. The office-boy as he sweeps out his domain whistles with especial shrillness and gaiety; and if his work is not so thoroughly done as usual, the sober, seedy book-keeper, as he puts on his overcoat, has his mind too full of the eager, happy little faces which will surround his humble board on the morrow to check the lad's exuberance or to chide his remissness.

The streets are filled with a noisy, pushing, bustling crowd; and many are the forms passing beneath the flaming gas jets laden with parcels whose shapes plainly betray their contents. The brilliantly lighted shops are crammed with customers inspecting, haggling, and pricing; but usually going out with a satisfaction and good-humour that are eminently shared by the shop-keeper.

And round the windows of the toyshops, gay with novelties, may often be seen a group which excites feelings of mingled pleasure and sadness: the children of the streets are there with their small arms burdened with the last editions of the evening papers, while they at intervals reluctantly break away to press upon the hurrying passengers, to return again in a moment with increased eagerness and more noisy criticism. Their faces betray nothing but the intensest enjoyment of the mere sight of pleasure they may not possess. How long will they keep their innocent unselfishness? or how soon will they learn to pass such sights with a bitter comparison or a jealous sneer? For there are despairing poor even in free America; and one may sometimes catch in the silence of the garret the faint sobbing murmur of the *Song of the Shirt* even in this land of liberty, crooned by those who are working from darkness to darkness in 'poverty, hunger, and dirt.'

But there are other and even more interesting figures in the scurrying tide of humanity. One may get a glimpse here and there of forms that wear the marks of a singular and sometimes a hard life, gazing about them with a look and a smile that are at once familiar and strange. Many are the changes which they probably note in their native city; and great is the difference in their eyes, accustomed to the sights and sounds of distant lands, between this noisy, whirling pandemonium and the quiet old town that has occupied one of the tenderest spots in their memory, as they tended the water-troughs in the Western mines, or rolled themselves in their blankets around the blazing pile in the clearing, with the strangeness of the forest all about them. For this is the time when the wanderers return, when those who have branched off into the world to make their own

way and to carry their own burdens come back to the old home, 'there to grow young and loving again among the endearing mementoes of childhood.' And so they pass on, each bent on his own destination, and filled with his own story, out of the windy street, with its flickering gaslight, into the lighted comfort of the home, or the barren destitution of the garret.

The picture of the celebration of Thanksgiving Day in an old New England household is one which it would be difficult to eclipse in its thorough simplicity, its genuine hospitality, and its sweet and loving communion between members of a family who have perhaps been separated during the past year. It fills the place, left vacant in the calendar, by the non-observance or the decreasing value in American eyes of the old English Christmas; and though it cannot have to English hearts the associations of the latter, unaccompanied as it is by the time-honoured holly and mistletoe and the ancient Yule-log, yet it has a peculiar individual interest of its own, which carries one irresistibly back to the times of the early colonists with their quaint garb and prim Puritan ways.

A short description of such a Thanksgiving so kept might not be unwelcome, and would serve to a certain degree as a type of what, unhappily, like our own Christmas, is fast retreating into the past, and what must eventually, under the harsh utilitarianism of modern times, eventually become entirely obsolete. The family was one which dates back to long before the Revolution, and many are the stories and legends which have been handed down of their early ancestors among the direct descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers; and great is the family pride which clusters about the consciousness of their ancient privileges. The old gentleman, one of the true type of native Americans, with something of the earnest, courageous, nonconformist spirit of the Puritans still lingering in his ageing frame, was full of reminiscences; and as he told the story of the Thanksgivings of his boyhood, and described with an eloquence born of emotion the country round Boston as he knew it then, one could appreciate that priceless possession of old age, a clear and undisturbed memory. The picture which he drew of the old homestead—now built over by rows of cheap lodging-houses, in one of the most thriving suburban districts of Boston—with the barns and the cattle; the brown orchard encircling the plain severity of the white house; the long approach through the fields; the old-fashioned garden, glowing with its last tribute to the Indian summer; the large well-swept kitchen, with its oaken settles and brick fireplace, and the long lines of brightly polished houseware—gave one a new insight into a long past age, connected only with the present through the medium of a few such venerable lives, fast tottering on to their last oblivion and well-earned rest.

The old lady, too, is one of the same worthy school; a kind, motherly, old dame, who, in her simple open-heartedness and genial activity, seems to cast a sort of halo of homely comfort around her, and carry a brisk air of cheeriness into all her relations with others. She was evidently disturbed in mind as to the fate of the Thanksgiving feast, and many were the bustling journeys she made to the kitchen to superintend

the actions of the hired girl, who, as she expressed it, 'could only cook these modern pastry fol-de-rols.'

And the event of the day, the Thanksgiving dinner, what a gorgeous spread was that! The old family table fairly creaked and groaned beneath the load of substantial dishes, as if its aged strength were taxed to the utmost by this unexpected revival of the past. The old family china and table-linen, too, reverently taken out of the oak-chest and divested of their wrappings and sprigs of lavender, were renovated for the occasion, and seemed to shine with enhanced gloss and brilliancy in appreciation of long-forgotten usages. The turkey, with its indispensable attribute, cranberry sauce, was basted to a delicious brown, and hissed and sizzled in its gravy as it was placed on the table. Its arrival was the signal for the solemn opening by the head of the house of the earthenware cider jug; and keen was the enjoyment depicted on the old gentleman's face as he sent the glasses, filled with the cool amber liquid, circling round the table. The chicken-pie, large and succulent, the various arrangements of squash, the three indispensable sorts of pie—'open-topped, cross-barred, and kivered'—all were there in their largest and most delicious forms; and the hospitable hostess seemed quite hurt, and apprehensive that all was not right, if exhausted nature refused to have more than twice of each dish. There she sat at the head of the table beaming warmth and comfort into every heart; only too happy if some one would pause in the general engrossment to remark on the excellence of some particular dish. Evidently the dinner was the event of the day with her; and after it was over, like Othello, her occupation was gone, and she rested, satisfied that her best had been well appreciated, and conscious of the placing of one more landmark on the highway of a long life.

Then in the evening, 'twixt the gloaming and the mirk,' we gathered round the great open fireplace, on which blazed and crackled a huge wood-fire—the collateral descendant of the Yule-log; and listened to more reminiscences from the old gentleman; while presently, after much urging and many protestations and nervous flutterings, the eldest daughter, as kind-hearted a soul as ever lived, not soured in mind by the non-fulfilment of all her youthful dreams, was induced to show somewhat of her ancient skill on the pianoforte. She assured us, with considerable embarrassment, that 'she really had not practised for several years, and would we please excuse all mistakes.' Being reassured, she turned to the instrument; and the discordant notes struck from its rickety interior seemed to fill the darkened room with a subdued and appropriate melody; and over the face of the old man there passed with the flickering firelight the chastened remembrance of years still more distant than those he had told us about, brought back by the jangling chords of the *Old Oaken Bucket*.

And so the evening wore away, with jests and stories among the elders, and music and innocent mirth among the younger ones, varied by the eating of 'phillipenas' and the 'pulling' of candy; until Thanksgiving Day was again with the past, and the party retired to pass through the intermediate land of slumber into another year;

which also will assuredly end in a Thanksgiving Day, but with what changes in the fireside circle, with what places vacant, or what others added, who can tell?

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE meeting of the British Association marks for us every year the progress of all the different branches of science, and enables those who have neither time nor inclination to study the 'proceedings' issued by our learned Societies, to form a general idea of what is going on in the professorial world. There were many excellent addresses in the various sections, and papers were read on a variety of subjects; and if their perusal should seem to suggest dullness, it is only because no very important discovery or invention has been brought forward during the past twelve months. Yet certain of the sectional addresses possessed both interest and novelty, and there is little doubt that this meeting at Newcastle has been in every way a success. The discussion on heredity evoked perhaps as much interest as any, and the appearance of Dr Nansen, of Greenland fame, naturally aroused a considerable amount of enthusiasm. The next meeting of the Association will take place in another great centre of human labour—namely, Leeds, and the year after, the Association will find its home at Cardiff.

If we are to believe the sanguine statements of a certain military writer in one of the French journals, the explosive called Melinite must far surpass all previous compounds which have been invented by man for the destruction of his fellows. Melinite, he tells us, is composed of melted picric acid; but its exact composition is a secret, which the Italian and German spies have in vain endeavoured to find out. The explosive has, since its invention some years back, been so perfected that it is absolutely safe. Only one accident from its use has occurred within the past three years, while during the same period other explosives have been responsible for a hundred terrible catastrophes. Melinite can be used for charging shells for field-artillery as well as for forts and siege-guns; and its behaviour upon impact is so terrible that the writer is constrained to ask: What will become of a fortification in face of this redoubtable agent? Some answer the question with a confession that such structures are doomed; others recommend the use of armoured circular forts, from the curved surface of which the deadly messengers will glance and do little harm.

Overhead wires and their dangers are a subject which regularly crops up in this country whenever a snowstorm of exceptional severity has laid low our telegraph lines. But the danger becomes of a far more serious character when such wires are charged with the powerful currents necessary for electric lighting. During a gale in an American town lately, several such wires were blown down, with the result that a number of men and horses were knocked over by electric shocks. Many of these unfortunates were insensible for a long time, and in some cases they have remained in a precarious state.

Her Majesty's ship *Sultan* is now lying in dock at Malta, and is undergoing a patching process,

so that she may be safely towed to England for more permanent repairs. It will be remembered that this vessel struck on a sunken rock in Comino Channel many months ago, and received such injuries that she subsequently sank in deep water. Her loss formed the subject of a long inquiry, and she was regarded as irrecoverable. But a firm of Italian engineers were more sanguine regarding the wrecked vessel than were their English confrères, and they made our government an offer to raise the vessel for a sum of fifty thousand pounds, which would represent about one-fifth of her original cost. By the exercise of wondrous patience and skill, they have been able to fulfil their contract, and have made, it is said, a profit of forty thousand pounds on the transaction. No one will feel inclined to grudge them this reward, which has been thoroughly well earned. But it would seem that a fresh inquiry is necessary with a view to find out why the work of recovery was left to foreigners.

In view of the many conflagrations which have occurred from lightning-struck oil-tanks in the petroleum regions of America, a new system of lightning-rods has been devised by Mr Charles F. Hill. This consists of several upright rods surrounding the tank to be protected, and supporting over the tank itself a roof of iron network. The poles themselves are crowned with the usual points; but a novel feature about them is that they are made of galvanised gas-pipe, and hollow from top to bottom. One object for this form of construction is, that water, from rain or dew, gathered in cups near their summits may be drained off to the earth below, so that a wet-earth contact is always secured. All who have studied the conditions under which a building can be best protected from lightning will at once recognise the importance of this provision.

A curious invention has lately been perfected by Professor Elihu Thompson. It consists of an electrical welding apparatus which can be moved along a railway or tram-line so as to weld the junctions of the rails wherever it may be desirable. To provide for expansion and contraction, a break would be left at every hundred feet. It is difficult to see the object of this joining-up of the rails, especially when we remember that when a rail comes fresh from the rolling-mill it is three times as long as is considered desirable, and is then and there cut into lengths. If there were any good end to be served by using the rail in its original length, surely it would not be cut into shorter pieces. To join these together again when the rail is placed in position seems to represent an unnecessary waste of labour.

A German consular Report has lately called attention to the value of banana fibre, which hitherto seems to have remained almost entirely unnoticed as a textile material. This fibre extends the entire length of the plant, and is not interrupted by the presence of lateral branches; it can be separated into threads as fine as silk, or into strings and ropes of great toughness. Indeed, in Central America this fibre, after being roughly dried, but without any further preparation, is used for shoe-strings and for ropes of all kinds. It is said that if the banana plantations of the entire tropical world were utilised as they ought to be, the markets would be flooded with a textile material that would quickly influence the

value and cultivation of such rivals as hemp, flax, cotton, and jute. The question naturally suggests itself: If all these anticipations of the value of banana fibre be true, why were not its many excellences discovered before? Perhaps, as with certain other plants, there is some difficulty in adapting machinery to prepare it for the market.

Some astonishment was a short time ago aroused by the report that a substance had been discovered which was three hundred times sweeter than sugar. This substance, *saccharine*, has since become a marketable commodity; and those who are curious enough to try its sweetening properties can obtain tabloids of it at most chemists' shops. Our French neighbours were quick to recognise it as a rival to beet sugar, and it speedily obtained a bad name which it does not deserve from their initiative. Our medical authorities regard it as a valuable remedy in certain diseases; and it seems to be used in somewhat large quantities in the preparation of fruits and liqueurs—at least we gather that that must be the case from the statement which is published, that in Germany alone so much saccharine has been made as to render five thousand tons of beet sugar superfluous. The sugar manufacturers are naturally anxious that this new coal-tar product should be regarded as a drug, and that its sale should be effected through chemists only. In other countries, the manufacture of saccharine is arousing the attention of the authorities, who possibly see in it a favourable subject for taxation.

An American inventor has proposed a plan for checking evaporation, in the case of fire-pails, which should always in case of emergency be kept full of water. His plan consists in covering the surface of the water with an air-tight sheet of tinfoil, which could readily be broken through by the hand when required. The suggestion is a good one in cases where pails are in use.

We are glad to hear that the Dairy School which was founded some time back at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, and which represents one of the most important training-schools of the kind in the kingdom, is in a flourishing condition and is doing excellent work. It has been aided by a government grant, but still more by the generosity of Lady Ossington, who has placed the Holmes Farm at the disposal of its promoters. Here all the duties of a dairymaid are taught in a systematic way, so that the scheme may be looked upon as a successful attempt to develop female technical knowledge. The instruction in cheese-making at this school has had the direct effect of so improving the quality of cheese made in the district that the price of that commodity has risen from five to fifteen shillings per hundredweight. But it is clear that this improvement will not be of a merely local character, for the pupils, who average thirty in number, are drawn from all parts, and from such distant countries as Sweden, Africa, and Australia. The fees are moderate, and the School is supported by influential names.

The electric light is gradually pushing its way to the front, and we are inclined to believe in its advance, because its progress is so slow that it is the more likely to be sure. Ten years ago it was different, for then the introduction

of a form of electric lamp which has since turned out to be full of objections, caused the gas shares to run down in a few days to about half their previous value. It is improbable that this can ever occur again, for the public are now far better educated in matters electrical. We have always been of opinion that the gas companies have been wrongly advised in posing as rivals to the new light. It would have been a far wiser policy to become agents for it, for they already possess extensive powers, and have at hand all the machinery for dealing direct with the public. This union of gas and electrical interests has already been found to work well in America, and could not fail to succeed in this country. We are interested to see that the *Gas and Water Review* is persistently advocating this policy on the part of gas companies, and has adopted the sub-title, *Journal of Electric Lighting*, as a kind of guarantee of good faith in the matter.

An account has been published of a newly invented mask for the use of firemen, which contains a filter of porous material through which the wearer can breathe the air that is supplied to him through a pipe which opens near the floor. A great many protective devices of this kind have been devised from time to time; but it is as well to remember that in cases of emergency there is nothing very much better than a wet blanket. This acts both as a defence against the flames and a filter for the smoke.

An extraordinary case of parental care is recorded by a correspondent of the *American Field*. He tells of having discovered in the corner of a park a quail's nest, from which the old bird would always fly away upon his approach, this bird being invariably the male. There were in the nest twelve eggs, and in due time they were hatched. The female bird was never seen either by the narrator of the story or by any of his men, who were on the spot every day; so that the presumption is that the female was killed soon after the eggs were laid, and that her mate thenceforward took charge of the nest and hatched out the young ones.

A curious method of cutting stone blocks has been perfected by M. Gay of Marseilles. It consists in the employment of an endless wire-cord, which is put in motion by a steam-engine, and which is fed with water and sharp sand. The cord is made up of three steel wires twisted to a certain pitch, and is not quite a quarter of an inch in diameter. It is evident that it can be carried to the stone blocks, and that several can be cut at the same time, provided only that the metal has time to cool between its work on two different stones. As the work goes on, there is a twist upon the cord which causes it to be worn down equally on every side until it gives way from sheer wear and tear. But this does not occur in a cord one hundred and fifty yards long until nearly five hundred square feet of surface have been cut through. The invention is not actually new, for it was awarded a prize at the Brussels Exhibition last year; but it has been much improved in various details.

In the *Journal of the Scottish Meteorological Society* there appears a most interesting paper by Mr Angus Rankin, entitled 'St Elmo's Fire on Ben Nevis,' from which it appears that this

phenomenon is occasionally seen on the mountain. In fact, fifteen appearances had been recorded up to the summer of last year. All these were nocturnal visitations; but probably only because the light given by the so-called fire is far too feeble to be observed during the hours of daylight. The display takes the form of jets of light on the summit of all objects which stand at any height above the general level of the roof of the observatory; and in exceptionally fine displays the tops of the objects are ablaze with the phenomenon, which then glows and hisses in tongues of blue and white, sometimes more than six inches in length. The observer, too, is affected if he stands on the roof of the building, for his hair, hat, and pencil are then all aglow; and if he raises his stick in the air, it is crowned with a long flame. The weather which precedes and follows these displays has marked characteristics, which are not peculiar to Ben Nevis, but affect the whole of Western Europe. We learn that the phenomenon has actually been photographed, St Elmo's fire appearing in the picture as three small tufts of white at the top of one of the chimneys connected with the observatory buildings.

The Employers' Time Recorder is an instrument which has been recently invented, and one which will be found valuable in all places of business where a large number of hands are engaged. It consists of a lever clock, above the dial of which are half-circles engraved with two rows of numerals, upon which are movable pointers. The object of the contrivance is to register every workman's number, the hour at which he arrives and that at which he leaves, in plain printed characters on a slip of paper, which can subsequently be transferred to the wages-book. The co-operation of the men themselves is necessary in this work, for they have to set the pointers at the hour of arrival or departure, and press a lever which makes the printed record; but in the majority of cases they will be only too glad to adopt a system so certain and so free from all cause for dispute. The working of the instrument occupies so little time that two hundred hands can be passed in ten minutes. The clock requires to be wound up once a week, and an inked roller attached to the machine requires occasional attention. The apparatus is constructed by Messrs Lincolne & Co. of Glasgow.

The old adage, which deals with the terrible uncertainty that must prevail 'when doctors disagree,' takes it for granted that all must go well when those learned gentlemen are of but one opinion. But sometimes even doctors are wrong when they are quite unanimous in their vote; witness a statement recently published by the *Belgian News* regarding the dangers of railway travelling. According to this authority, a document has been found in the archives of one of the Belgian railways which is a protest signed by nearly two thousand doctors pointing out the evils of what was at the time a new mode of locomotion. This wonderful document states that 'locomotion by means of any kind of steam-engine should be prohibited,' on the strange ground that rapid change of place 'cannot fail to produce among travellers the mental malady called *delirium furiosum*. But even if travellers consent to run such a risk, the State

ought to protect the spectators from catching the same disorder,' the plan recommended for accomplishing this end being the erection of a paling ten feet high on each side of the railway.

Various processes of sewage purification are in operation or are being proposed; but in every one of them the treatment takes place at the outfall station, thus allowing, unchecked, the formation of what are known as sewer gases on the route along which the sewage flows. Now, however, a method is proposed by Mr E. H. Reeves by which the sewage is, as it were, intercepted as it passes from the house-drains and at once dealt with. Mr Reeves deodorises the sewage as it is run into the sewers from the houses by placing in the sewer man-holes in the streets a small earthenware apparatus, containing in combination strong sulphuric acid and a solution of manganate of soda, which are automatically mixed, and give off sulphurous acid gas and nascent oxygen. Sulphurous acid gas completely destroys putrefactive and contagious organisms; while oxygen, as is well known, is a perfect deodoriser. The solution formed by the combination of the two chemicals overflows into the sewer from the chamber in which they are admixed, and deodorises the sewage on its way to the precipitating tanks. At the same time, whatever gases evolved from the sewage may escape to the outer atmosphere must pass through the chamber in which the chemical gases are generated, and are thus rendered innocuous. Mr Reeves' apparatus is in operation on a small scale at Putney, London; but his method has been extensively and successfully applied for some time at Frome, Somerset.

THE ORDEAL BY CHEWING RICE.

PROBABLY many people have heard of the Indian method of discovering a thief by the ordeal of chewing dried rice. We once saw it tried, and tried with success. It happened more than forty years ago; but as the custom of employing this ordeal has almost disappeared with the advance of civilisation and education in British India, we may be allowed to tell what we remember of it.

Four of us were living together in Calcutta, 'chumming,' as it is called out there. We were young men under twenty-five years of age, recently arrived from England, with fair earnings or salaries, and good prospects in our several professions. We lived in a fine three-storied house, in a large compound or garden, in the fashionable quarter of Calcutta. Amongst us we had a large retinue of servants—altogether about ten men apiece; so that the whole domestic establishment numbered some fifty persons.

One day there was an alarm that my friend George Christian's gold watch was missing. Search for it was made in vain; and we reluctantly arrived at the conclusion that it had been stolen. We held a domestic court of inquiry with the aid of the *moonshees* or native tutors who used to come to teach us the languages; but it was difficult to fix even a suspicion on any one. From the arrangement of our rooms in the house it seemed probable that one of Christian's own servants must have been the thief. But he indignantly repudiated this idea. He said that his servants were the best in the house, and would

never have robbed him, as he was so kind and liberal to them. We may observe that all of us were very confident of the integrity of our own private servants, as is the custom with most young men in India, until they have gained experience. We were almost jealous of one another as to which kept the best servants. We arrayed them in smart liveries, with silver badges in their turbans, and coloured waist-belts. My friend Christian had one remarkably good-looking *khidmudgar*, or table-servant, named Abdul, whom he considered the show-servant of our establishment, and he valued him accordingly.

As our domestic court of inquiry failed to detect the thief or to recover the property, one of our moonshees suggested that we should apply to the Calcutta police for the services of the native official who was then retained in the employ of government for conducting the process of detecting thieves by the ordeal of rice-chewing. It must be remembered that the Calcutta police itself was at the lowest stage of efficiency. It was feebly officered and badly manned. For the detection of thieves, especially in cases like ours, where domestics were suspected, they trusted to the services of a professor of magic.

The Pundit—as we shall call the professor—with two or three policemen escorting him, arrived at our house about eleven o'clock one morning. All our servants had been warned of the impending ordeal, and the lodge-keeper had been ordered to allow no one to go outside the gates. The Pundit was a tall and stout man, arrayed in muslin, and evidently possessed with a great idea of his own importance. According to his request, the servants were all seated in two rows on the ground in one of the long verandas of our house, and we took up our position so as to be able to superintend the operation. The Pundit's attendants then produced some pieces of green plantain-leaf, and a small portion was placed in each man's hands, to serve as a plate, on to which he was to eject the dried rice after he had successfully chewed it. The Pundit then went round with a bowl full of pounded rice, like flour, and with a wooden spoon poured a quantity of this rice-flour into the open mouth of each servant. The order was given that each man was, within five minutes by the watch, to chew the rice-flour and eject it, in a state of pulp, on to the plantain-leaf before him. Most of the men set to work with a will, though a few were rather frightened at first; but long before the five minutes had elapsed almost every man had got through the process, and held what may be called 'the evidence of his innocence' in his hands. But why are so many eyes turned towards one man, who sits back as if anxious to avoid observation? We also look, and there is Christian's favourite *khidmudgar*, Abdul, with his face almost convulsed, and trying in vain to get the rice-flour out of his mouth. His lips are dry, and his glands refuse to produce the saliva which is needed to moisten the rice-flour. At last the Pundit's eyes glare at him, and pointing at him with his long bony finger, he says solemnly: 'There is the thief.' The victim quails and grovels on the floor before him; his handsome face becomes livid with terror; and at last he faintly appeals to his master for forgiveness, and promises that he will restore the

watch. All the other servants are now talking as fast as they can, delighted at their own deliverance, and full of reverence and dread for the Pundit. The convicted thief slowly rises, and requesting his master to follow him, goes to the well in the garden, and produces the gold watch from under a loose brick.

The Pundit and his men were duly presented with a handsome reward, and the members of our household returned to their ordinary duties. Not quite so perhaps; for although the thief was not given up to the police, to be tried and punished by a magistrate, he was brought before the domestic tribunal, at which his master was president, and sentenced to receive twenty strokes from a rattan. The twenty strokes were presently administered by two of our most stalwart *syces*. After this, the culprit was readmitted into his master's favour, and became a much better servant than he had been before. Nor did his fellow-servants in the least object. They recognised the fact that he had expiated his guilt by the punishment that he had suffered, and they were not so uncharitable as to deny him a chance of regaining a good character.

A U T U M N.

Brown and bare are the Autumn fields;

Reaped and stacked is the yellow grain;

Hardly a partridge the stubble yields,

So closely shorn is the bristly plain.

Summer is dying 'mid shower and cloud,

Crimson and gold is his royal shroud.

Winter is coming; the leafy woods

Are withering fast in their golden pride;

For the wind is fierce, and the rain in floods

Is sweeping o'er valley and mountain side.

Dead leaves are falling through sun and shade,

A crimson carpet all down the glade.

Mute are the Finches, the Lark, and the Linnet;

Only the Robin sings loud and clear,

A song for the beauty and joy of Summer,

A sweet good-bye to the waning year.

Mead and valley and mountain steep

In misty silence are falling asleep.

But out of their sleep shall they one day waken,

And sparkle anew with pearl and gold,

When the rosy gates of Morn reopen,

And crown with splendour the dusky wold.

Though the year die out amid cloud and rain,

Yet golden Summer shall come again.

B. G. JOHNS.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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ROME IN TRANSFORMATION.

No city is going through so rapid and radical a transformation as Rome. The map of the town published only in 1886, at the beginning of 1889 is scarcely serviceable. A great question had to be solved: how to accommodate the Rome whose history goes back into a remote antiquity, a city crowded with relics of the past from that remote period when it was first founded, with the requirements of a modern capital to a new kingdom.

The Rome of the popes went on in a happy-go-lucky fashion, houses, churches, palaces, ruins jumbled together, without a proper thoroughfare from one end of the town to another; and so long as Rome was but the capital of the Papal States and a curiosity-shop, that was well enough; but such a condition of affairs could not exist when it became the centre of political and social and mercantile life to an entire kingdom. Accordingly, Rome is going through, as stated, a rapid and radical change, so rapid that one-half of the space within the old walls, mapped in 1886 as garden and vineyard, is now covered with houses; so radical, that large portions of the town are being absolutely transformed. For instance, the banks of the Tiber were crowded with mean and miserable houses, and the river was only reached at the bridges. One of the main bridges, that of Quattro Capite, connecting the city with Trastevere by the Tiberine island, had as an artery of traffic a wretched lane, in places fifteen and a half feet wide, in one place the roadway narrowing even to eleven and a half feet.

The Tiber has been known to rise from thirty to thirty-five feet, as was the case in the inundation of 1871. Its average width is sixty-five yards, and its depth twenty feet. The houses on both sides of the river have been pulled down; magnificent embankments of masonry are being constructed, enclosing and slightly widening the stream—a work worthy of the ancient Romans; and on the top a broad esplanade is being formed, so that eventually it will be possible to walk along

the river on both sides of the Tiber, as on the Thames Embankment. The old bridge of Sixtus IV., constructed in 1474, has been removed, and a new bridge erected in its place, sixty-three feet wide. The view from this bridge and that of Quattro Capi have long been famous. It is, however, doubtful how long it will be remarkable, for enormous houses seven stories high are being erected along the new embankment, which will shut out the view not only of St Peter's, but also of the Janiculum and of Monte Mario. What will be a gain in one way will be a loss in another. If the municipality and the building Companies could be brought to consider how ruinous to the effect it will be to shut out these objects from view, and to moderate the height of the new rows of houses, the alteration would be a real advantage.

Archæologists are animadverting angrily on the destruction of certain ruins that have been brought to light by the alterations; but it may well be asked, whether it was possible under the circumstances to save them. Rome is not a healthy city. The narrow lanes and foul habitations were nesting-places for fever-germs, and what was essential, if the city was to become a capital and largely to increase, was, that great passages should be driven through these dens of poison, to let the fresh air in. The Via Nazionale is such a ventilator. It is not completed, but it is being carried daily, as the work of demolition proceeds, deeper into these slums, and will finally reach the river.

The Corso is at best narrow, and in time will no doubt be widened, but it ends at the great mass of brick buildings, the Venetian Palace. At the present time, houses are being demolished beside the Capitol, where now runs the Via Marforio, so that the Corso may be carried on, and skirting the Forum and the Basilica of Constantine, strike the Colosseum; then the winds will blow through Rome.

Every one who has been in Rome knows the slums that lie between the Forum and Santa Maria Maggiore. Here also demolition is going on; and a thoroughfare is being made to let air

in and traffic pass, a thoroughfare which will eventually open out of the continued Corso. In so doing, extensive remains of the Temple of Venus Genetrix, hitherto concealed behind houses, have been disclosed.

But there is one sacrifice being made which might well have been omitted. The beautiful villa gardens, with their ilexes and their stone pines and their cypresses, are being ruthlessly destroyed. The railway station and goods department occupy the site of what was one of the loveliest gardens in the world. The glorious gardens of the Ludovisi Palace are gone, occupied by hideous blocks of modern houses. On the Via Salaria these glorious gardens are in process of destruction, the century-old trees being hacked down. All the gardens, vineyards, that extended from the church of Santa Maria Maggiore to the Lateran are built over.

The presence of parks in a town is necessary to its salubrity; they are open spaces in which the fresh air blows; consequently, it is a mistake to wreck these gardens from a sanitary point of view, apart from the loss to the eye, and the destruction of what constituted one of the main charms of old papal Rome. The new Government, or rather the municipality, seem to entertain a hatred of trees: wherever they can, they hew them down, not only with detriment to the landscape, but with injury to health, for every tree and shrub and flower assists in the purification of the atmosphere. In the same way have the municipal authorities stripped the ruins of the creepers and other plants that veiled their raggedness. Mr Hare, in his *Walks in Rome*, says: 'The whole aspect of the city is changed, and the picturesqueness of old days must now be sought in such obscure corners as have escaped the hands of the spoiler. The glorious gardens of the Villa Negroni and Villa Ludovisi have been annihilated; ancient convents have been levelled with the ground or turned into barracks; historic churches have been yellow-washed or modernised; the pagan ruins have been denuded of all that gave them picturesqueness or beauty. The Palace of the Caesars is stripped of all the flowers and shrubs which formerly adorned it. The baths of Caracalla, which, till 1870, were one of the most beautiful spots in the world, are now scarcely more attractive than the ruins of a London warehouse. Many of the most interesting temples have been dwarfed by the vulgarest and tallest of modern buildings. Even the Colosseum has been rendered a centre for fever by aimless excavations, and has been deprived not only of its shrines, but of its marvellous flora, though in dragging out the roots of its shrubs, more of the building was destroyed than would have fallen naturally in five centuries.' Indeed, as they now appear, the ruins more resemble masses of old mite-eaten Stilton cheese than anything else, and are wholly void of charm. A vast amount of irreparable mischief to Christian antiquities is being wrought outside the Porta Pia and Porta Salaria, where ranges of model-lodging-house style of buildings are being run up to accommodate the lower classes, and their foundations are being laid in the early Christian catacombs, which are choked up with rubbish, and ruthlessly broken through

to form basements and cellars for these vile erections.

Another work that is being carried on, and which is greatly altering the appearance of the city, is the levelling the historic hills and filling in the valleys between, so as to form comparatively level runs for the streets and for the accommodation of tramcars. It is not possible to altogether abolish the hills, or the municipal council would do it; as, however, the seven hills are too great, and defy that, the excavators take slices out of their sides, or take off their heads and make embankments across the valleys, and fill up wherever filling-up can be done, so as to form a series of *piani* or levels, along which the carriages and buses can run without any great amount of collar-work for the horses.

The Anio makes a great loop about the Mons Sacer. 'This spot,' as Arnold says, in his *History of Rome*, 'on which the great deliverance had been achieved, became to the Romans what Runnymede is to Englishmen: the top of the hill was left for ever unenclosed and consecrated.' It was to this spot that the plebeians seceded, and where they encamped, B.C. 494, till they had extorted from the patricians the concessions of tribunes who were to represent the interests of the people. Alas! even this Mons Sacer is not sacred to the eyes of the municipal authorities, which is being carted away as building material for the ranges of new houses which are making Rome as modern and hideous as are the new quarters of a thousand cities on the Continent, all equally hideous and uniform in their type.

There is no *pro* without its *con*. The capital of Italy must be Rome. That was decided upon, regardless of other considerations than sentiment. Having decided on making it the capital of Italy, it is hard to see what else could be done. A vast increase of accommodation was necessary, and means of passage from one part of the city to another must be found; it was impossible for the traffic now trebled to pass through the old arteries.

There was much against making Rome a capital. It is unhealthy except during the winter. It is the curiosity-shop of Europe. It was full from end to end of historic associations. It could be enlarged only on one side. Florence, on the other hand, is healthy; there was little to spoil there in order to acquire room; and the city could be expanded indefinitely on all sides.

But, as the determination was come to that Rome was to be the capital, there was no choice in the matter—the place must be fitted to the demands of the population crowding into it, and to the exigencies of a capital city where is the court and centre of government.

The artist complains that the picturesqueness of Rome is being destroyed; but we are much inclined to dispute the picturesqueness of the dirty houses and narrow streets that are being swept away; and the antiquary must remember that if some few things have to go, a great deal that was hidden has been revealed, and discoveries made which are a real gain to archæological science, and which would not have been made but for the remodelling of Rome under the new régime.

Then again, and lastly, is not the health, the happiness of the present and the future, better

than a little questionable picturesqueness and a few crumbling walls? The increase in the population of Rome is so rapid that the crowding, and with the crowding, disease and death would be rampant, were it not that the municipality had faced the problem and resolved on a re-planning of the city. The old emperors brought pure water into Rome, and Rome now enjoys an abundance of fresh and wholesome water. But what Rome does not enjoy is fresh and wholesome air, and that is what the municipality are introducing as fast as they possibly can. By all means let the relics of the past be preserved, but not at the expense of the present.

A DEAD RECKONING.

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER X.

IN less than a week after her interview with Picot, Mrs Brooke, her husband, and Miss Primby were settled in their new home. The rooms recommended by the Frenchman had proved more to Clara's liking than any she had seen elsewhere, and she at once engaged them. The furniture and fittings were to a great extent after the cheap and tawdry style so much affected by the inferior class of French lodging-house keepers; but as the whole place was pervaded by an air of cleanliness, such little *désagréments* as existed in other respects Clara was prepared to overlook.

No. 5 Pymm's Buildings was one of a row of half-a-dozen houses similar to itself in size and outward aspect, situated in a quiet court abutting on a main thoroughfare in the busy and populous district of Soho. All the houses in Pymm's Buildings accommodated a more or less numerous tribe of lodgers, the lower floors being generally arranged in suites of rooms for the convenience of families, while the top floors were usually divided into separate sleeping apartments. And it was in this place and amid such sordid surroundings that the whilom owner of Beechley Towers hoped to find for a little time a secure shelter from the hue and cry of the ten thousand hounds of policedom, each and all of whom were doing their utmost to run him to earth. His idea had been to bury himself in the heart of some densely populated district where one man is but as a grain of sand among ten thousand others, and in so far it may be surmised that he had been successful.

When Mrs Brooke quitted Beechley Towers secretly and by night to join her husband in London, Margery, faithful Margery, was the only one who was made aware of her departure. The girl pleaded so hard to be allowed to accompany her, that at last Clara was fain to make her a promise that she would send for her as soon as she was settled in her new home. Thus it fell out that Margery was now here, and her mistress found the value of her services in a score different ways. For instance, Margery did all the marketing, and did it for little more than half what it had cost before her arrival. Poor simple-minded Clara, who believed everybody to be as honest as herself, had been imposed upon at every turn; but the shopman or peripatetic vendor who succeeded in 'besting' Margery, as

she termed it, must have been very wide-awake indeed. The girl would haggle for half an hour over a penny, and her powers of vituperation always rose to the level of the occasion.

What was Mrs Brooke's surprise about the third day after her arrival at Pymm's Buildings, as she was on her way down-stairs, to encounter M. Picot on his way up! Then it came out that the mountebank rented a room at the top of the house which he looked upon as a permanent home, and occupied as such when his avocations did not take him elsewhere. Had Mrs Brooke been aware of this fact at the time, she might perhaps have hesitated before deciding to take the rooms. And yet, somehow, she had an instinctive feeling of trust in the mountebank—the same sort of trust, although in a lesser degree, that she had in Margery; and after the first tremor of alarm which shot through her when she encountered him on the staircase, she never felt a moment's doubt that her secret, or as much of it as he might know or suspect, was safe in his keeping. It became, of course, necessary to explain to him that it was she and her husband, and not any one else, whose fortunes had changed so wofully. But Picot was one of the most incurious of mortals outside the range of his own affairs. He only remembered Clara as 'la belle madame' who had kissed his boy and spoken kindly to him and had laden him with gifts, and about whom Henri often spoke when his father and he were alone. He had never thought of asking any one what her name was; and even now, when he understood from Clara how terribly the circumstances of herself and her husband were changed, he expressed neither curiosity nor surprise in the matter. He was *vraiment désolé*—he was heart-broken to think that such should be the case; but that was all. He did indeed, a little later, ask the landlord the name of his new lodgers; and when he was told that they were known as Mr and Mrs Stewart, he repeated the name to himself two or three times over, so as to impress it on his memory, and then went contentedly on his way.

The furnished lodgings rented by Mr and Mrs 'Stewart' comprised three rooms on the first floor and two on the second. As it chanced, the rooms on the ground-floor were at present untenanted. The sitting-room had two windows and was a tolerably sized apartment. In it, about eight o'clock on a certain autumn evening, were seated Miss Primby and Margery. The former, as usual, was engaged on some kind of delicate embroidery; while the latter was trying her hand at a little plain sewing, the result being that on an average she pricked her finger once every three or four minutes. But, indeed, the girl was somewhat nervous this evening, or what she herself would have termed 'in a pucker.' She had had the ill-fortune to break a cup while washing up the tea-things.

'O mum, do you think Mrs Stewart will let me stay when I tell her? She won't turn me away, will she?'

'Why, of course not, Margery. It was an accident; it cannot be helped.'

'Oh, thank you for saying that, mum. Sometimes my fingers seem as if they were all thumbs, and I lets everything drop. But I wants no wages, mum, and I ain't a big eater—leastways,

I think not; and I'll eat less than ever now, so as to help to pay for the cup. A crust o' bread and drippin', a few cold taters, and the teapot after everybody else has done with it—that'll do me.'

'You must not talk like that, Margery; your mistress would not like it.'

'Oh, but you don't know how sorry I am, mum. Mariar—her on the boat—always used to say as I was a great awkward lout of a girl; and she was about right there.'

The two went on with their work for a little while in silence, and then Margery said: 'You'll excuse me, mum, for saying so, but I've often wondered why such a nice lady as you never got married.'

The spinster could not help bridding a little. 'Married! How absurd of you, Margery,' she exclaimed. 'From what I have seen of married life, I'm sure I am far better off as I am.' Then, as if by way of afterthought: 'Not but what I have had several most eligible offers at various times.'

'Lor! mum, didn't it make you feel all-overish-like when they went flop on their knees and asked you to marry 'em?'

'Gentlemen don't often go on their knees nowadays. Still, I have had them do that to me more than once. I remember that when Mr Tubbins, the eminent brewer, did so, he was so very stout that he could not get up again without assistance.'

'My! I'd have stuck a pin into him; that would have made him jump,' cried the girl with her strange laugh.

At this juncture the door opened and Mrs Brooke came in. She was plainly dressed in black, and was closely veiled. Since Margery's arrival she rarely ventured out of doors till dusk, and then only when she wanted to do a little shopping such as the girl could not do for her. Any one who had not seen her since that April evening when M. Karovsky's ill-omened shadow first darkened the terrace at Beechley Towers, might have been excused for failing to recognise her again. It was not merely that she looked older by more years than the months which had elapsed since that day—anguish, anxiety, and the dread which never ceased to haunt her of what the next hour might bring forth, had marked their cruel lines on her features in a way that Time's gentle if inexorable graver never does when left to labour alone. The clear dancing light had died out of her eyes long ago; they looked larger and shone with a deeper and more intense lustre than in the days gone by; but a sudden knock at the door, an unusual footfall on the stairs, or the voices of strange men talking in the court below, would fill them on a sudden with a sort of startled terror, just as the eyes of a deer may fill when first it hears the baying of the far-away hounds.

She took off her bonnet with an air of weariness and sat down. 'Has not Gerald returned yet?' she said to her aunt. 'What can have become of him?'

'The evening is so fine that he has probably gone for a longer walk than ordinary.'

'It makes me wretched when he stays out longer than usual. And yet, poor fellow! what a life is his. To be shut up in one miserable room from

morning till night; never to venture out till after dark, and then only with the haunting dread that he may be recognised and arrested at any moment! How will it all end?' She sighed and went into the other room. Presently she returned, and a few moments later a knock at the door made every one start. Margery hastened to open it. Outside stood Picot carrying a bunch of flowers. 'Bon soir, madame,' he said, addressing himself to Clara with a low bow, and then favouring Miss Primby with another.

'Bon soir, Monsieur Picot. Entrez, s'il vous plaît.'

'Merci, madame,' he answered as he advanced into the room. 'I have here a petit bouquet—a few flowers—which Henri has sent for madame, if she will have the bonté to accept them.'

'I shall be charmed to do so,' answered Clara as she took the flowers. 'How fresh and sweet they smell! I am much obliged to Henri, and to you also, monsieur.'—The mountebank made another low sweeping bow.—'I hope that Henri is quite well?'

'Parfaitement bien, madame.'

'The first time he has a holiday, he must come and take tea with me; I will not forget to have a nice cake for the occasion.'

'He will be enchanté, madame.—Ah! if madame could see him on the trapeze—could but see him jumpeze from one bar to another—it is splendid, magnifique!'

'I think I would rather not see Henri go through any of his performances, monsieur.'

'Mais, madame!' with an expressive shrug; 'there is no danger, nothings to be afraid of. Oh, the grand artiste that Henri will be one day! He is twice so clevare as I was at his age. He will be what you call in England great man—big fellow.'

'I am very glad to hear it. Meanwhile, you will not forget that he is to come some afternoon and take tea with me.'

'Ah, madame, he talk about you every day.—But I go now. I hope that monsieur your husband finds himself quite well?'

'Quite well, thank you, monsieur.'

With that the mountebank made his adieus and bowed himself out.

It here becomes needful to explain that just then Henri was engaged at a certain hippodrome as one of a troupe of juvenile acrobats who, under the pseudonym of 'les frères Donati,' and under the tuition of a celebrated 'Professor,' were performing a number of well-nigh incredible feats before crowded and enthusiastic houses.

'Ain't he polite!' said Margery as Picot closed the door. 'But what a pity the poor man talks such a lot of gibberish.'

'What can have become of Gerald?' said Clara for the second time, as she went to the window and drawing aside the curtain peered into the darkness. 'I never knew him to be so late before. I cannot help feeling dreadfully uneasy.' Then turning to Margery, she said: 'Here is a list of things I want you to fetch from the grocer's in Medwin Street. Do you think you can find your way in the dark?'

'Why, of course, mum. I never gets lost, I don't.' Half a minute later she ran down-stairs, whistling as she went.

The minutes dragged themselves slowly away,

and Clara was working herself into a fever of apprehension, when a well-known footfall on the stairs caused a cry of gladness to burst from her lips. 'At last!' she exclaimed as she started to her feet and hurried to the door. 'How glad I am that you are safely back,' she added as her husband entered the room. 'You were away so long that I grew quite frightened.'

'The evening was so pleasant, that I extended my walk farther than I intended. I must be a caged bird now for the next four-and-twenty hours. Heigh-ho!'

'Will you not have something to eat?'

'Thanks; nothing at present,' he answered as he proceeded to lay aside his slouched hat, his overcoat, and the muffler which had shrouded the lower part of his face. Then he took up a book and sat down in an easy-chair near the fire.

His wife's eyes brimmed with tears as they rested on him. 'My poor boy!' she said softly to herself. 'This life is killing him. When, oh, when will it end!' She sat down to her needle-work.

Miss Primby was the first to break the silence. 'Do you know, my dear,' she said to her niece, 'that Monsieur Picot puts me greatly in mind of the Count de Bonnechose, a French nobleman who once made me an offer of marriage. He used to speak just the same delightful broken English—and then he had such great black eyes, which seemed to pierce right through you, and the loveliest waxed moustaches; so that when he clasped his hands and turned up his eyes till nothing but the whites of them were visible, and murmured "Mon ange," and called me his "beautiful Engleesh mees," can you wonder that my heart used to thrill responsively?'

Clara could not repress a smile. 'I am by no means sure that I should have cared to call that count my uncle.'

'It was a mercy that I sent him about his business. He turned out to be no nobleman at all, but only a hairdresser's assistant whose father had left him a little money. But certainly he had remarkably fine eyes.'

Again there was a brief space of silence. This time it was broken by a knock which sounded all the more startling because no one had heard the faintest sound of footsteps on the stairs. All three started to their feet and looked at each other. Then, at a sign from Clara, Miss Primby crossed to the door and opened it.

Framed by the doorway and shone upon by the lamplight from within, they beheld the black-clothed figure, the statuesque, colourless face and the inscrutable eyes of M. Karovsky.

'Karovsky—you!' cried Gerald as he sprang forward.

'Yes, I—why not?' said the Russian with a smile, as he raised his hat and came forward.—'Ladies, your servant.' Then to Gerald: 'You stare at me, mon ami, as if I had just come back from Hades. But this is scarcely the hand of a *revenant*, if I may be allowed an opinion in the matter.'

'It seems incredible that you should have found me out in this place,' answered Gerald as the two shook hands.

'Incredible? Peuh! I had need to see you; and I am here.'

'Will you not be seated?'

As Karovsky drew up a chair, Clara made a sign to her aunt, and the two ladies passed out through the folding-doors into the room beyond.

'Pardon,' said the Russian as he glanced around, 'but this place seems scarcely a fit home either for madame or yourself.'

'You know that I am in hiding; you doubtless also know that a large reward is offered for my capture?'—The other nodded.—'While such is the case, it is impossible for me to touch a penny of my income. My wife's aunt has lost her property by a bank failure. We are very poor, Karovsky; but there are worse ills in life than poverty.'

'Part of my errand to-night is to tell you that I have instructions to place certain funds at your disposal. You can leave this place to-morrow, if it please you so to do.'

'Thanks, Karovsky; but I cannot accept a penny of the money you offer me.'

'How! Not accept! But this is folly.'

'It may seem so to you; but that does not alter the matter.'

'It is unaccountable,' said the Russian with a lifting of his black eyebrows. 'But why remain in these wretched apartments? Why not go abroad—on the Continent—to America—anywhere? The world is wide, and there are places where you would be far safer than here.'

'I doubt it. One reason why I am here is because I believe this spot—in the heart of one of the most populous quarters of London—to be as safe a hiding-place as any I could find. My other reason is that were I to go abroad, I feel as if I should be throwing away my last faint hope of ever being able to prove my innocence to the world.'

Karovsky stared at him in wide-eyed amazement. 'How! Your'—

'My innocence of the murder of Baron von Rosenberg.'

'Pardon; I fail to comprehend.'

'When we parted last, I told you clearly and emphatically that, let the consequences to myself be whatever they might, mine should not be the hand to strike the fatal blow; but when you left me, you evidently did so in the belief that in a little while I should change my mind, and that of the two alternatives you had placed before me, I should choose the one which you yourself would in all probability have chosen had you been in my place. Time went on, and, within the period you had prescribed, Von Rosenberg was found dead, shot through the heart. Such being the case, it was perhaps a not unnatural conclusion for you to arrive at that it was I, Gerald Brooke, who was the assassin.—But I ask you, Karovsky, to believe in the truth of what I am now going to tell you. I had no more to do with the death of Von Rosenberg than you yourself had.'

'Est-il possible!' exclaimed the Russian in a voice scarcely raised above a whisper. For a few moments he sat staring silently at Gerald; then he went on: 'Not often am I astonished at anything I hear; but you, Gerald Brooke, have astonished me to-night. The evidence against you seemed so conclusive, that I never doubted Von Rosenberg fell by your hand. Yet more than once I said to myself: "What an imbecile

Brooke must have been to leave behind him such a condemnatory piece of evidence as the weapon with which he did the deed!"—But who, then, was the individual who so kindly spared you a necessity so painful?"

'That I know no more than you do.'

'C'est un vrai mystère.'

'From day to day I live in hope that the real criminal will be discovered and brought to justice; but with each day that passes that hope grows fainter within me.'

'I know not what to say.—When I remember the past, and when I look round and think that this is now the home of you and madame'—He spread out his hands with a gesture more expressive than words.

Before more could be said, there came a peculiar knock at the door—three taps in quick succession, followed by a fourth after a longer interval. At the sound, Clara and Miss Primby emerged from the other room.

'That summons is intended for me,' said Karovsky quickly as he rose and opened the door.

Then those inside saw that a man, a stranger, was standing on the landing, who seemed to retire further into the shade the moment the light fell on him. He said something rapidly in a low voice to Karovsky, to which the latter replied in the same language. Then the Russian gave a nod as of dismissal, and closing the door, turned and confronted Gerald with a grave face and distended eyes. 'That man is one of us,' he said. 'When I entered the house, I left him on watch outside. He now comes to tell me that a policeman in plain clothes is on guard outside the court, and that another is stationed inside, so that no one can pass in or out without being observed. He also tells me that there are two more constables in uniform patrolling the street close by; and that from what he can gather, they are waiting the arrival of some one, probably a superior officer. Is it possible, Brooke, that you can be the quarry on which they intend presently to swoop?'

'There can be little doubt of it,' answered Gerald, who had risen to his feet while Karovsky was speaking. He had turned very pale; but his lips were firm-set, and the expression which shone out of his eyes was something far removed from craven fear.

Clara stood with one hand resting on the table, her frame trembling slightly. Was the blow she had dreaded so long about to fall at last?

Miss Primby sat down with a gasp.

'Well, let them come,' went on Gerald after a moment's pause. 'It will be better so. I am tired of this life of hide-and-seek. Why not end it here and now?'

'No, no!' cried his wife. 'Even at this, the eleventh hour, there must surely be some way of escape.'

'Even if I were eager to escape, which I am not, I know of none.'

'Madame is right,' said the Russian in his impressive tones. 'There is still one way of escape.'

'And that is?'—said Gerald interrogatively.

But before Karovsky could reply, Margery, breathless and dishevelled, burst into the room. 'O Muster Geril!—O mum,' she exclaimed, 'the polis is in the court—four or five of 'em, and I

believe they're coming here. But I shut and bolted the door at the bottom of the stairs; and it'll take 'em some time to break that down,' added the girl with a chuckle.

Picot, who was on his way down-stairs as Margery rushed up, had overheard her words, and he could now be seen dimly outlined on the landing, his eyes piercing the obscurity like two points of flame; but for the moment no one observed him.

THE TRINITY PILOTS.

BY R. H. MC CARTHY.

VERY many of those who are familiar with the somewhat imposing stone building near the head of Tower Hill, known as Trinity House, have but a hazy idea of the use to which the structure is put, or of the functions of the body whose habitation it is. After moving from Deptford to Ratcliffe Highway, thence to Stepney, and afterwards to Water Lane, in the City, where it was twice burnt out, the corporation, thus described in a charter granted by Henry VIII., in 1798 erected the present building: 'The Masters, Wardens, and Assistants of the Guild, Fraternity, or Brotherhood of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity, and of St Clement in the parish of Deptford Strond, in the county of Kent.' The first Master was Sir Thomas Spert, commander of the famous *Great Harry*, which carried Henry and his splendid retinue as far as Calais on their way to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. This charter permitted the mariners of England to form a guild, which might include women, and empowered it to make laws for shipping, and to punish offenders against such laws. Subsequent monarchs widened the sphere of the society. In the eighth year of Elizabeth, for instance, there was passed an Act, which, after describing the corporation as 'a company of the chiefest and most expert masters and governors of ships, charged with the conduction of the Queen's Majesty's navy,' and bound to see to the supply of ships and men for Her Majesty's service, laments the loss of life caused by the destruction of marks along the coast, and authorises the Trinity Brethren (as the members were and are called) to preserve and erect beacons for the guidance of ships.

Further extensions were made by James II., the most important being with reference to pilotage. The king, having ascertained that serious loss of life and property arose from the incompetency of pilots, forbade the latter to take charge of ships in the Thames or Medway, unless provided with licenses from the Trinity House, confirmed by the Lord High Admiral; and a deduction from the earnings of pilots holding licenses was sanctioned, with a view to forming a pension fund. Acts of the 48th and 52d of George III. directed the corporation to license cutters to cruise with pilots off the coast, and to appoint sub-commissioners where there was already no pilotage authority. Side by side with the growth of its pilotage duties, the powers of the Fraternity with regard to beacons increased; and ultimately, by purchase from the Crown and from private owners, it obtained the sole right to levy duties upon shipping for the maintenance of lights on

the coast of England. But this, as well as other branches of the work of the Guild, is outside the scope of our paper.

In 1853 the power of the corporation had reached its zenith. It managed a large income of some three hundred thousand pounds a year with a minimum of inconvenience to the community, and to the great advantage of the charities attached to the society. Committees of the House of Commons had in 1822, 1834, and 1845 investigated its business, and on each occasion the brethren emerged from the ordeal with credit. Still, it was against the spirit of the age that a self-elected, irresponsible body should tax shipping, even for charitable purposes; and by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 the corporation was shorn of much of its power. From bequests and other sources, considerable property had been derived, and was employed in supporting almshouses and out-pensioners. This was left untouched; but the brethren were made responsible to the Board of Trade for everything connected with light dues and pilotage, and the disposal of the revenue thus obtained vested in that body. But though subject to this control, the functions of the Trinity House remain highly important. Nautical men are flattered when invited to become 'elder' or 'younger' brethren, high personages have been glad to accept honorary membership, and a royal Duke is proud of his position as Master.

The Act of Parliament just referred to amalgamated with the Trinity House of Deptford Strond a similar institution at the Cinque Ports, over which the Lord Warden presided; but three other Houses remained, as venerable if not so powerful as that on Tower Hill. At Hull, Newcastle, and Leith, Shipmen's Guilds existed at a very early date, which were virtually friendly societies, and this character they all preserved when the possession of royal charters increased their power and wealth and made them more useful to trade. The Trinity Houses of Hull and Leith were legally recognised in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and the present charter of the Hull Guild is dated 1537. The Leith Trinity House licenses pilots for the Firth of Forth, the North Sea, and for the coast as far south as Orford Ness, in Suffolk. That of Newcastle up to 1864 held sway over the pilotage, lighting, and buoyage of the Tyne, and of the coast from Holy Island to Whitby, eight hundred pilots owning its authority. But Hartlepool and Sunderland obtained permission to manage their own affairs, and the Tyne has been placed under elective bodies, so that hardly anything remains to the Trinity House. The Hull Guild retains the management of the Humber pilotage and of the streams flowing into it; and besides other powers, it has that of licensing pilots for the Baltic, the North Sea, and for the coast between Whitby and Orford Ness, where the authority of the Deptford Strond House commences.

Omitting the legal boundaries and divisions, the latter fraternity practically has charge of the pilotage between Orford Ness, southward and westward, to the Bristol Channel, and of the harbours between. Though the importance of its lighthouse duties has overshadowed its position as a pilotage authority, it will be seen that with this as with the other corporations, the pro-

vision of pilots was one of its main, perhaps its primary function. Indeed, that was so before any charter was obtained; for from an early period the Fraternity maintained a pilotage station for outward-bound vessels at Deptford and at Leigh, near Southend, for ships entering the Thames. It was also in their capacity of master-pilots that in 1797 some of the Elder Brethren of Deptford Strond personally, by night, removed the buoys in the Nore, and thereby did much to quell the sailors' mutiny; and in the same capacity they took on themselves the defence of the Thames in 1803. As pilots, too, they escorted the Queen on her voyage to Scotland with Prince Albert in 1842; and on the occasion of naval reviews their yacht is privileged to precede the royal procession. There are numberless other pilotage authorities in the United Kingdom; but they are mere mushrooms, things of yesterday, whose rules are usually copied from those of the Trinity Houses, especially that of Deptford Strond. It may be of interest to glance at that system, the result as it is of many centuries of experience.

In early times the pilot was simply the steersman, and the references to that official in classical literature must be so understood. The word is of Dutch origin, and meant a person who conducted a vessel with the assistance of a sounding-line; but the legal definition given in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 is, 'any person not belonging to a ship who has charge of it.' The importance of such aid to shipmasters has been recognised from the infancy of commerce; and the maritime laws known as the *Ordonnances de Wisbuy*, enacted in the twelfth century, and adopted by most European countries, made the employment of local pilots compulsory. The present state of our law is that all vessels above sixty tons engaged in the foreign trade, and all home-trade ships—that is, those plying from one British port to another, or to any part of Europe north of Brest—carrying passengers, are obliged to take a legally qualified pilot. Obviously, then, it becomes the duty of the legislature to provide pilots, a task which the Trinity House performs, directly as regards the district between Orford Ness and Dungeness, and through sub-commissioners over the remainder of its jurisdiction. By itself or its deputies, the Deptford Strond corporation rules nearly nine hundred pilots.

Any seaman is eligible for a pilot's license; but those who have served an apprenticeship to the calling get a preference, and as there is usually an ample supply of ex-apprentices, this is practically the only road to the position. The youth, who must be above fourteen when indentured, serves seven years, during which he may be employed as a fisherman, a yachtsman, or even on board a trader; but he is expected to occasionally spend a little time on board one of the pilot-cutters belonging to the port for which he seeks a license. Then, on a vacancy occurring, he among others is examined as to his knowledge of local waters, and in seamanship—'the method of staying or wearing a vessel, the complete management of a ship in bad weather and narrow channels, to be able to bring her properly to an anchor, to keep a clear anchor, and to know how to get her under weigh in all situations.' If successful, he pays a fee,

usually two guineas, enters into bond for one hundred pounds as a guarantee against any loss brought about by his neglect, and receiving a license, is appointed to a cutter. The Trinity pilot is also required to pay two guineas a year for the renewal of his license, and to contribute two and a half per cent. on his earnings towards the Pilot Fund. This Fund has a capital of ninety thousand pounds, and out of it infirm members get an allowance varying according to length of service from ten to sixteen pounds per annum. Widows of pilots receive from four to six pounds, and children twenty-four shillings per annum. In the London district these allowances are more liberal. Necessarily, the pilot is under rigid discipline. To keep a public-house, or a shop for the sale of dutiable articles, is forbidden to him, and drunkenness or other misconduct is severely dealt with. Pilots are expected to take care that the quarantine laws are not infringed, and on them local authorities depend to see that their regulations are adhered to by shipmasters.

There is one important exception to the law of compulsory pilotage. A master or mate can, upon passing an examination and paying the same fees as the regular pilots, obtain a license to navigate any vessel belonging to his employer 'without incurring any penalty for the non-employment of a qualified pilot.' This privilege, which is extensively availed of, is resented by the Trinity pilots, to whom it is a serious blow. At Hull, the matter is made worse by the fact that many of the persons so licensed are foreigners. No doubt, as pilots say, one of the objects for which the Trinity House was chartered was to prevent foreigners from becoming acquainted with our harbours; but if these men be sufficiently acquainted with the Humber to pass an examination in its navigation, it is not easy to see how the withholding of a license will prevent them from guiding a foreign ship-of-war. That, by the way. It is said that an Act of the early part of the present century, dealing with a single article, madder, was admirably drawn except in one respect—it did not mention madder at all. A measure is now (August) being passed through parliament, one clause of which rectifies a somewhat similar omission in the Shipping Act of 1854. Section 340 relieves qualified masters and mates from penalties, as quoted above, and was intended, of course, to exempt them from payment of pilotage dues, which, indeed, was the primary object of the section. But it left them liable; and now, after thirty-five years, the error is being amended by the insertion of the words, 'or without incurring any liability for the payment of pilotage dues.'

There is a certain uniformity in the Trinity House pilotage system throughout its jurisdiction, and in order to see it at work it will suffice to glance at one of the English Channel ports—say Plymouth. There are there six cutters of from thirty to fifty tons, each carrying five pilots and two men, the latter becoming necessary when the pilots have been one by one drafted into ships requiring their services. The profits are divided into twenty-four parts; the vessel, a pilot, and a man receiving respectively five, three, and two parts. By a rule of old standing, the details of which the pilots settle among themselves, three cutters cruise in a semicircle with a radius of twelve or fifteen miles; a fourth patrols the

entrance to the harbour; a fifth is within, ready to take the place of any cutter denuded of its crew; and the pilots of the sixth are off duty. These several places are held by each vessel in turn. The first time the writer saw a Plymouth pilot-boat was when approaching the harbour some years ago in a coasting steamer. A stiff south-west wind was piling water against the cliffs, and the breakwater could only be traced by a line of foam. A column of smoke became visible far out, near the Eddystone lighthouse, and a large steamer hove in sight, heading for Plymouth. On coming nearer, the union-jack—in nautical parlance 'the jack'—was hoisted to the foretopgallant-mast head; and as if awaiting the signal, from behind a sheltering headland a little yacht-like vessel stole, a red and white flag, the colours divided horizontally, at her masthead. On getting clear of the friendly promontory, she heeled over, almost burying a huge P (the initial letter of the port must be six feet long) which, with a number, disfigured her white mainsail, and then righting, flew seaward, now diving beneath a great green billow, or now climbing what seemed a perpendicular wall of water. The two vessels met; the pilot-boat described a sharp curve, the mainsail fell, and she swung round under the lee of the great steamer, which had meanwhile slowed. In a moment a small boat was dancing on the waves, and into it three men sprang, one of whom had donned a uniform of bright blue with brass buttons; and we watched with anxiety the perilous voyage to the rope-ladder which hung over the steamer's high black side. Hardly had the propeller begun to revolve before the rowers were again on board their own craft, and the little vessel hurrying across the dark threatening sea to meet a foreign-looking brig which was beating towards Plymouth.

It was a good day; perhaps a week would pass before they should meet another vessel. For the steamer, which had a draught of twenty-four feet, three pounds twelve shillings were received; and from the brig, rather less than half that amount, the men who actually piloted the ships receiving an eighth. The earnings of pilots vary so much that it would be difficult to give an average. Some of the London men receive over eight hundred pounds per annum—occasionally more than one thousand pounds is earned within the year—and a few large incomes are made in the Southampton district. On the other hand, at many of the smaller outports the average earnings do not exceed a pound per week. The large sums just named are obtained through the operation of the 'choice' system, by which the great steamship companies select pilots for their work. No doubt this good fortune is won honestly; still, where most are worthy and all are competent, selection looks like undue favouritism, and there will always remain a suspicion that to fee a shipping-clerk is more efficacious than merit. On the whole, in spite of these prizes, the pilot's calling, laborious, dangerous, and highly responsible as it is, is an ill-paid one. The 'palmy days' of pilotage are gone. A Cunarder or Orient liner carries four or six times as much cargo as the foreign-going barque of thirty years ago, and pays but little more; masters and mates qualified to pilot their own ships are becoming each year more numerous; and for some time legislation has been

the foe of a body of men who are regarded as monopolists.

Several attempts have been made to totally abolish compulsory pilotage, and Mr Chamberlain, when President of the Board of Trade, brought in a bill for the purpose. But a great vested interest had to be dealt with; it would cost some millions to compensate the present pilots and owners of cutters, and the project was dropped. There is much difference of opinion as to the merits of the compulsory system. On the one hand, there is so great an improvement in the lighting and buoyage of our shores and harbours, and charts have attained such excellence, that the highly educated men commanding large ocean steamers learn in their frequent voyages almost as much of channels and currents as the local pilots. There is a good deal to be said against forcing these men to pay for services they do not require; but, on the other hand, such officers can, if they desire, provide themselves with licenses, while the present system assures to the foreigner and the less confident navigator reliable assistance. Besides, the obligation to take a pilot is not more galling than the prohibition to load a vessel beyond a certain point, the government interference in agreements between master and crew, the official inspection of emigrants' food, or any of the hundred other steps the legislature has found it necessary to take in connection with shipping, in order to repress the recklessness of avarice in its dealings with human life. However, compulsory pilotage is probably doomed. Henceforward, every owner of a cutter and every pilot will, on receiving a license, be required to resign all claim to compensation in the event of the abolition of compulsory pilotage; and with the extinction of the present holders of licenses, the opportunity of the iconoclast will come. One step more, a step hotly urged, and with forcible arguments—the abolition of light dues on ships—and the *raison d'être* of the Trinity House will cease; and the besom of progress will then doubtless sweep away a most interesting survival of the infancy of English commerce.

A LEGAL SECRET.

BY THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAP. I.—CONSCIENCE-STRICKEN.

THE house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, from which the firm of Trench, Pilkington, and Trench addressed their numerous clients, was getting quite antiquated. It had stood there a century or more. Discreetly placed a little distance back from the roadway, like most of the legal houses in Lincoln's Inn, its angular architecture somewhat resembled a tumble-down house of cards; there were balconies, outside barred windows, upon which no one ever ventured to trust his weight, and there were stunted gables half-hidden by projecting walls. Upon the topmost gable was a weathercock; and this vane, pointing towards the north-west, reminded one that a gust of wind from that quarter might any day blow the old house down, as it had threatened to do already more than once; and would have done but for

the support of a more modern building on each side.

There had been many changes since the first deed of partnership between Trench, Pilkington, and Trench had been signed; for sometimes a Pilkington was senior partner, sometimes a Trench. But the designation of this legal firm had always remained unaltered. It had been known as Trench, Pilkington, and Trench time out of mind, and so it was still described. There had always been a trustworthy representative—always bearing either the name of Trench or of Pilkington, and always gifted with an acute ear for confiding clients.

For a day seldom passed but what some one driving up in his carriage brought with him a weighty secret; and the head of the house, whether young or old, was always there with his wits about him prepared to accept the trust. Before one partner showed any sign of superannuation, as it was shrewdly observed, another was skilfully trained to step into his place; so you might confide your secrets to the firm of Trench, Pilkington, and Trench with the same sense of security which you experienced when placing your money in the Bank.

The senior partner's room was large and oblong in shape, and with three dismal windows in a row; for these windows had iron bars, and the dust upon them was an efficient substitute for blinds. Between the bars could be seen a blurred forest of distorted chimneys. At the end of the room was a huge fireplace; and before the fire, which was burning brightly, was a great brass guard. It was an ideal chamber for the safe deposit of secrets; the walls were hidden by shelves, and on these shelves stood deed-boxes, some with names in full, others with the initials only painted upon them. At a desk, between the barred windows and the guarded hearth, sat an old man.

If any one ever looked like a living embodiment of secrecy that could not be tampered with, this lawyer looked it from head to foot. His white shaggy eyebrows hung over his eyes and seemed almost to hide them: it was difficult to get more than an occasional flash from them—difficult to judge whether they were small or large. His nose was narrow, long, and hooked like a hawk's; and the thin lips were pressed together as if they had been sealed. He seemed at least fourscore years of age. The expression on his face appeared to imply that he had chosen the same motto as the Prince de Condé, and had based his character on the word 'Listen!'

It was growing dusk. As the lawyer placed his hand upon the bell at his side, the door opened, and in came a young man whose frank face was in striking contrast to the senior partner's. The old lawyer leaned back in his chair, and although he did not open his lips or even look up, his face plainly expressed these words: 'Well—what is it? I am listening.'

The young man, Sidney Trench, held a letter in his hand. He glanced at it as he stood over the fire, and then at Mr Pilkington. 'I have a little matter to settle,' said he, 'in Chancery Lane. I will not keep you waiting, sir; the carriage is at the door.' The old lawyer was Sidney's guardian. Mr Pilkington's villa, in one of the suburbs, was the young man's home;

it had been his home since boyhood. Again Sidney looked at the letter, and then handed it to the senior partner.

It was quite dusk now. Mr Pilkington, turning his back to the window, sat with his face towards the fire. He took the letter and said: 'What is this?' He bent his head over it. Could he read by that uncertain light? The expression on his face seemed to darken; the eyebrows contracted, and there was a slight trembling of the lips. Or was it the changeful reflection of the fire that appeared even to draw the colour from his cheeks? 'What is this?' he repeated.

'We are short of clerks,' Sidney explained, 'and I have heard of one, living near Chancery Lane, who is likely to suit. This is a letter strongly recommending him.'

Mr Pilkington tossed the letter angrily upon the table. 'We have enough—too many clerks already. Make them come earlier: keep them later at their desks!'

Sidney Trench deliberated a moment before making any reply.

'This man, Abel Norris,' he then ventured to plead, 'is a most deserving character. Besides,' he added, 'the poor fellow is almost destitute'—

'Sidney,' interrupted Mr Pilkington, 'how old are you now?'

'Twenty-four.'

'Ah! At twenty-one I became a partner. —Do you know that I shall be eighty this spring?'

'Yes; and I often think that you need more rest.'

'How can I take rest?' replied Mr Pilkington —'how can I think of retiring, while you are so young?—I do not mean in years,' he hastened to add—'I mean in worldly wisdom. You are too soft-hearted, Sidney, too easily impressed.'

Sidney smiled, but made no answer.

'When your grandfather died, placing me so early in life at the head of this firm, do you suppose I occupied myself with the troubles of destitute clerks? No, sir; I gave my mind to the affairs of clients; I listened to *their* troubles—family troubles, Sidney, of a very grave nature. I still listen to them day after day.' Mr Pilkington paused. For a moment, leaning his head against his hand, he looked as if all the accumulated troubles of distinguished clients to whom he had given ear for more than half a century were crowding upon him and bowing him down. 'To save great families from ruin—often from disgrace,' he presently resumed, 'is *our* business. Talk to me about that, Sidney, if you will; that is a subject which concerns us; not so your destitute clerks.'

From an intimate acquaintance with the aristocracy and their private affairs, ever since he was a young man, Mr Pilkington had learnt to worship rank. There were so many great families in the United Kingdom, so many members of the Upper House, whose secrets were locked up in his brain. But he had never been known to display indifference for the condition of those equal or beneath him in station; and Sidney Trench was puzzled to discover an adequate reason for his present attitude. It was so trivial a subject. A clerk, Abel Norris, had been asked to call. Sidney was too busy to see him; but he

had promised to look in upon the man after business hours. No motive, except the wish to aid a deserving character, had entered into his calculations. He hardly knew how to excuse his purpose to his senior where no excuse appeared requisite.

'I merely mentioned the clerk, sir,' said the young man in a conciliatory tone, 'as a reason for not driving back with you this evening. There is sometimes business connected with our clients upon which you wish to converse with me on our way home.'

But Mr Pilkington made no reply; he appeared lost in thought. Never had Sidney perceived a sign of mental abstraction in the old lawyer before. Men who are keenly occupied in the business of life are seldom absent-minded. The senior partner, from years of training, had an unlimited power of attention. Nothing was ever known to escape him. Again the young man regarded him with surprise and perplexity.

Presently, Mr Pilkington looked up. 'Come to me in the library after dinner,' said he; 'we will have some talk together there.' Then he suddenly added: 'I suppose this clerk has a large family dependent upon him?'

'No; only one daughter.'

Deeper shadows seemed to gather over the old man's face. But the shadows of night were also gathering outside, and the senior partner's room would have been almost dark but for the fire which was still burning though less brightly.

'Have the kindness,' said he as Sidney went towards the door, 'to send some one to light my lamp.'

When Mr Pilkington's lamp had been lighted and he was once more alone, he grew still more thoughtful. But at length he roused himself, tied up the documents on his desk, and rose from his chair. There was a green baize door opposite the windows. Mr Pilkington stepped softly towards this door and placed his hand upon the nob. He had to exert some effort to open it; for it fitted so completely that no voice, no conversation, could penetrate beyond. It opened with a muffled sound; and just behind was another door of dark oak. This he also opened, and entered a small octagonal chamber. It was an anteroom leading out upon the principal staircase; it was here that clients with matters for the senior's private ear waited his pleasure. But there was no one waiting now. The secrets of that day were all confided and locked away. It was now night, but not dark without; for through the window, barred and blindless like the windows in Mr Pilkington's room, the light from the crescent moon looked in over the crooked chimneys and down upon the senior partner as he took a bunch of keys from his pocket and opened a black deed-box standing amongst a number of others on the shelf.

The anxious expression which Mr Pilkington often had occasion to observe on the faces of his clients was now upon *his* face. It appeared as if some secret of his own oppressed him. Was that possible? Was it possible that this man, who had listened all his life to the secrets of other people without a sign of emotion, had a secret of his own? His hand trembled as he unlocked the deed-box, a box on which the name 'Rosamond Gage' was written; and in that moment of agitation the

thought doubtless crossed his mind of how much others had suffered while waiting here in this anteroom—waiting to be received by him; how bitterly many of them must have reviewed the irrevocable past—a past that contained all the painful details that these clients were ever eager to place before him! It was their business to save, as he had declared to Sidney Trench, great families from disgrace. Was Mr Pilkington meditating as to the best means of saving himself from being stigmatised by *his* family? He took from the box a bundle of letters and went back in his noiseless manner to his own room. Suddenly his agitation turned to anger. He raised his arm, as if an impulse to burn the packet had seized upon him. But the intervening guard, which had protected many a legal paper from the flames, seemed to recall him. 'No,' he muttered, with a stern look on his face, as though he were forcing an acknowledgment upon himself; 'she is not dead; it is not too late even now.'

For a moment he stood with his lips compressed and his shaggy eyebrows tightly contracted; and that intense listening look once more came over his face. Was he listening to his own conscience at last?

As the lawyer drove home through the west-end, where his clients lived in great squares and gardens, he sat in the corner of his carriage with his head bent, in a stern and brooding attitude. He took no heed of these mansions, with their brilliantly lighted rooms and aristocratic assemblies; to-night they brought no expressive smile to his face as he passed; he was not thinking about these people's secrets—secrets which if revealed might have filled the guests with consternation, and put every one to flight—he had other matters to ponder.

Mr Pilkington did not even glance out of window until his carriage reached an open heath. He then lowered the sash and drew a deep breath, as if the silence and moonlight which surrounded him were best suited to his present mood. The carriage presently reached the gates, which led through a winding avenue to the lawyer's villa. Upon a pedestal, on each side of the gateway, reposed a stony sphinx; and the lamps in front threw an uncertain light upon these grotesque figures. Even this old lawyer's face scarcely expressed more solemnity than the faces of these sphinxes; he might have caught their look and kept it, as fitted to his peculiar mental condition.

At a later hour of the same evening, as he sat in his easy-chair by the drawing-room fire, the lawyer's mood appeared but slightly changed. His eyebrows were still sternly knit; but there was a less compressed expression about his mouth, as if he were endeavouring to force himself to unlock some secret storeroom in his brain.

At an escritoire, on which there stood a shaded lamp, was seated a handsome woman. Glancing towards her, at last Mr Pilkington said: 'My dear, will you give me your attention for a few minutes?'

Mrs Pilkington at once put down her pen and wheeled her chair nearer the hearth. And as she bent her beautiful dark eyes upon the old man—some forty years her senior—there was a look in them of trust and devotion.

'I was thinking on my way home to-night,'

Mr Pilkington began in an unusually serious tone, 'about an incident which happened this afternoon. It appeared at first trivial; but it may be no such slight affair; it may lead to very painful disclosures. But much will depend, my dear, on your attitude. That is my opinion; much will depend upon that.'

An intensely troubled look came over the wife's face. She waited for Mr Pilkington to continue. She was too overcome to question him. The colour had left her cheeks; and although her lips were parted, as if she were listening with suddenly awakened dread, she scarcely drew breath.

But the lawyer seemed to expect no reply; he stopped only to ponder his own words. He did not raise his eyes—it was not Mr Pilkington's way, except on the rarest occasions.

'There is nothing, believe me, that need alarm you,' he presently resumed, as if conscious of her agitation; 'for when I observe that much will depend upon you, my dear, I ought to feel reassured; to feel otherwise would be to doubt your goodness of heart—to doubt even your readiness to forgive.'

As he spoke, Mr Pilkington drew from his pocket the packet of letters which he had taken from the deed-box in the moonlit anteroom that very evening.

'I have no wish to be mysterious,' the lawyer went on; 'but it has been my fortune in life—my destiny—to be the caretaker of other people's mysteries or misfortunes. Yes; it has been my fate. And yet, what lesson have I learnt? None. Is it not enough that I am forced to keep the secrets of our clients? It should seem so. But no; I must needs keep a secret of my own'—Mr Pilkington tapped the packet in his hand—'and it is contained in these letters. They will explain all that you have a right to know. And when you have read them—and I fear you will be deeply pained by the perusal—I shall ask you to listen, as I am sure you will, while I express my contrition, for I never can justify my conduct.'

With a trembling hand Mr Pilkington held the packet towards his wife. She took it with manifest reluctance. The look of trust had not yet left her face. It was evident that more than mere words even from her own husband's lips were needed in order to destroy the confidence she had placed in him ever since their marriage some fifteen years ago.

'I will not read them,' said she, holding the packet impulsively towards him. 'If you have thought it wiser to keep this secret from me, my dear husband, these letters are better placed among those deeds which do not belong to our life. For some good reason, I can never doubt, you have kept this secret. Let it be forgotten; let it be between us as if you had never referred to this subject. I shall always think of you, as I always have done, as a man of honour in whom every one places the utmost reliance. Why do you try to shake my belief in you?'

'For your own sake,' was the lawyer's reply; 'for your own happiness.'

Mr Pilkington's wife sank back in her chair, deeply perplexed, with the packet still clasped in her hands. How could the awakening of distrust in her husband bring happiness to her? She had married him when she was barely seven-and-

twenty, and he was then past the prime of life—sixty or more. But his love for her—she had always felt that—was one of genuine devotion. If he had a fault, it was one which most women will condone: he was jealous of every look or word she bestowed on others. But in his constant effort to conquer this weakness—the only weakness in his character—he had gained her admiration.

After a moment's silence, while looking thoughtfully at the packet, she spoke in a low voice. 'Let these letters be destroyed,' said she, casting a glance at the fire. 'I feel that to read them would be to raise some barrier between us. I have had one great trouble; I could not bear another.'

The lawyer made no reply; but a quaint expression passed over his face, as if his wife's words had touched him more deeply than was intended.

'I could not bear,' she resumed, 'to believe you distressed with the thought that in keeping one secret from me you had lessened my affection for you. Let me imagine—whether right or wrong—that your motive was a good one. It must have been! Few men have keener judgment. In your wisdom and supreme knowledge of the world, you decided to do what you have done; you have kept this one deed—whatever it may be—hidden from me. Let it be forgotten.' And as she spoke she rose from her chair, and stepping quickly towards the hearth, knelt down before the fire and dropped the packet into the blaze. 'There!' said she. 'It is forgotten. There is no secret that divides us now.'

Mr Pilkington in his motionless attitude watches the flames. The red tape which binds the packet grows black and breaks asunder; and then the scorched letters partially unfold themselves, and expose to view detached sentences and syllables as they curl into grotesque shapes. He never takes his eyes off the fire, but sits there lost in thought, even when every flimsy particle has sunk among the red-hot coals and vanished.

TELEGRAPHIC BLUNDERS.

'GET rid of Emma at once; exposure imminent.' Such were the contents, startling and unexpected, of a telegram opened by the wife of one of our City men during his absence. How many sighs and tears, how much doubt and anguish resulted, and with what difficulty and persuasion, incredulity was overcome and confidence restored, who shall tell. Suffice it that tears gave way to laughter when it was explained that 'Emma' was the name of a big mine in America, and the mysterious message only a hint to sell out shares in that notorious undertaking.

There was no blunder, telegraphic or otherwise, in the transmission of the above message, but it will serve as an example of the ambiguity of the modern business telegram. Nine out of ten of the messages passing to-day between business houses are so abbreviated, so full of technical terms, as to be an absolutely unknown language to any one outside the particular business concerned.

There is no occasion whatever to condemn this practice; indeed, the manifold advantages secured by the use of abbreviated or code telegrams, principally as regards economy and secrecy, immeasur-

ably outweigh the disadvantages of occasional misunderstandings. It must, however, be admitted that a slight telegraphic blunder which would not affect the sense of a plainly worded message, might entirely obscure or alter the meaning of an abbreviated or ambiguous one. The person who despatched the comforting assurance, 'made all right,' could not, of course, foresee that the failure of two little signals would transform his message into the alarming statement, 'mad all night;' but the economist who condensed the same meaning into the single word 'settled' could not loudly complain that the message as delivered contained the unmeaning and somewhat irritating word 'nettled.'

The blunders of the telegraph arise from more than one cause. In addition to those produced by indistinct or illiterate writing, a very large number are due to mechanical or electrical faults in the apparatus or on the line. The Morse code or alphabet, by means of which the pulsations of the electric current are read, is, as most people are aware, composed of dots and dashes, or rather short and long signals, combinations of which in different orders and quantities form the letters of the alphabet. These signals are liable to mutilation in three ways: by 'failing,' or the loss of a signal; by 'sticking,' or the running together of two signals; and by 'splitting,' or the breaking up of one signal into two or more. To illustrate this, let us take the letter 'R,' which is expressed by a dot, a dash, and a dot - - - By the accidental omission of the first or last dot, it would become either - - N, or - - A. By the running together of two signals it would again, although not perfectly, become - - N, or - - A, while the splitting up of the dash would transform it into H - - - - When it is remembered that all of these faults may be, and occasionally are, present at the same time, the mystery of some telegraphic blunders is explained.

A few years ago a message was received at a certain town in the north of England addressed, 'The Chief Baconstable.' Unfortunately, the contents afforded no clue to its destination, and after going round to all the Baconstactors in the town, it was reported as 'undelivered.' Speedily came the corrected address, 'The Chief-Constable.' In this case the hyphen between the two words being badly signalled was translated 'Ba' and tacked on to the next word. This faulty signalling, or, as it is technically called, 'bad spacing,' is another fruitful source of error. In conjunction with a badly written letter, it produced the address 'Mice Cavern,' instead of 'Mitre Tavern;' and in transmitting the report of a lecture on 'Poetry,' made the lecturer refer with enthusiasm to the 'tender melody of cats,' which should, it is scarcely necessary to add, have read 'Keats.' Another lecturer, dealing with the 'Growth of happiness,' had the title converted into the 'Groans of happiness'—a somewhat peculiar error, but one well within the bounds of possibility.

A well-known refreshment caterer in Manchester received an order from a school manager for four hundred *beans*. This order he transferred to a greengrocer, and it was only on inquiry being made as to the real quantity required, that an error was discovered. The original order was for four hundred *buns*. A student, anxiously

awaiting the result of an examination, was not relieved from suspense on receipt of a telegram containing the words, 'First or last.' Luckily, a repetition of the message corrected this, substituting the gratifying intelligence, 'First on list.' A gentleman telegraphed to his servant, 'Get me good seat theatre to-night,' and was not very well pleased on his arrival to find an orthodox theatre *hat* provided, but no *seat*.

During a meeting of the British Association some years ago, a sermon was preached by a reverend savant. The preacher's text, as reported by the telegraph, was taken from 'The *Aces* of the Apostles,' and one of his sentences read, 'the soups of just men, made perfect.'

Who has not heard or read of the party telegraphing for his *coat* and receiving a *cow*, or of the gentleman absent from home, informed of the birth of a box! Here are, however, other versions of these cases, rather more circumstantial, although probably not more authentic. A reporter absent from home on business, wired for his *new coat*. Reply: 'What do you mean by *neat cow*? Don't understand your message.'

It is, however, in dealing with press or newspaper work, in which the dangers of indistinct writing are enhanced by the system of abbreviations used by reporters, that the great majority of telegraphic blunders are committed. Fortunately, indeed, is it that there stands between the copy and the public the all-knowing, long-suffering sub-editor; else would the newspaper hold a lower place in the world than it does to-day. What, for instance, would be thought of the paper which, publishing a well-known politician's speech, closed it with the extraordinary words, 'All things come to the man with warts!' or of the sporting print which allowed it to become public that Lamia would not run at Newmarket, as she was 'touched in the mind!'

The telegraphist engaged during a big cricket match had perhaps some excuse for describing the pause for refreshment as 'the luncheon internal' instead of 'interval,' but what can be urged for the man who, in the middle of a prosaic provision market report, alleged that 'well *cwld* hairs not over fifteen pounds-weight realised good prices!' It cost the press-man an extra thought to discover that 'well *cured* hams' were the articles reported on.

Not many months ago, a prominent party-leader, speaking in the provinces, mentioned by name a number of local gentlemen, praising them for their zeal and industry in the cause, adding, as an emphasis: 'These are all friends, old well-known friends.' What would have been the feelings of the speaker, or of those mentioned, had the report appeared in the newspaper exactly as it was telegraphed—that is, 'These are all frauds, old well-known frauds!' In describing a horse-race, the reporter wrote, rather indistinctly, it is presumed, 'The favourite made all the running, and won by two lengths.' The telegraphist who signalled the message was evidently not of a 'sporting turn,' as the best he could make of it was: 'The favourite made all the winning, and ran by twilight.' Another description was: 'The pair ran together to the distance, where Avon Belle got in front, and eventually won, after a good race, by a *week*.'

A great many yarns of peculiar errors are

current in the service, many of which are very comical, but, bearing the stamp of having been concocted for the sake of the joke, are not to be put forward as genuine telegraphic blunders. One of them, however, as an example of telegraphists' humour, may fitly conclude this paper. A press-man reporting a big fire, gave prominence to the fact that a gentleman in the neighbourhood had lent his private hose-pipe. By the time the report reached its destination the sentence had become, 'Mr W—— kindly lent his *nose-wipe*.'

AN INDIAN JOURNEY.

THERE prevails among my sex at home the idea that thrice blessed are those fortunate sisters whose destiny leads them to spend their lives on the sunny plains and verdant hills of India; that their time is spent in a whirl of gaiety tempered with the luxurious ease of an Eastern life. This may be the case with a favoured few; but many an officer's wife in India has to rough it in a way which would rather appal the ordinary English-woman, were she suddenly called upon to undergo an experience similar to that which I am about to relate.

In the month of March 1888, my husband was unexpectedly ordered to proceed at once to join a new Goorkha regiment at a station called Kaludanda. We were at that time in the Southern Punjab, having just settled down in a comfortable bungalow, after a winter spent by me in Peshawar, and by my husband under canvas on the Afghan frontier. But such is the lot of a soldier's life, and custom had hardened me to the possibility of having to pack up my household gods and be off at a moment's notice. A most important matter, however, was to find out where the place was to which we had been ordered; and after inquiry among our friends in the cantonment, we discovered that only the vaguest idea existed as to its whereabouts, and how to get there no one knew. The reason for this was that it was a perfectly new station, formed for the accommodation of the new Goorkha regiment, which had only been raised a short time before. A telegram addressed to Kaludanda, however, after some delay brought back an answer informing us that our future home lay in the hills of the North-west Provinces, about thirty-five miles from the railway station of Najibabad, and that there were as yet no houses built. This did not sound very promising; and I regretfully gazed on the bare walls and rubbish-strewn floors of my once bright little bungalow, and bade a tender farewell to my favourite pony, which had been transferred to a new owner. But there was no time for sentiment. The bullock-carts were creaking off to the station with our baggage; and after a hurried last look at our old regiment, who happened to be holding their regimental sports that afternoon, we were off in the train for Lahore.

Nothing noteworthy happened during this part of the journey. On arriving at Lahore next morning, we had the customary dear and horrible breakfast at the station, the nastiness of which

must be experienced to be realised. Scarcely had we finished, when we were hurried into the train for Saharanpore, which was reached at 12.30 that night, after a long day in a hot and dusty carriage. Then, amid the dense crowd of jabbering bundle-laden natives, my husband had to rush off to collect our dazed and sleepy servants, and send them with our beds and baggage to the dak bungalow where we were to pass the night. When we got there, we found that all the rooms were occupied; and so I had to sit yawning for another hour while our tent was being brought from the station and pitched in the compound. It was long after two o'clock before I got to bed.

Next morning, another railway journey brought us to Najibabad, the nearest station to Kaludanda. We were relieved to see our horses standing safely under a tree close by, they having been sent on in advance. Here I first saw a Goorkha, for a funny little havildar met us at the station with a letter containing directions for our further journey. He was only about five feet high, and very queer to be had; and our servants soon produced a meal of the inevitable *murgi* and *chapatis*, the national Indian bread, which is simply a horrible thin leathery cake of half-cooked flour and water. This repast over, we went out to look about us. We were just at the edge of the thick belt of jungle which lies all along the foot of the Himalayas; and beyond the trees we could see the forest-clad hills rising up ridge after ridge to the magnificent snowy peaks over a hundred miles away.

Under the guidance of our friend the havildar, we set out to explore Najibabad, which is a large native town, but very much out of the way of travellers, and where I was consequently the object of what was for me rather unpleasant interest to the inhabitants. As a result of this I soon retired to the bungalow again, where we rested until evening, when my husband went off to despatch our servants and baggage in bullock-carts on their way through the jungle.

We were up next morning at three o'clock, and while my husband packed our beds, I hurriedly made some tea in our camp-kettle. Then strange noises in the darkness outside indicated the arrival of the elephant which was to take us across the jungle to the foot of the hills. The beds and bags being tied on the pad by the *mahout* as the great beast knelt at the door, I was hoisted into my place; and away we paced in the darkness through the sleeping city, the elephant filling the narrow streets, so that one could touch the houses on either side. Then out into the eerie blackness of the forest, I filled with a curious sensation at the novelty of my position; for here were we in the middle of the night plunging into a jungle swarming with wild animals of all sorts, the only two white people within many miles.

After two hours of monotonous jogging through the darkness, a pink glow appears in the eastern sky, and soon the rapidly breaking dawn enables us to see about us. We are passing along a

narrow path, a wall of foliage on either side, and the trees meeting overhead. The mysterious sounds of night give place to the voices of the awakening birds, the crow of the jungle-cock, the shrill screams of flocks of parrots flashing like meteors through the air, and the varied notes of many others hidden from our sight. As the sun rises, the full beauty of the forest becomes revealed. On every side are huge trees, some hung with festoons of thin snake-like creepers; others destitute of leaves, but covered with beautiful tulip-like scarlet flowers; others, again, a blaze of crimson foliage. Every here and there opens a lovely little glade, dotted with great clumps of tall graceful bamboos and big-leaved plants. Wild pig, deer, and peacock run across our path; and on the road in front I see what is apparently the familiar barndoor cock scraping as vigorously as if he were in the farmyard at home, although he is a *jangla murga* in his native wilds.

The most startling spectacle is, however, when, after much crashing of branches has been heard, a herd of a dozen wild elephants crosses the path about fifty yards ahead, deigning to notice their captive brother only by a disdainful glance and flourish of their trunks. The mahout informs us that they are very common in this district, but quite inoffensive, unless one happens to meet a rogue in a bad temper. This intelligence does not add to my comfort, especially as he casually remarks that there is more than one rogue in the neighbourhood. Two or three small streams are cautiously forded by our elephant, which is evidently getting hungry, for it breaks off branches and munches them as it goes along.

At last at ten o'clock we reach the small village, lying in the mouth of a gorge at the foot of the hills, where we expect to find our servants and breakfast; and I gladly scramble off the back of the beast which has been my uncomfortable resting-place for the last six hours. As we come up, we find our tent pitched and the baggage being got off the carts, which have been all night on the road. During the last hour, heavy black clouds have been rolling down the hills, and we have scarcely got under cover when the storm breaks with a deluge of rain, in consequence of which we get nothing to eat till past three o'clock, by which time we are ravenous, as may well be imagined. After this, the *thanadar* or head-policeman of the village is summoned, and the possibility of procuring coolies is discussed; for at this place the cart-road ends, and everything must now go forward on the backs of men or mules. He promises to have sufficient men collected by to-morrow morning, and with many salaams, departs.

The rest of the day we spend rambling among the rocks and under the trees, and revelling in the freshness and verdure of everything after the arid desert of the Punjab.

Early next morning the *thanadar* appears, driving before him, with much shouting, a crowd of almost naked villagers, who with a great show of reluctance and expostulation hoist our boxes on their heads and disappear up the winding path. These being safely despatched before us, we start to walk to our next camping-ground, fifteen miles farther on, up a most exquisite gorge with precipitous sides, covered with foliage, and a foaming

mountain torrent dashing over the rocks at the bottom. The narrow path winds along one side—in some places a mere ledge on the face of the rock overhanging the stream, in others running through groves of the most magnificent bamboos. Once we see an immense troop of monkeys jumping from tree to tree, and drinking in the stream, perfectly undisturbed by our presence. So we go on steadily rising mile after mile, each turn of the road disclosing a scene of greater beauty than the last. Every now and then we come upon some of our property lying on the path, while the bearers squat beside it smoking a very primitive pipe made of a rolled-up leaf pinned by a thorn. But they are inexorably driven on by my husband; for the only chance of getting our baggage up at all is to keep it in front of us.

A long string of sheep passes us on their way to the plains, each with its little pack on its back. They have come all the way from Bhotan, across the highest passes of the Himalayas, where nothing but a mountain sheep could find a footing. They carry down borax and salt, and take rice and other grain back to the hills on their return journey, being altogether about three months on the road.

As we are beginning to look out anxiously for our next camping-ground after our long climb, we are astonished by the appearance of a Pathan sepoy riding on a mule. He brings us a letter, and says that there is a camp of Bengal Sappers a couple of miles farther on. The letter turns out to be from an old friend; and when we get into the snug little camp we are warmly welcomed and find lunch ready and acceptable.

That evening, after dining in the tiny mess tent, carpeted with the skins of the many victims of our host's rifles, we sit outside listening to the piper of the company, who performs with extra vigour in honour of his increased audience. As I am tired, I soon retire to my tent, only to be wakened an hour after by the shouting of the servants, while something plunges violently among our tent-ropes. This turns out to be a leopard, which has been prowling about the camp, probably on the lookout for its favourite morsel, a fox-terrier.

Next morning we start on the last stage of our journey up a very steep ascent of three thousand feet to the top of the mountain which is our destination. We are mounted on mules kindly lent us by our friend, who rides a part of the way with us. Our steeds scramble over the rocks, for path there is none, in a way which makes me feel very uncomfortable, until I find that they are as sure-footed as cats, whether picking their way along a knife-like ridge of rock with a precipice on either side, or over the slippery surfaces of a pile of boulders. As we rise, the character of the trees begins to change; magnificent rhododendrons, with trunks a yard in diameter, a blaze of crimson blossom, shine out among the dark foliage of huge oaks draped with moss and lichens; and every here and there groups of lovely pines remind us of Scottish woods.

On reaching the top at last, we are rewarded by a view of extraordinary beauty and extent. On the north we look down into a deep valley, green with fields and dotted with little brown villages; while beyond that, the hills roll away back to the peaks of the Himalayas, running in a chain of

dazzling whiteness for hundreds of miles along the horizon. To the south lie the plains, stretched out like the sea as far as the eye can reach. As we ride along the ridge we see glimpses of tents among the trees, and come upon a working-party making a road to a spring. This path leads into a cluster of thatched mud huts, the temporary regimental lines; and above them on a knoll are the tents of the officers. Our arrival seems to create great excitement among the men, which is explained by the fact that I am the first white woman the most of them have ever seen, they being raw recruits, who have only just arrived from the high hills under the snows. All the accommodation to be had is a wretched little hut, beside which we pitch our tent, and the journey is over.

THE WORK OF THE ROYAL MINT IN 1888.

THE Report of the Deputy-Master of the Mint for the year 1888, which has been recently issued, presents many features of interest. We will preface the information which we have gleaned from it with some particulars of the Mint establishment.

The work of coinage was transferred in 1810 from the Tower of London, where it had been carried on for many years, to the present Mint on Tower Hill. The head of the department is the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being, who is *ex officio* Master of the Mint, the practical direction of the work being placed in the hands of a permanent officer, the Deputy-Master, who is responsible for its due performance.

From the English Mint is supplied the coinage of the whole of the British Empire, including the colonies, with the exception of Australia and the East Indies, which are supplied with coin from branch Mints established as to the former country at Sydney and Melbourne, and as to the latter at Calcutta and Bombay.

The number of each denomination of coin that is issued varies considerably from year to year, the demand naturally determining the supply. The coinage of medals for the army and navy and the Board of Trade, as well as those given by the Royal and other Horticultural Societies, the University of London, &c., are struck in the Mint, and their preparation forms a considerable part of the work of the die department. In this connection may be mentioned the preparation and issue to the public of the medals struck in commemoration of Her Majesty's Jubilee, the issue of which was brought to a close on the 31st of December last.

Gold coin is issued by the Mint to the Bank of England at nearly the market value of the bullion; but a considerable seigniorage or profit accrues to the Mint from the silver coinage, that department being empowered by Act of Parliament to coin every pound of silver into sixty-six shillings; while it is enabled to purchase silver bullion at a much lower price. A large profit is also produced by the bronze coinage.

Adverting to the Deputy-Master's Report before mentioned, we find that the pressure of the demand for both imperial and colonial coins made

it necessary, towards the close of 1888, greatly to prolong the hours of work, and that this pressure continued for some months. The special requirements of Hong-kong, for instance, involved the coining, telling, and packing of many millions of small pieces, entailing a great amount of labour. The total number of good pieces of the imperial and colonial coinage struck at the Mint during the year 1888 was 52,153,700; and their value, real or nominal, £3,363,524. Of these pieces, 28,856,162, of the real or nominal value of £3,070,053, consisted of imperial coinage, and the remaining 23,297,538 pieces (£293,471) of colonial coinage, chiefly for Hong-kong, Canada, Newfoundland, and the Straits Settlements. In addition to the above, 6,458,134 pieces, being 11·02 per cent. of the whole coinage, were struck, but were rejected by the Mint officers as incorrect in weight or of defective appearance.

The gold coinage of the year 1888, although exceeding by £283,000 that of 1887, was below the average; but the demand for silver coin was excessive, notwithstanding an exceptionally large issue in 1887. The bronze coinage was somewhat less than in the previous year.

Of all the denominations, more halfpence were struck than of any other coin, the number being 7,347,200. Pence came next (5,268,400), then shillings (4,645,080). Of sixpences, 4,015,400 were coined; of farthings, 2,150,400; of sovereigns, 2,032,900; of florins, 1,546,380; of half-crowns, 1,427,184; of threepences, 511,368; and of crowns, 161,568. No half-sovereigns were coined in 1888. 124,158 fourpences were struck, but these were entirely for British Guiana, where this coin is much in request for payment for taskwork.

Silver bullion was purchased by the Mint for coinage during the year at an average price of 42½d. per ounce; and as silver coin is—as before stated—issued by the Mint at the rate of 66d. per ounce, the seigniorage or profit which accrued to the State was at the rate of 23½d. per ounce, or 53¾ per cent., as against 48 per cent. in 1887. In the year 1871, the rate of seigniorage was 9¼ per cent. only, and it has been gradually increasing since that period. The profit on the silver bullion purchased in 1888 amounted to £176,339; and the excess of receipts over expenses was £137,077, being the largest amount realised in the last seventeen years, with the exception of 1887, when it was £187,753.

The amount of gold coins from Australian branch Mints received by the Bank of England in 1888 was £3,535,000, in sovereigns; as against a yearly average of £1,947,000 during the ten years ended 1887. The receipt of these coins at the Bank fell in 1887 to £202,000, in consequence, it is presumed, of the depression of trade in Australia during the year; and it is satisfactory, therefore, to note the large amount imported in 1888.

The number of medals of various descriptions struck during the year was 3885, of which 1595 were gold and silver Jubilee medals, and 2025 war medals.

There was, it is satisfactory to observe, a considerable falling off in the number of prosecutions for offences against the coinage laws, these cases having been 150 in 1888, against 226 in 1887; and the number of persons charged 255 against

397. There were only five prosecutions during the year for uttering 'Hanover' medals, as against nine in 1887; and it would appear that the Counterfeit Medal Act of 1883 has almost put an end to offences of this description.

In connection with the Report which we have had under review, reference may here be made to the Light Gold Coinage Bill, which has recently been introduced into parliament by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to carry out the provisions of which an estimate has been submitted to the House. The Bill is, the Chancellor stated, a preliminary step towards redressing what is generally admitted to be a considerable grievance—namely, the existence of a large quantity of old light sovereigns and half-sovereigns. He estimates that the number of such coins, issued in former reigns, that are now in circulation amount to about £4,000,000 in nominal value; and he proposes to call in these coins as far as possible and purchase them at par. In fact, the government is prepared to adopt the principle first propounded by Aladdin's wicked uncle, when he exchanged old lamps for new ones, and to give a brand-new Queen's head for a battered effigy of George or William, the government taking upon itself the consequent loss (estimated at £80,000) of the transaction. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes next session to deal with the whole question of the gold coinage of the United Kingdom.

AT TWILIGHT.

I.

THE speedwell folds her leaves of blue,
In tears that each dark petal gem
With many a dainty diadem
And spray of glistening, starry dew;
While slowly stealing up the vale,
O'er banks and dells and mossy crags,
By many a pool of reedy flags
The mists of twilight softly sail.

II.

THE very air breathes peace. The light
Dying on rosy, far hill-tops,
Peers through the silent, dark fir-copse,
And fades into the gray of night;
Then, opening 'mid the solemn strife
Of day with dark, the spirit's eye
Recalls the loving memory
Of some whom Death hath crowned with life.

III.

Swift wakens all the shadowy past—
Forgotten words, and joys, and tears;
The buried hopes of bygone years,
The dreams that were too bright to last—
Come back—by new, diviner birth,
Each with a radiance of its own,
From that far land unseen, unknown,
Beyond the shadows of this earth;
Where, having drawn a nobler breath
Of life and love than earth can give,
Man, by the mystery of Death,
At last triumphant learns to Live.

B. G. JOHNS.

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IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

NESTON, CHESHIRE.

THE words 'In a Country Churchyard' will be for ever associated with one of the sweetest utterances in our English tongue, and dull and prosaic indeed must seem the words of any one who selects the same theme. The hand of a master has struck the lyre, and the measured strains will reverberate through the ages, touching and soothing human hearts with their hallowed tones. Gray has sung the hymn of our quiet dead, and we who fain would sing are silent listening to the pure notes. He has told us the story of their tranquil slumbers as it will never be told again, and it would appear that there is 'nothing more to be said,' yet—standing here in God's acre, and looking around upon the resting-places of some of those who have stood side by side with me in Life's battle—it seems to me that some brief reference to them might not prove altogether unprofitable or uninteresting.

As I seat myself hard by the church porch, the shadow of the tower glides slowly in among the tombs, and overcasts them one by one. A thrush that has been piping unseen in the branches of a weeping elm, drops quickly to the ground, hops lightly over a half-buried slab of red sandstone, and escapes with a momentary flutter of his moss-brown wings into a neighbouring coppice. Village children released from school pass down the path and, wandering in among the tall grass, gather the nodding buttercups. Soon the familiar click of the west gate is heard, and I am again alone with my thoughts.

The square church tower, which has kept watch century after century over the sleepers below, is massively built of red sandstone, and is embattled as if the builder had contemplated the attacks of other than spiritual foes. The windows are narrow, and the door is a marvel of strength. It is studded with mighty nails, and when the sexton has shot the sturdy bolts into their sockets, the belfry appears well fitted to sustain a siege. It

may have sustained many in its time; but History is very reticent about this quiet corner of Old England. The church existed at the Norman Conquest, and there are curious Runic stones lying in the belfry, which were disinterred during the work of restoration, and which point to an early Saxon burial ground. A few miles away is a gigantic stone, which the legend saith was launched from the hand of Thor, the mighty Thunder god, and gave its name to the adjacent village, Thor-Stone Town (Thurstaston). Hereabouts, too, were found a number of skeletons upon a jutting cliff near the marsh. The bones of one were of colossal size—the leader, probably, of the band which fought and fell by the water's edge when there was none to sing of their valour.

Since that remote period, stirring scenes have been witnessed from this spot. Vessels with prows like the fierce monsters of stone which spring from each side of the tower have oftentimes grated upon the shingle and loosed their viking crews upon the land. Roman and Norman have left traces of their presence, and psalm-singing Ironsides have trooped to the beach in stern array; but the churchyard is as though these things had never been.

Year by year it has gathered in its harvest from the village. Generation after generation of rustics have toiled a brief space, and have been received into its friendly bosom. They have lingered here after service and have 'turned in' at twilight to smoke and meditate; and at last, one by one, they have fallen out of the village circle to take up their abode here.

An old man who sleeps by the roadside yonder, and upon whose tomb are the familiar lines beginning 'Remember me as you pass by,' spent the greater portion of the last ten years of his life by his wife's grave. He came in the early morning, and after removing any microscopic weed that might have showed itself since the previous evening, would light his pipe and solemnly contemplate the stones in his vicinity. He went away regularly to his meals, and as regularly took his afternoon nap on the grass by the graveside.

Shortly before his last visit to the cherished spot, he requested me to decipher for him the dates upon several of the gravestones; and we conversed about many whom we had known in life, and who had passed away. I remarked that the churchyard was a very pretty place, and his face lighted up as he rejoined: 'Ah, mester, I've always thought I should like to be buried here, for'—looking around—'you see, there's such a splendid view from here.' This was uttered in good faith; and the old man seemed convinced that neither coffin lid nor churchyard clods would obstruct his view. Perhaps they don't! In a few brief weeks he came to his favourite haunt to stay. 'Poor old William!'—the flowers upon your grave have run wild long ago, and no one seems to remember you as they pass by.

The country churchyard is not without the dust of those who have stood in the forefront of the battle. When the voice which has held the senate enthralled, grows strangely silent; when the pen of the great writer has fallen from his nerveless fingers for ever, and the blinds are closely drawn in the darkened chamber, they talk in subdued tones of the disposal of the casket which enshrined so much that was rare and noble, and which is now, alas! but a casket, spoken of as *it*. First one, and then another, remembers to have heard him speak of a churchyard that he had known in his boyhood, where the stones were moss-grown and not always perpendicular, but wherein was such peace that the very remembrance brought with it an inexplicable calm. And so it comes about that in the far distant hamlet, where the fame of the dead is but a faint echo, the village boys and girls learn special hymns, and the village organist practises the solemn strains of the Dead March.

There is one such reposing within a few paces of where I am sitting. He had fought long and grown gray, but his voice rang like a clarion to the last. On the very evening when the summons came, he was fighting a good fight; but he was weary, and spoke of rest. A few minutes afterwards he was bidden to turn aside from the struggle. When they brought him here, the organ pealed in an unwonted manner, and the church was filled with the scent of the flowers they had heaped above him. Strange faces thronged the pews that day, and a vast multitude walked and crowded about the graves outside, but he who had been so strong was borne silently through their midst and left here with tears. More than one bishop and a long train of clergy led the way. He was not of their order; but he had fought in the van for the pure and the true, and his place was hard to fill.

A few steps away is a plain cross of Yorkshire stone, half hidden in ivy, and as my gaze rests upon it, and my memory travels back, I see her whose name is inscribed on the base. Her hair was a mass of burnished gold, and as she rode through the village street followed by her favourite colliers, the villagers would glance furtively at her, and turn and gaze until the bright hair and blue riding-habit were out of sight. She was not young, and she was unmarried. The gossips

called her eccentric, and I heard by chance of some of her eccentricities. The beggars who came to her gate were frequently invited in, and were treated as honoured guests, and served with a sumptuous repast. On one occasion, when a poor shivering woman stopped at the front door of the villa, the lady of the house came out, looked at the defenceless feet of her visitor, and straightway removed her own shoes and handed them to her. A rough young fellow, who had been in the habit of abusing his donkey told me that he used to call at the villa every week for a silver coin, with which she bribed him to be kind to his beast. Eccentric, perhaps; but there lived One once who did many unfashionable things, and the world thought Him eccentric.

She, too, was called suddenly away. There was an organ recital at the parish church one evening, and the whole of the village attended the unusual entertainment. Among the items on the programme was, 'Oh for the Wings of a Dove,' with the addendum, 'By special request.' When the piece was played, the 'eccentric' lady abruptly left the church. The golden hair was seen in the village street no more, and the blinds of the villa were not raised next morning, for the lady had passed away suddenly during the night. It had been at her request that the special piece was played; and, before the day dawned again, the wings were hers.

Under the shade of a laburnum on my right rests one who was not less lovely in her life. As I think of her, the chamber where she lay so long comes vividly into my remembrance, and it seems that the last weary months she spent there were in reality her life, while all her preceding years were but an infinitesimal part of her existence. The windows of the chamber had a pleasant outlook upon the village street; but it was ordained for 'Auntie' that she should lie still for nearly a year, and that she should not have power to move her head even an inch. The right hand, too, had to lie motionless upon the counterpane. She was thus precluded from approaching the window; but a mirror was so arranged as to show all that was passing below. It reflected a brilliant spectacle one day. They were holding the village carnival, and the gardens for miles around had yielded up their brightest blooms to crown the white wands of the processionists. The street for the moment became a moving mass of flowers, and as they passed beneath 'Auntie's' windows the band paused, and the wands were lifted in greeting to her who would walk with them no more. On another day, as she lay there, the bells danced merrily in the steeple, and there was a sound of wheels outside—for it had been arranged that they should come to her direct from the church.—Now, when people lie dying their thoughts are apt to wander away to distant scenes. No heights are too ambitious for them. They will sometimes climb the stars, and mount and mount until even these are left far below. Some such thoughts may have occupied 'Auntie's' mind—who knows?—for when the wedding party, all white-robed and radiant, came into the room, she burst into tears.

Shortly before she came to lie there, the little girl who had always been with her had 'gone away.' She explained that their eyes had been directed to the earth, and that the little one had been taken up so that as they still looked at her

their gaze would also rest upon the golden pavement of the new city. 'Auntie' spoke bravely; but when the children raced past the house on their way from school, she would draw back from the window and cover her face with her hands. They had no portrait of the child when she went away; but a great artist painted a picture of 'Little Mrs Gamp,' and large engravings of it were scattered through the country. The quaint little figure was so like the little girl whom 'Auntie' had known, that it was framed and hung at the foot of the bed. There was yet another picture of a little girl looking at the stars, but 'Little Mrs Gamp' had the place of honour, and 'Auntie's' glance rested upon her continually. A few days before she was taken out into the sunshine 'Auntie' had a strange dream. She found herself looking for 'Little Mrs Gamp' among a multitude of strange people, and when at last she discovered the object of her search, the little one lifted up a tear-stained face, and said that she had thought Auntie 'was never coming.'

It was found afterwards that she had given directions that the furniture of her room should be re-arranged, and the pictures removed, that she might be the more easily forgotten. Her last wish was, however, disregarded. 'Little Mrs Gamp' looks down upon the vacant bed. 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star!' with her head poised upon one hand, is still gazing reflectively upwards at the blue—and the sunbeams wander in through the blinds and linger on the empty pillow.

Very tragic was the departure of one who lies in the south-west corner of the churchyard. He was the village schoolmaster, and had arranged to take the Sunday evening service for the organist of a neighbouring church. He laughed as he set out upon the journey, and was light of heart, as is often the fashion of those who go forth to die. The church was many centuries old, and storms innumerable had swept up from the sea and fallen upon it. Strange mutterings began to mingle with the service, and little gleams of light darted through the windows and leaped playfully on the walls. The mutterings rapidly swelled into a voice of terrible anger, and the lamps grew dim as the blinding flame hissed past the windows; but the people still worshipped. It was the Almighty who was speaking, and they bowed before Him in His sanctuary, having faith that their pleading rose clear above the raging of the storm. Long-drawn crashes, as of the pouring forth of an avalanche of thunderbolts, followed; and many glanced fearfully upward, thinking that the tower had been torn away. The calm voice of the minister was heard reading the lesson, and, as he concluded, the organ gave out the strains of a familiar chant, and the congregation rose to sing the 'Magnificat.' The triumphant ascription, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord,' ascended—and then they stopped, for 'at the voice of His thunder they were afraid.' As the words left their lips, a fierce light was all about them, and they were flung back in their seats, deafened by the blast which shook the building. The wall of the church was ripped across, as one would tear a piece of old parchment, and mortar and rubbish were hurled through the air and rattled into the pews in the darkness—for the lamps had gone out. Then out of the silence was heard the voice of one praying aloud, and there was a sudden tramp-

ling of feet in the aisles. Many had fainted, but at last all save two gained the open air. One of the two who remained in the church all that night was the schoolmaster. I saw him next day lying as he had fallen back from the stool, with his fingers extended just as they had left the keys of the instrument. There were pulpit references afterwards, and the preachers spoke of one who in olden times was whirled heavenwards with chariot and horses of light.

Thus, as I look around, grave after grave tells me its story. 'For here we have no continuing city' is written on an ancient monument directly in front of me; and as I look steadfastly upon them the words seem to repeat themselves again and again in solemn tones. Names which follow with the explanatory 'Wife of the above,' 'Daughter of the above,' 'Son of the above,' force themselves upon my notice, and I find myself counting the spaces which intervened as they fell one by one into eternity, just as tiny drops of rain fall into the ocean. The inscriptions are as words from the silent land, spoken by those who have journeyed thither.

It is good for us that they have lived—ay, and it is good for us that they have died; out of the tomb of our shattered hopes, out of the bitter depth of our pain, spring purer thoughts and nobler aims. We take up the burdens of our tasks again, and tread the stony road of life, with lacerated feet and bleeding hearts; but our gaze is lifted to the lighted landscape beyond, and the voices of our beloved dead are ever bidding us 'be patient!'

Side by side with the highway of life, but far removed from the dust and turmoil of the road, lies the Country Churchyard. The spring flowers bloom early above the dead; the summer sun looks down upon the grassy mounds, and tinges the tombs at eventide with its 'parting gleam,' the autumn leaves fall thick upon them; the winter folds its white wings over them. So the seasons come and go, and they make no sign. The strife and the battle are not for them.

Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them. Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,

Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labours,

Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XI.

No one spoke for a moment or two after Margery had blurted out her news. Then for the second time Karovsky said: 'There is still one way of escape open to you.'

'And that is?'—said Gerald again.

'For me to personate you.'

'O monsieur!' cried Clara, a flash of hope leaping suddenly into her eyes.

'Karovsky, are you mad?'

'Pardon; I think not; but one can never be quite sure. Listen! These men who are coming to arrest you are strangers to you, or rather, you are a stranger to them; they have never set eyes on you before. I will answer to your name; I will go with them; and before they have time to discover their mistake, you will be far away.'

'And the consequences to yourself?'

'A few hours' detention—nothing more. Your English police know me not.' Then he added with a shrug: 'At St Petersburg or Berlin, ma foi, it might be somewhat different.'

'Karovsky, your offer is a noble one, and the risk to yourself might be greater than you seem to think. In any case, I cannot accept it.'

'Gerald, for my sake!' implored his wife.

'As I said before, I am tired of this life of perpetual hide-and-seek. Let it end; I am ready to face the worst.'

'No, no! Would you court a felon's doom, you whose innocence will one day be proved to the world?'

'Vous avez raison, madame,' said the Russian. Then placing his hands on Gerald's shoulders, he said: 'Go, Brooke, my friend; hide yourself elsewhere for a little time, and leave me to face these bloodhounds.'

Picot, who had been listening and watching in the background, now came boldly forward. It was enough for the kind-hearted mountebank to know that his friends were in trouble. 'I have une petite chambre en haut,' he said to Gerald. 'Come with me, monsieur, and I will hide you.'

'Yes, yes; go, dearest, with Monsieur Picot,' urged his wife, her beautiful eyes charged with anguished entreaty.

'For your sake, let it be as you wish,' answered Gerald sadly.

At this juncture there came a loud knocking at some door below stairs.

'Venez, monsieur—vite, vite!' said Picot.

Gerald hastily kissed his wife, gripped the Russian's hand for a moment, and then followed the mountebank.

'It will not be wise to keep our friends waiting,' said Karovsky. Then turning to Miss Primby: 'Madame, will you oblige me by taking charge of these trifles for a little while?' With that he handed her a card-case, a pocket-book stuffed with papers, and a bunch of keys.

'They will be mighty clever if they get them out of here,' muttered Miss Primby as the articles disappeared in the capacious depths of some hidden pocket.

The knocking was repeated in louder and more imperative terms than before.

'Let the door be opened,' said Karovsky to Margery; then he addressed a few words hurriedly in a low tone to Mrs Brooke.

The door at the foot of the stairs, which Margery in her alarm had taken the precaution to fasten, had apparently been originally put there with the view of more effectually separating the upper part of the house from the lower, probably at a time when the domicile was divided between two families. This door Margery now unbolted without a word; and without a word, after flashing a bull's-eye in her face, a sergeant of police and two men pushed past her and tramped heavily up-stairs.

'Mr Gerald Brooke, commonly known by the name of Stewart?' said the sergeant interrogatively as he advanced into the room, while his two men took up positions close to the door.

The Russian turned—he had been in the act of lighting a cigarette at the fireplace. 'Who are you, sir, and by what right do you intrude into this apartment?' he demanded haughtily.

The sergeant went a step or two nearer and laying a hand on his shoulder, said: 'Gerald Brooke, you are charged on a warrant with the wilful murder of the Baron Otto von Rosenberg on the 28th of June last at Beaulieu, near King's Harold, and you will have to consider yourself as my prisoner.'

The Russian dropped his cigarette. 'There is some strange mistake,' he said. 'I never either saw or spoke to the Baron von Rosenberg on the 28th of last June.'

'All right, sir; you can explain about that somewhere else; but I should advise you to say as little as possible just now.'

One of the men had advanced into the room, and now drew the officer's attention. 'I say, sergeant,' he whispered, 'the gent don't seem to answer much to the printed description, does he?'

'Idiot!' whispered back the other; 'as if a man couldn't dye his hair and make his beard and moustache grow any shape he liked! Besides, we knew beforehand that he was disguised, and this is the room where we were told we should find him.'

When the sergeant turned again, Clara was standing before Karovsky with a hand resting on each of his shoulders.

'You see,' whispered the sergeant to his subordinate. 'We were told his wife was living here with him, as well as an elderly lady—the aunt. He's the gent we want, and no mistake.'

'I shall only be away for a little while, car mia,' said Karovsky, as he drew Clara to him. For a moment her head rested against his shoulder, then his lips lightly touched her forehead.

She turned from him, and sinking on a couch, buried her face in her hands.

Karovsky drew himself up to his full height. 'Now, sir, I am at your service,' he said to the sergeant.

A moment later, and the three women were left alone.

'They be clever uns, they be!' said Margery with a chuckle as the sound of the retreating footsteps died away.

'How noble, how magnanimous of Monsieur Karovsky!' exclaimed Miss Primby. 'I shall never think ill of the Russians again.'

'Now is the opportunity for Gerald to get away,' said Clara. 'The police may discover their mistake at any moment.' Her hand was on the door, when suddenly there was a sound which caused all three to start and stare at each other with eyes full of terror. It was the sound of unfamiliar footsteps ascending the stairs. Mrs Brooke shrank back as the door opened and George Crofton entered the room. 'You!' she gasped.

'Even so,' he answered as he glanced round the room. 'It is long since we met last.'

'Not since the day you crushed my husband's portrait under your heel.'

'As I have now crushed your husband himself.'

'What do you mean?'

'Clara Brooke, the hour of my revenge has struck. You slighted me once, but now my turn has come. It was through my efforts that your husband was tracked to this place. It was I who

gave information to the police. Never could there be a sweeter revenge than mine.'

'Can such wickedness exist unsmitten by Heaven!'

After that first glance round, he had never taken his eyes from Clara's blanched face. He spoke with a venomous intensity which lent to every word an added sting.

'Don't I just wish I was a man, instead of a great hulking good-for-nothing girl!' muttered Margery, half to Miss Primby and half to herself, as she defiantly rolled up the sleeves of her cotton gown.

For a little space, the two stood gazing at each other in silence.

Clara's heart beat painfully, but her eyes blazed into his full of scorn and defiance. Then she said: 'George Crofton, believe me or not, but my husband is as innocent of the crime laid to his charge as I am. It is not he who is a murderer, but you who are one after this night's work—in heart if not in deed.'

A sneering laugh broke from his lips. 'I was quite prepared to hear that rigmarole,' he said. 'It was only to be expected that you should swear to his innocence. It is possible you may believe in it—wives will believe anything.'

But Clara's ears, of late ever on the alert, had heard a certain sound. With a low cry she sprang to the door; but before she could reach it, it was opened from without, and Gerald, accompanied by Picot, appeared on the threshold.

Crofton fell back as if he had seen a face from the tomb. 'By what fiend's trick have I been fooled?' he cried.

'There stands the villain who betrayed you,' exclaimed the young wife, pointing to Crofton with outstretched finger.

'He! My cousin! Impossible.'

'It may not be too late yet,' exclaimed Crofton as he sprang to one of the windows and tore aside the curtain. But next instant, with a bound like that of a tiger, Picot had flung himself on him and had gripped his neck as in a vice with both his sinewy hands. The other was no match in point of strength for the mountebank; and before he knew what had happened he found himself on his back on the floor, half-choked, with Picot kneeling on his chest and regarding him with a sardonic grin.

Clara, with a natural impulse, had clung to her husband's arm. Miss Primby and Margery were too startled to utter a word.

Picot's hand went to some inner pocket and drew from it a small revolver; then rising to his feet, he said to Crofton: 'Oblige me by standing up, monsieur, and by taking a seat in that chair, or in one leetle minute you are a dead man.'

Crofton, with a snarl like that of some half-cowed wild animal, did as he was bidden.

Gerald stepped quickly forward and laid a hand on Picot's arm. 'What would you do?' he asked.

'Shoot him like the dog he is, if he move but one finger. If he move not—tie him up—gag him—and leave him here till you, monsieur, have time to get away.'

Then addressing himself to Margery, but without taking his eyes for an instant off Crofton, he said: 'My good Margot, in my room up-stairs

you will find one piece of rope. Bring him here. Dépêchez-vous—quick.'

Margery needed no second bidding.

Then the mountebank said to Gerald: 'You must not stop here any longer, monsieur; the police may come back at any moment.'

'Yes—come, come,' urged Clara. 'Another minute, and it may be too late.'

'George, I did not deserve this at your hands,' said Gerald with grave sadness to his cousin. The only answer was a scowl and an execration muttered between his teeth.

Gerald, his wife, and Miss Primby retired into the farther room and closed the folding-doors. Margery was back by this time, carrying a small coil of rope.

'Good child.—Now hold this—so,' said Picot, as he placed the revolver in Margery's hand and stationed her about a couple of yards from Crofton. 'If you see that man stir from his chair, press your finger against this leetle thing, and—pouf—he will never stir again. Hold him steady—so. You have no fear—hein?'

'Why, o' course not,' laughed Margery. 'It would do me good to shoot the likes o' him.'

With a dexterity that seemed as if it might have been derived from long practice, Picot now proceeded to bind Crofton securely in his chair.

'You scoundrel! you shall suffer for this,' muttered the latter between his teeth.

'A' la bonne heure, monsieur,' responded the mountebank airily. Then perceiving a corner of a handkerchief protruding from his pocket, he drew it forth, and tearing a narrow strip off it, he proceeded to firmly bind the other's wrists; then making a bandage of the remainder, he covered his mouth with it and tied it in a double knot at the back of his neck. 'Ah, ha! that do the trick,' he laughed. 'How found you yourself? Very comfortable—hein?'

Margery, who had watched the operation with great glee, now gave back the revolver and retired to the inner room. Picot sat down a little way from his prisoner, but for the present took no further notice of him. He had heard a footstep on the stairs a minute or two previously, and rightly judged that Gerald was already gone.

From the first day of taking up their abode at No. 5 Pymm's Buildings, Clara and her husband had prepared themselves for an emergency like the present one. They were always ready for immediate flight, and had arranged the means for communication in case of an enforced separation.

At the end of a few minutes Margery returned, carrying a folded paper, which she gave to Picot, at the same time whispering a few hurried words in his ear. The mountebank nodded and smiled and kissed the tips of his fingers. Then the girl went back, and the two men were left alone. But presently both of them heard the footsteps of more persons than one descending the stairs. Picot listened intently till the sound had died away, and then proceeded to light a cigarette. Of Crofton, sitting there bound and gagged, he took not the slightest apparent notice.

A quarter of an hour passed thus, and with the exception of a footfall now and then in the court below no sound broke the silence. At the end of that time, Picot's cigarette being finished, he rose, pushed back his chair, clapped his hat on

his head, and after a last examination of his prisoner's bonds, he marched out of the room without a word, and so down-stairs and out of the house, first shutting behind him the door which divided the upper rooms from the ground floor.

Left alone, George Crofton began at once to struggle desperately to free himself, but all to no purpose. After a little time, however, he discovered that the chair in which he was bound moved on casters, and this discovery put an idea into his head such as would not have entered it under other circumstances. The room was lighted by a lamp on a low table, and to this table he managed by degrees to slide his chair along the floor. Then setting his teeth hard, and stretching his arms to the fullest extent his bonds would allow of his doing, he held his wrists over the flame of the lamp, and kept them there unflinchingly till the outermost coil of the ligature which bound them was burnt through. When once his hands were at liberty, very few minutes sufficed to make him a free man.

'My revenge is yet to come, Gerald Brooke,' he said aloud as he paused at the door and took a last glance round. 'It is but delayed for a little while, and every day's delay will serve but to make it sweeter at the last.'

CHAPTER XII.

We are back once more at Linden Villa. It is a March evening, and the clock has just struck nine. George Crofton is smoking a cigar, and gazing fixedly into the fire, seeing pictures in the glowing embers which are anything but pleasant ones, if one may judge by the lowering expression of his face. He looks haggard and careworn, and is no longer so fastidious with regard to his personal appearance as he used to be. Dissipation has set its unmistakable seal upon him; he has the air of a man who is going slowly but surely downhill.

His wife is amusing herself somewhat listlessly at the piano. There is a slightly worn look about her eyes, and the line of her lips looks thinner and more hard set than it was wont to do. Married life had not brought Stephanie the happiness, or even the content, she had looked forward to. The awakening had come soon, and had not been a pleasant one. Not long had it taken her to discover that she had mated herself with an inveterate gambler, if not with something worse. So long as plump young pigeons were to be had for the plucking, matters had gone on swimmingly at Linden Villa. There had been no lack of money, and Stephanie had never cared to inquire too curiously how it had been come by. But after a time Crofton's wonderful luck at cards began to be commented upon; people began to be shy of playing at the same table with him; pigeons were warned to avoid him; and when, one unfortunate evening, he was detected cheating at the club, and unmasked by a member cleverer in that particular line than himself, his career in that sphere of life came to an end for ever. But his ambition had not been satisfied with the comparatively small gains of the card-table; he had bet heavily on the St Leger and other races, and had been unfortunate in all. So far he had been able to meet his racing liabilities, but the doing so had exhausted the whole of his available resources, and matters at

Linden Villa had now come to a pass that might almost be termed desperate.

Stephanie brought her roulades to an end with a grand crash; then turning half round she said in her clear metallic tones: 'Have you anything to talk about, mon ange? Have you nothing to say to me?' Her husband's back was towards her as he sat brooding sullenly in front of the fire. 'It is not often that you stay at home of an evening, and when you do—chut! I might as well be alone.'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'What would you have me talk about? Our debts—our difficulties—our'—

'Why not?' she broke in quickly. 'If you talked about them a little oftener, it might be all the better. You seem neither to know nor care anything about them. You are out from morning till night. It is I who have to promise, to cajole, to lie, first to one person and then to another who come here demanding money when I have none to give them. Oh, it is a charming life—mine! N'importe. It will end itself in a little while.'

'What do you mean? What new trick are you hatching now?' he demanded.

'It is nothing new—it has been in my head for a long time. Shall I tell you what it is? Why not?' The fingers of one hand were still resting on the piano. She struck a note or two carelessly, and then went on speaking as quietly as though she were mentioning some trifling detail of everyday life. 'One evening, cheri, when you come home you will not find me; I shall be gone. This life suits me no longer. I will change it all. I will go back to the life I used to love so well. I have had a letter. Signor Ventelli is at Brussels; he prays to me to return to him. I shall go. You and I, my friend, can no longer live together. It will be better for both that we should part.' Again her fingers struck a note or two carelessly.

Crofton was roused at last. He started to his feet with an imprecation and faced his wife. 'What confounded stuff and nonsense you are talking, Steph,' he exclaimed. 'As if I believed a word of it!'

'Do I ever say that I will do a thing when I do not intend doing it?' she quietly asked.—In his own mind he was obliged to confess that she did not.—'We have made a mistake, you and I, and have found it out in time,' she resumed. 'We can be friends, always friends—why not? But you will go your way, and I mine; that is all.'

The cold indifference of her tone and manner stung him to the quick. Evidently she was minded to cast him off as carelessly as she would an old glove. The sullen fire in his heart blazed up in a moment. He loved this woman after a fashion of his own, and was in nowise inclined to let her go. 'What you say is utter nonsense. I would have you remember that you are my wife, and that I can claim you as such anywhere and everywhere.'

'And do you imagine that if I were twenty times a wife I should allow you or any other man to claim me as such against my will!' demanded Steph with a contemptuous laugh. 'Tza! tza! my friend, you talk like a child.'

They were standing face to face, and for a few moments they stared at each other without speaking; but the clear resolute light that shone out of Steph's eyes cowed, for a time at least, the fitful,

dangerous gleam flickering redly in her husband's bloodshot orbs, as though it were a reflection from some Tophet below.

George Crofton turned away, and crossing to the sideboard, poured himself out a quantity of brandy. 'You would be a fool, Steph, to leave me as you talk of doing, were it only for one thing,' he said dryly. He seemed to have quite recovered his equanimity, and was choosing a cigar as he spoke.

'If it pleases me to be a fool, why not?'

'Has it never occurred to you that any morning the newspapers may tell us that my cousin, Gerald Brooke, has been captured? Every day, that is the first news I look for.'

'Ah, bah! you mock yourself. Your cousin will never be arrested now; he has got safe away to some foreign country long ago.'

'You have no ground for saying that. Any hour may bring the tidings of his capture, and then—— But you know already what the result of his conviction would be to you and me. Beechley Towers and six thousand a year—nothing less.'

'You deceive yourself,' resumed Steph. 'You are waiting for what will never happen. Nine months have passed since the murder, and the crime is half forgotten. You let Gerald Brooke slip through your fingers once; but you will never have the chance of doing so again.—Let us come back to realities, to the things we can touch. Dreams never had any charms for me.'

He went back to the fireplace with his cigar, and took up a position on the hearth-rug. 'As you say—let us stick to realities; it may perhaps be the wisest,' he went on. 'What, then, would you think, what would you say, if I were to tell you as a fact that in less than six weeks from to-day I shall be in possession of ten thousand pounds?'

'I should both think and say that it was not a fact, but a dream, a—what do you call it?—a Will-o'-the-wisp.'

'And yet it is not a dream, but a sober solid fact, as a very short time will prove.'

She raised her eyebrows; evidently, she was incredulous. 'You made sure that you would win two thousand pounds at Doncaster, whereas you contrived to lose five hundred. You were just as certain that you would win'——

'What I am referring to now has nothing to do with horseracing,' he broke in impatiently. 'Listen!' he added; and with that he planted himself astride a chair and confronted her, resting his arms on the back of it and puffing occasionally at his cigar as he talked. 'I am about to tell you something which it was my intention not to have spoken about till later on; but it matters little whether you are told now or a month hence.' He moved his chair nearer to her, and when he next spoke it was in a lower voice: 'The young Earl of Leamington, who is enormously rich, is to be married on the 27th of next month. On the 14th of April one of the partners in a certain well-known firm of London jewellers, accompanied by an assistant, will start for the Earl's seat in the north carrying with him jewelry of the value of over twenty thousand pounds, for the purpose of enabling his lordship to select certain presents for his bride.

That box of jewelry will never reach its destination.'

Stephanie was staring at him with wide-open eyes. 'You would not'—— she exclaimed, and then she paused.

'Yes, I would, and will,' he answered with a sinister smile. 'I and certain friends of mine have planned to make that box our own. The whole scheme is cut and dried; all the arrangements in connection with the journey are known to us; and so carefully have our plans been worked out, that it is next to impossible that we should fail.'

'And you, George Crofton, my husband, have sunk to this—that you would become a common robber, a thief, a voleur!'

His face darkened ominously, and the gash in his lip looked as large again as it usually did. 'What would you have?' he asked with a snarl. 'My cursed ill-luck has driven me to it. I cannot starve, neither will I.'

For a little while neither spoke.

'I didn't think you would take my news like this, Steph,' he said presently. 'Think of the prize! How is it possible for a man fixed as I am to resist trying to make it his own? One half comes to me because the plan is mine, but of course I can't work without confederates. My share will be worth ten thousand at the very least; and then, hey presto for the New World and a fresh start in life with a clean slate!—What say you, Steph?'

'At present, I say nothing more than I have said already,' she answered coldly. 'I must have time to think.'

MOUNTAIN LIONS AND WOLVES.

THE Mountain Lion of North America is one of the most dangerous of the wild animals which are found in the mountains of the Far West. Although called a lion, yet this animal bears no resemblance to the African lion except so far as its fierceness is concerned. It really belongs to the same family as the wild-cat or catamount, but is of much greater size, generally being about as large in body and limb as a full-grown sheep-dog. It is rarely seen in the vicinity of settlements, except driven thither by hunger, when it will attack cattle, sheep, horses, or poultry, and at times human beings. But, as a general thing, if not molested it will not attack human beings; though, if wounded, there is no animal which will make a more desperate fight, regardless of consequences. It cannot be driven off from an attack as long as life lasts; it must be killed to be beaten. Its chief peculiarity is its cry, which the most experienced hunter has at times mistaken for the wail of a child in distress. This feature makes the beast more dangerous, especially if he should establish his lair in the vicinity of a settlement, because, unless a person is an old-timer, he will be deceived by that cry whenever he hears it. It is the most perfect imitation of a child's wail of lament I ever heard, more perfect than the cleverest mimic could utter.

Well do I remember the first time I ever heard it. On a winter's night several years ago, while residing in an isolated place in the foot-hills, I was awakened by that cry. Without a second thought I bounded from my bed with the inten-

tion of finding the lost child. As I was opening the door the cry was repeated; this time it was plain and distinct, and apparently very near to the door. I searched the near vicinity thoroughly, but failed to find any child in distress, and was on the point of returning to my bed, when my attention was called to the fact that the watchdog, one which had never failed to sound an alarm at the approach of any person or animal in the night, had not in this instance barked, nor was he at his accustomed post near the door of the house. But instead, I found him cowering in his kennel, apparently terror-stricken. This to me was inexplicable until the next morning, when I saw the tracks in the snow of the beast's feet, larger than the footprints of any ordinary-sized dog.

At another time I had the opportunity of observing the effect on a horse when ridden near a mountain lion. It was late one night in the autumn. I was riding along a lonely mountain road, and when only about two miles from the town or mining camp, I heard the cry of the mountain lion. My horse at once showed fear and refused to move forward. His trembling was so intense that he fairly shook me in the saddle. To whip and spur he paid no attention. Indeed, it was only by the strongest effort that I could prevent him from turning and bolting in the direction we had come from. A crashing in the brush a short distance in advance of me increased the horse's fear and restiveness to such an extent as almost to unhorse me. We both knew full well what that crashing meant; but I also was well satisfied that the beast would not trouble us, because I knew that only a short distance across the hill was a slaughter-house, whither I judged the terror of the mountains was journeying. Although quite a cold night, I found my horse sweating as freely because of its fright as if I had ridden on a dead run for miles.

Another experience, and involuntary meeting with a mountain lion which I had one night when afoot, proved to me conclusively that although dangerous when wounded, it would not attack a man as a rule if not provoked. I was walking along an unfrequented mountain trail about ten o'clock when I heard the lion's cry in the woods not far from me. To say that I was nervous does not express my feelings, for I was scared, the more so because I happened to be entirely unarmed. For the first time for years I had lent my trusty revolver, which by day always rested in its scabbard on my right hip, and by night was carefully placed under my pillow. But there was no help for me; the road I was travelling led home, and although the cry sounded in advance of me, yet I would rather walk on and run my chances with the lion, than retrace my steps, and hear the jeers and scoffs of my late companions at what they and myself would consider an act of cowardice. Besides, the thought that his majesty might not be going to cross my path at all was quite consoling.

All doubt, however, on this subject was removed when the moon came out from behind a cloud, and almost at the same instant the lion sprang into the road from the brush not more than fifteen feet in front of me. Then all the stories I had heard about its ability to cover forty-five feet in one spring down an inclined plane, and

twenty-five feet on a level, flashed through my mind as I stood rooted to the spot with my eyes riveted on those of the intruder. Talk about balls of living fire! Why, I thought that lion's eyes looked as large as two suns on a midsummer day and equally as brilliant. It was only for a minute at most; but it seemed an hour before he turned in a very dignified manner and trotted up the side-hill.

The largest mountain lion I ever saw was one killed by a hunter in the Black Hills, which measured seven feet from tip of nose to tip of tail, or over five feet and a half from tip of nose to root of tail. Miners and hunters fear meeting a grizzly or cinnamon bear less than the mountain lion, because of the latter's ability to spring such a long distance, and to climb trees as quickly as a cat. Its jaws are very strong, and set with very sharp teeth; while its feet are armed with claws stronger, longer, and sharper than those possessed by any animal except it be the tiger or panther.

Another animal seen on the western prairies which has a peculiarity in its cry, howl, or bark, whichever you like to call it, for it resembles all at once, is the coyote wolf. This animal is the direct opposite to the mountain lion in all its characteristics except its partiality for poultry. Neither is it possessed of any of the savage qualities of the timber or gray wolf. It is really more like a fox both in nature and appearance and size, but gets its name of wolf because of the peculiar noise it makes. One of these animals when howling at night makes such a racket that a 'tenderfoot' would be convinced there were a thousand of them round. When hungry, they will sneak into a camp at night and steal bacon or boots, bridles, or anything made of leather. But the least movement will scare them away; they won't even make a fight with a dog.

On the plains and mountains we find three distinct varieties of wolves. First, the little cowardly coyote; next, the gray prairie wolf; and last, the brown gaunt timber wolf. The two last varieties have been known in exceptional cases, when in large packs, to attack people; but usually they are content with committing depredations on sheep-folds and chicken roosts. In 1870, on the prairies in Western Kansas, I knew of cases where the gray wolves had followed calves and yearlings, and by jumping on their haunches and cutting the muscles of their hind-legs with their sharp fangs, dragged them down and killed many young stock-cattle. Every cowboy when in winter-quarters will be found provided with a good supply of strychnine; and when they find the carcase of a calf or other creature killed by wolves, they poison the meat; and on the next night, when the pack come to finish their feast, many of them fall as prey to the cowboy's poison, and their bodies being found on the morrow, are skinned. The hides of the gray and timber wolves are valuable, but those of the coyote are almost worthless.

Nearly all the States and Territories pay a reward for killing wolves; and many hunters in years gone by used to live on the buffalo and cattle ranches all winter through, and give their entire attention to killing wolves for the bounty and value of their hides. The larger varieties will when wounded fight hard, and often fight dogs that pursue them, to the sorrow of

the dogs and their owners, for almost invariably they are killed because of the intense strength in the wolf's jaws and extreme length of their fangs. In fighting, these wolves do not show any of the tenacity possessed by bulldogs, their method being a series of quick snaps as they attempt to escape from their pursuers. Rarely are wolves seen in the daytime, except the cayote; but the traveller will see many of these as he rides over the Western prairies. Wolves used to be found at night following in the trail of any buffalo that may have been mortally wounded by the hunters. When he drops to the ground, they attack the body and gorge themselves; returning to the feast every night as long as any meat is left on the bones of the carcase, or until they fall prey to poison.

A LEGAL SECRET.

CHAP. II.—DREAMERS.

TOOK'S COURT, Chancery Lane, has not a very sunny outlook even on the brightest of days; it is shut in on all sides, except at the narrow entrance, by tall antique houses, with dusty shelves over their doorways and dusty stone steps below. The open window-shutters, begrimed with many coatings of London smoke, are fastened by rusty hooks against the walls. A dull wintry patch of sky hangs overhead; and from there a twilight falls upon hurrying figures—with their echoing footsteps and flitting shadows—passing in and out of this old courtyard. When the evening becomes still more gloomy, and the patch of sky is a mere patch of black, a dismal street lamp in the centre of the Court throws a glimmer through its dusty panes upon the houses on each side; and where the blinds are not yet drawn, and there is no stronger light to oppose it, this modest gleam enters a room quite boldly. There is one room in particular, in which a young girl is seated over a cheerless fire, where this ghost of a light looks in; and it only seems to add to the cheerless surroundings. For the room is small, dingy, and threadbare in appearance. The carpet is worn in places almost to the boards; and there are splashes of ink on the floor, and even on the walls, as if a shower of writing-fluid had recently fallen.

Although simply dressed in a dark serge, the girl appears out of place in the midst of such obvious poverty. There is little in her look and manner to suggest contentment, or even submission. The knitted brow, the curl of the pretty lips, the expressive pressure of the fingers against the dark hair, indicate a self-willed and sensitive nature; and so absorbed is she in her own thoughts, that neither the sound of a peculiar step in the courtyard, nor even the rattling of a latchkey in the door, attracts her attention. It is only when a lean shabby-looking man with a wizened face comes in that the girl starts and glances up. She tries bravely to hide her dejection with a little laugh as she holds out her hand to welcome him to a place beside her on the hearth.

'Dreaming again, Rosa?'—and while speaking, the man sat down before the fire and began to

warm his hands. 'Dreaming again?' His tone, although reproachful, was not wanting in affection.

'I was wondering,' said she, while stroking a large black cat on the hearthrug at her feet, 'whether the impressions of my childhood—the time seems so distant—could be mere fancy? How old was I, dad, when you first took me in?'

The man regarded Rosa thoughtfully. 'How old? Between five and six.—But I can't fix a date, my dear,' he added; 'that's impossible. Your birthday, you know, wasn't spoken of.' Pausing a moment to tap a little wooden box, he extracted a pinch of snuff and then resumed, as though speaking to himself: 'No; he was a reticent party, he was'—and he shook his head at the recollection—'a very reticent party indeed.'

'Twelve years ago,' said Rosa—'twelve years to-day?'

'This very day. Twelve years this afternoon, my dear, since he left you under our care. And that's why,' he added, 'we call this your birthday.'

And now, as he shifted his seat to the table and leant over a portable desk with his back to the window, it became apparent that he and this little parlour must have grown inky and threadbare together. The man's face was sallow and creased like parchment that has been kept in the dusty corner of a lawyer's office for years; and his scanty hair was of a gray dingy colour that might have belonged to a dusty corner too. And yet the man's appearance could scarcely have failed to awaken sympathy. It was kindly in expression, and there was something irresistibly pathetic in the gray watery eyes.

'Then I am seventeen to-day,' said the girl—'or am I eighteen? I think I must be eighteen, dad,' she went on in a thoughtful mood, 'for some of my dreams, as you call them, seem like reality.—What was the gentleman like?'

'The party was keen-featured.' Then he added musingly: 'I should know him again among a thousand.'

'He never told you my name?'

'Why, no. You told us that,' said the man. 'Mother asked you as soon as he was gone. "Rosa," says you.—But as to your surname, we never could make that out.'

'Ah! If we only knew my name,' said the girl in a low voice, 'you would have found out long ago whether the home which I have so often told you about was really mine; and whether that beautiful face—a face bending over my pillow at night—was the face of my own mother. It sometimes seems to me as if it must have been true,' she added, with a look of discontent returning to her face. 'Is it not a shame, if my parents are rich, that I should live in such poverty as this?'

The old man looked troubled. He took a quill pen from behind his ear and began to stroke his chin agitatedly, and looked at the girl and then at his desk. 'Rosa,' said he, presently breaking the silence, 'what *is* the use, my dear, of thinking so much about the past? It leads to no good; it only makes one wretched.—Not that I've any right to expect,' he added in an almost humble tone, that removed any suspicion of irony,

'that a young lady born in the lap of luxury—if I may so express myself—could easily lead herself to take a much brighter view of *this* life. Before we came to town—before mother died—there were fields to run about in, and you were younger. But there's a bit of garden in New Square, just across Chancery Lane; and there's Lincoln's Inn Fields hard by; and when one listens to the sparrows, though it ain't much of a song, it makes one fancy, as the birds must do, that the spring ain't very far off now.'

The brightening hopeful look on the careworn features which accompanied these words brought a smile to Rosa's lips. She left her seat and went and laid her hand tenderly on the man's shoulder. 'Daddy,' said she with a repentant look, 'I will try to be more reasonable; I will try to think less about my sunny childhood. I always get dreaming more on my birthday, as we call it, than at any other time. Don't I?'

The man nodded and smiled.

'But, daddy, I was not thinking altogether about myself,' she went on, 'though I know I'm very selfish; I was thinking, if I could find my beautiful mother, that I could tell her what a father you had been to me; and she would make you rich and happy.'

'Would she? Ah, my dear,' said the man, shaking his head incredulously, 'you don't know the world.—But I'm forgetting,' he suddenly added, with a glance towards the window. 'I'm expecting a visitor; he may be here at any moment!'

'A visitor?'

'I've been calling, as I was advised, at Pilkington's,' the man explained, 'and'—

'Pilkington?' She spoke scarcely above a whisper. 'How that name reminds me of my old home.'

'And,' the man continued, scarcely heeding the interruption, 'the junior partner, Mr Trench, being too busy to see me, sent out a message to say that as soon as he was disengaged he would step over and have a talk about the work. There's a vacancy in the office; and it looks very much as if I should get the post.'

This was good news. For the last few weeks the poor clerk had been out of employment, and his slender savings were exhausted. He had confessed to Rosa only yesterday that the last shilling had been changed, and that unless he got work they would have to face a serious situation. But he did not lose heart: he assured her that it was better to laugh over their trouble—even though it might mean starvation—than break down in tears as she had done.

Rosa thought of his words now, as she stood at the window and looked out into the dismal Court; and while she still stood there, she heard a quick step below, and saw a young man with a frank handsome face stop at their door and raise the knocker. She could see him glancing up at her by the street lamp.

Sidney Trench—for it was he—having knocked at the old house in Took's Court, again glanced towards the window; and the glimpse he gained of the girl by the dim light thrown upon her set him wondering. Where had he seen that pretty dark face before? Next moment the door opened and the dark face was looking up inquiringly at him. And now, so familiar did her

whole appearance seem to Sidney, that he could scarcely suppress a smile of recognition. Where had they met, and when? These questions rose to his lips; but he could not give them utterance. He could only look at the girl in silent wonder and admiration. It was like a dream-scene that had flashed through his brain only to vex and bewilder him.

'Do you wish to see Mr Norris?'

Her voice scarcely recalled him; for it puzzled him, too, little less than the face.

'Yes. Does he live here?'

She led the way into the parlour. 'He will be with you directly.—Are you Mr Trench?'

He was standing with his back towards the window. The girl lingered at the door, and was glancing at him with modest curiosity. Was it his fancy, or was there a look of recognition in her eyes too? He hastened to answer her.

'My name is Trench—Sidney Trench. Have I the pleasure to address Miss Norris?'

She hesitated a moment before answering; then she looked up into his face and said: 'My name is Rosa.'

An exclamation nearly escaped him. But at this moment the old clerk came in with a light. It was an antique reading-lamp, of which the glass was broken.

Rosa went out, and Abel Norris closed the door.

'Pray, be seated, sir;' and Sidney sat down by the fireside where the girl had been dreaming not many minutes before.

Norris placed himself at his desk; he was more at his ease in that position. Taking the quill from his ear, he dipped it in the ink with some show of energy, such is the force of habit; then he waited for Sidney to speak.

'You have had some years' experience,' the young man suggested, 'in a lawyer's office?'

'Fifty, sir: fifty years, and one or two to spare.'

Sidney scrutinised the clerk's face. 'In London?'

'At St Albans,' said Norris, 'for over forty years. Since then, we've been wandering here and there; for when mother died'—

'Your wife?'

'That's what I should say—my wife. For when she died,' he resumed, 'we thought we would seek our fortune, so to speak. We have met with nothing but misfortune.'

'I'm sorry to hear that,' said Sidney sympathetically; 'and I hope your fortune will now mend.'

For a moment the young lawyer looked thoughtful. He then resumed: 'All that I have heard about you,' said he, 'makes me anxious, if I can, to serve you. And I would offer you without hesitation a place in our office; but I find it impossible to do so.' Sidney Trench, without turning his head, glanced towards the old clerk; for he heard the pen drop from the man's fingers. He now observed that he was pressing his hands to his head in a despairing attitude.

There was a lengthy pause. Sidney felt that, after his conversation with Mr Pilkington, he would be acting decidedly in opposition to his wishes if he engaged this clerk. How, then, could he serve one who appeared so deserving? He had roused his interest; and was he not also interested in the dark eyes that had looked up into his face when he came in? The young lawyer

turned to the clerk. 'Mr Norris,' said he, 'I have something to propose. Although I cannot promise, at least not at once, a situation in our office, there is no reason why you should not work here. I want some deeds and other documents copied. Will you undertake to do this for me?'

Norris briskly picked up his pen. 'Here, sir, at my desk? It is the method I should prefer.'

'Is it? Then you shall begin,' said Sidney, 'to-morrow morning.—Meanwhile,' added the young man, taking a cheque from his pocket, 'put this in your desk.'

The old clerk could not speak; but his trembling outstretched hand and the tears that sprang to his eyes expressed his gratitude.

'You have no family?' Sidney presently remarked.

'No, sir, none,' said Norris; 'only Rosa.'

Sidney regarded the man keenly. 'The young girl who?—he hesitated slightly—'who let me in?'

'Yes.'

'Ah,' said Sidney, assuming indifference, 'a grandchild, perhaps?'

'An adopted daughter.—After a moment's silence, he added: 'It's a strange story.'

'Indeed?' and Sidney looked up inquiringly into the old clerk's face.

Norris became thoughtful; and then, in a low voice, as if recalling to mind the incident, rather than addressing Sidney Trench, he said: 'It was one afternoon, a wintry afternoon, just twelve years ago. I was sitting at my desk at St Albans—as it might be now—and happening to glance towards the window, I saw an elderly gentleman coming across the road. The gentleman stopped, and seeing my wife at the front door, spoke to her; and presently they came in together where I was sitting. My wife was holding a child—a little girl—by the hand.' Pausing a moment, with the pensive look still on his face, he then resumed. He had placed his snuff-box on the table, but had not mustered the courage yet, in the presence of his new master, to extract a pinch. 'A prettier child,' said he, 'with her dark eyes and thick black hair, I never saw. I took to her at once—fell in love with her, so to speak, at first sight! The gentleman briefly explained his errand. He was going abroad—he did not say for how long, and wanted a home for the child. He had been recommended to call upon us. Would we undertake the charge of this little girl during his absence? He would pay us liberally'—

'Can you recall to mind,' interrupted Sidney, 'what this gentleman was like?'

'Yes; I shall never forget that,' replied Norris. 'A stern face, with thick gray eyebrows. I don't remember the eyes, but it was a hard mouth; a hard man, I thought; a reticent man, who seemed to read your character at a glance, and gain your confidence by sheer force of intellect. A more clever face—as I expressed myself to my wife at the time—I never saw.'

'What age did he appear?'

'Between sixty and seventy. And I remember thinking—perhaps because I had to do with the law myself—that he must be a member of the legal profession.' In an absent-minded manner, Norris took a pinch of snuff, and then concluded:

'We accepted the offer, gladly enough, for we were very poor. He placed fifty pounds in bank-notes in my hand; and he wrote down an address in Paris, and promised that we should soon hear from him again. I posted letters to that address, but never received any answer; so at last I ceased writing. We have neither seen nor heard anything of him since.'

Sidney now rose, and stood on the hearth-rug with an earnest look on his face. 'A mysterious affair. Have you no clue?'

'None. I have even lost the address in Paris.'

'How comes it that you call the girl Rosa?'

'Ah! we were just talking about that, sir, before you came. She told us herself that her name was Rosa: and that was all she could tell us, though we questioned her over and over again.'

Sidney Trench, thinking over all that he had learnt from Abel Norris, began to recall to mind in a dreamy way his early boyhood. He had had a playmate in those days—now twelve years ago—and he had named her his little sweetheart. She was a child, he could well remember, with dark serious eyes and a wilful manner. But he had been sent away to a school in Switzerland for three years, and she had gone out of his young life; for when he returned to England she was never spoken of in his presence. But an incident, which had impressed him deeply, had one day occurred. Mr Pilkington had been appointed his guardian by Sidney's father, the late senior partner. It was a grave responsibility. Sidney Trench was very young; and Mr Pilkington, even at that time, was getting on in years; and should he die (this was when Sidney was fourteen), all the legal secrets—as far as Trench, Pilkington, and Trench were concerned—would die with him. To read between the lines of legal documents which lay in deed-boxes in every corner of the old house would be impossible; and the calamity, if it came about, could only be compared to the loss of a bunch of keys which could never be replaced; for the clients would take their secrets elsewhere, and the great firm would dwindle into comparative insignificance. The very thought of such a mishap—as Sidney had been taught to believe in his wondering boyhood—was enough to shorten his guardian's life.

So, one day, in his youthful simplicity, he had ventured to put the question to Mr Pilkington: 'Is my little sweetheart, sir, a legal secret?' For the thought that his guardian might die, and he might never learn what had become of that child, was the subject which troubled him most. But he had no sooner made this inquiry than he wished he had held his peace; for on the following day Mr Pilkington sent him back to school, though the holidays were only half over. He never again had the courage to question his guardian.

This old dread of Mr Pilkington—though so many years had gone by—recurs to Sidney when he goes that evening to join him in the library; for he is but a boy compared to this aged lawyer, and the fear of offending him is strong within him still.

And yet, if he had yearned in his boyhood to know something about that 'little sweetheart,'

he is yearning even more now to solve the mystery of her disappearance.

Mr Pilkington is warming his wrinkled hand over the library fire; he looks at the young man under his thick eyebrows. Can Mr Pilkington have observed—for they had met at dinner an hour or two after Sidney's visit to Took's Court—that Sidney is revolving some problem in his own mind? Something in the old lawyer's manner as he bends and warms his hand suggests an unusual sternness. 'Sidney,' says he, and the voice is stern too—'sit down and listen to me.—At least,' he adds as the young man takes a chair beside the hearth—'listen, if you still look upon me as your guardian; if you are still willing to receive advice.'

'Why should you doubt it, sir?'

Mr Pilkington's brow darkens at the question. 'You are not frank with me,' he replies in an angry tone; 'you are holding something back.'

Sidney does not answer. Why not? His guardian's words are like a direct challenge; and yet he remains silent. The old dread cannot in a moment be overcome.

His silence does not dispel Mr Pilkington's displeasure; it seems to add sensibly to his irritation. 'Be careful, Sidney'—the old lawyer admonishes him, raising his forefinger impressively. 'A secret character—a man who does not confide in his friend—deserves no compassion! I have some acquaintance with such natures; and when you come to know all our clients' secrets—and you soon will now—you may learn that troubles arise out of this very fault—secrecy. Profit by experience—*my* experience. That is my advice to you.'

Sidney now essays to reply. Mr Pilkington stops him: 'Another time; I am in no mood to listen now.'

Sidney, more perplexed than ever at his old guardian's attitude, turns away; and the lawyer, still warming his hand over the fire, looks after him with keenness as he goes out.

'THE NOTES THAT PEOPLE THE SUNBEAM.'

OUR knowledge in no department of science has made greater strides during the last few years than in that of Bacteriology. The existence of organisms far smaller than anything that the naked eye can discern was a fact little suspected until comparatively recent times; and ever since the microscope first revealed to our eyes the world of 'the infinitely little,' as it has been felicitously called, our knowledge of these microscopic forms of life has gone on increasing. Indeed, we have every reason to believe that we are now at the threshold, so to speak, of another and vaster world of even still more minute organisms, smaller far than even anything our most powerful microscopes are capable of revealing; about which, it is true, we as yet know little, but which we cannot doubt play a most important part in the economy of nature.

These micro-organisms exist in the atmosphere and in water; but it is only within the last few years that we have had any means of

arriving at an approximate idea of the extent to which they are present in these media. It is in the first instance to the brilliant investigations of M. Pasteur that we owe our knowledge on this point; and the important experiments he was the first to carry out have been developed and extended by others. Pasteur showed that with regard to the presence of these micro-organisms in the atmosphere, the higher the altitude reached and the greater the distance from human habitations, the purer was the air. These investigations, so brilliantly begun by the great French chemist, have been carried on by chemists and physiologists both in this country and on the Continent. Professor Tyndall has shown that in calm air a rapid subsidence of these microbes takes place. The distinguished German physiologist Dr Koch has devised a method by means of which we are enabled to form an estimate of the number of these micro-organisms present in a measured quantity of either water or air. The method consists in cultivating the germs in a solid medium (gelatine is most commonly used). Each organism thus grows and multiplies on the spot where it is planted, as it is prevented from moving. The progeny of each micro-organism in this way gather round the parental home, and we have in the course of a short time, instead of the single organism, a large colony. All that is required, therefore, in order to test air or water for micro-organisms is to introduce a definite measured quantity of either air or water into the cultivating medium, and, after allowing a sufficient period of time to elapse, to count the number of colonies visible.

Some interesting experiments were made on this point a short time ago by Dr P. F. Frankland. The air was tested at different places and under different circumstances. It was found that the number of organisms present in the atmosphere differed at different seasons of the year, the largest proportion being found during the summer months. In a certain volume of air (two gallons) collected on the top of the Science and Art Department buildings at South Kensington, one hundred and five of these micro-organisms were found to be present. This was in the month of August. Indoors, of course the number is very much greater. Thus, in a similar quantity of air collected at the rooms of the Royal Society during a *conversazione*, no fewer than four hundred and thirty-two were found to be present; while another experiment showed that from the air of a third-class railway carriage containing ten people no fewer than three thousand one hundred and twenty microbes fell per minute on a square foot.

So much for the living organisms in our atmosphere; now for a word or two on the dead inorganic particles in the air. These are infinitely more numerous than the living germs; and an extremely ingenious method has recently been devised by Mr John Aitken, F.R.S.E., for the purpose of estimating their number. Like the organic germs, they are infinitely minute in size, most of them being altogether undetected by the most powerful microscope. It was necessary, therefore, to have recourse to some method of making them visible. The plan adopted was

as follows: The air to be tested was admitted into a large glass vessel, where it was saturated with water-vapour; then supersaturated by slightly expanding it by means of an air-pump. The result was a fog; and as it is known that a fog is caused by these dust-particles becoming surrounded by a watery envelope, the number of fog-particles shows the number of dust-particles. The counting of these fog-particles was effected in the following way: A very small portion of the air to be tested was mixed with a large quantity of air which had been rendered absolutely pure by filtering it through cotton-wool. The mixture was then admitted into a large glass receiver and saturated as above described. As the dust-particles were so few, instead of a fog a small miniature rain was formed, and the number of these small raindrops falling on a small silver mirror was counted, and, by a simple calculation, the amount in the quantity of air originally admitted thus estimated. The following are some results obtained: It was found that the air outside during rain contained per cubic inch 521,000 dust-particles; that during fair weather the number present was more than four times that amount; while inside a room near the ceiling 88,346,000 were counted. The dust-particles seem, however, to be most numerous near a gas flame, for it was found that in a cubic inch of air taken from the immediate vicinity of a Bunsen flame, the colossal number of 489,000,000 were present. In Mr Aitken's own words: 'It does seem strange that there may be as many dust-particles in one cubic inch of the air of a room at night when the gas is burning as there are inhabitants of Great Britain; and that in three cubic inches of the gases from a Bunsen flame there are as many particles as there are inhabitants in the world.'

OLD QUIN'S BANK.

ONE morning I was walking along the shore. The tide was ebbing, being already lower than I remembered it, leaving a broad stretch of glistening sand exposed. Projecting above the surface of the water were some timbers, and where they were left high and dry, curiosity led me to inspect them. The beams were evidently very old; but being deeply embedded, I could not tell if they were part of some sunken vessel or the remains of a jetty. Poking among the pebbles that were washed between them, I came to a cavity containing something round, which could be moved, but was too large to be easily withdrawn. Setting to work with a piece of wood, I succeeded in clearing away the seaweed and stones which blocked up the hole, and at length dragged out a small barrel, strongly hooped with iron, and encrusted with limpet and mussel shells. I carried the barrel to the beach, and seating myself in a cave, proceeded to examine it. Forcing in one end with a heavy flint, I drew out an oil-skin bag—all the barrel contained. Inside was a piece of soiled paper, on which the following words were scrawled in faded ink: 'We are driving on to the rocks with our rudder washed away. I,

Thomas Quin, do commit this to the sea. Let whoever finds it take it to my daughter Dorothy at Shingle Bay. No time for more.' On the other side of the paper was a rough drawing, of which at first I could make nothing.

This Thomas Quin was one of the bygone heroes of whom the fishermen in my part of the coast were never tired of spinning yarns. Quin had been very successful in his ventures; but on his last voyage home from France with a valuable cargo, his vessel must have foundered in a terrible storm, for nothing had since been heard of him. This happened more than thirty years before. His wife, who was a cousin of my mother, had died in giving birth to Dorothy; and the little girl, of whom Quin was passionately fond, was thus left alone in the world. She, however, was taken care of by some good friends in the village, who brought her up; and in course of time she was married to a young farmer, with whom things did not prosper, and who came to an early death. Dorothy Hendil was again left in an almost destitute condition, having now to support a little daughter. While in these straits, relief came in an unexpected manner. One evening, a weather-beaten old sailor trudged into the village, and making straight for the cottage, burst in on Dorothy and threw his whole stock of money into her lap. The neighbours crowded round; and it at once became known that her only brother Ben, who had long been given up as dead, had returned. After that there was no more want, for Ben was in receipt of a pension; and buying a small boat, he added to his income by fishing. My greatest delight was to visit my cousins and to go out with Ben in his little craft. I was almost as often at Shingle Bay as at home, and thus little Dorothy and I grew up together, and learnt to regard each other with more than cousinly affection. But I never mentioned the subject to my father, as I knew he would not allow me to marry a penniless girl.

These thoughts filled my mind as I sat puzzling away at the drawing in my hand, and raised the hope that perhaps Quin—who, though known to be well off, had left no account of any savings—might have hidden away his money, and the paper might contain the clue to finding it. Hiding the barrel in a crevice of the cave, I made my way to my cousin's house.

Shingle Bay, for which I was bound, was a deep inlet, shut in with high cliffs; the village consisting of one straggling street, built on the narrow strip of ground at the foot of the hill. A rough stone quay ran out into the sea for the unloading of small vessels, which occasionally put in here, and protected the outlet of a little stream that ran plunging down from a deep glen. As I went down the steep path I saw Ben Quin in his boat busy overhauling some fishing-tackle. On hearing my footsteps, he looked up and cried in a lusty voice: 'Well, I'm downright glad to see you, George! I'm going to hansom these new lines this morning. We'll go up to the Cottage and have a bit of something to eat before we start.'

Ben was a short thickset man, with a square good-humoured face, the colour of mahogany; and although getting on in years, was pretty well as sturdy as ever. We walked up the village, and soon came to the little thatched cottage, and enter-

ing its creeper-covered porch, were warmly greeted by Mrs Hendil and Dorothy.

I told the story of finding the paper, and they all crowded round me as I took it out; Dorothy leaning over my shoulder in her eagerness, read it aloud. Her mother was greatly affected on hearing this last message from the sea, while Ben had to clear his throat a good many times before he could recover his composure.

When they had got over the excitement, I asked them if they could make anything of the rough drawing on the back of the paper; but after carefully examining it, they came to the conclusion it was some old chart which had been used in the hurry of the moment. It represented an irregular oval, with the cardinal points marked, in the south-east part of which was a curious arrangement of five circles, the middle one being larger than the others. We sat discussing the discovery, speculating on the strange event so long that the fishing expedition was quite put on one side.

'I well remember,' said Mrs Hendil, 'that on the night in which father went on his last voyage, he promised me he would give up the sea when he came back. "I'm getting too old for the work, Dolly," he said, as I sat on his knee before going to bed; "and besides, it's a risky business. If this run is successful, I've made up my mind to retire from the trade altogether. Anyway, I've laid by a snug nest for you, my pretty.—It's in a bank," I remember he added with a laugh. Dorothy and I have searched over his papers again and again, but have found nothing relating to any savings, so I never could quite make out what he meant.'

Dorothy's mother sat looking sadly into the fire for a long time, during which none of us ventured to break the silence.

As I did not wish to be late in getting home, I was soon obliged to say good-bye; and on my way out came across a hulking young fellow, who seemed to be hanging about the cottage. He slunk off on seeing me, but not before I recognised him to be Will Jackson, the son of a coast-guardman stationed at the lower end of our village. He was a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, who had been one voyage; but finding the work too hard at sea, preferred idling about at home.

That night I dreamed that Old Quin visited me and caused me to accompany him over the hills; but what his object was, I could not make out, for I awoke just as he seemed to be on the eve of disclosing something that was weighing heavily on his spirits. Though I courted sleep again, in the hope of taking up the broken thread of my dream, I was doomed to disappointment. After this, I employed my leisure in rambling along the cliffs with a copy of the chart in my hand, trying to find anything at all resembling it in which to search. Two or three years, however, passed away without any discovery being made, and I had come to regard the whole thing as almost hopeless.

One afternoon, Ben Quin and I had rowed in-shore after a successful day's fishing, and hauled the boat up the beach of a little unfrequented bay called Flint Gap. As we had been hard at work in the sun and were tired and hot, we seated ourselves on a flat rock in the shadow of the cliffs, and after refreshing ourselves, sat talking

at our ease. Of late, I had relaxed my investigations; but some remark of Ben's made me take out my copy of the chart, and the sight of this called to mind the barrel which I had hidden away. The cave was not far off. Telling Ben I would not be long, I started up, and running over the sand, soon returned with the barrel. I took out the oilskin bag, and on carefully examining it, was surprised to find that it contained an inner pocket. In this was a piece of parchment which had escaped my notice before. To my great joy, it proved to be a more elaborate drawing of the chart or plan scrawled on the paper, with some written directions besides. Ben sat looking on in wonder, when I shouted: 'It's all right, Ben. We'll find your father's treasure; it's as plain as a pikestaff here. You'll be all rich now'—

'Whist!' said Ben at that instant, putting his finger to his lips. 'I believe there's some one listening in the gap up above. It'll be uncommon awkward if you're overheard.'

Thrusting the plan into my breast-pocket, I ran lightly up the steep narrow path and caught a glimpse of a man hurrying away. Though it was only a glance, it brought my heart into my mouth, for the man was young Jackson, who had some time before gone back to sea. He looked back on gaining the top, and seeing me following, he turned round and grumbled out in a half-sulky way: 'Well, how you startled me, to be sure, by rushing up so sudden-like.'—I looked at him without speaking, so he went on: 'I think you might give a poor shipwrecked fellow a heartier welcome, though we didn't use to be such friends over yonder,' jerking his thumb towards Shingle Bay.—'I've been through a deal of rough weather since then, and don't bear no ill-will. Let bygones be bygones, say I.'

From the shuffling manner in which he spoke, I felt sure he had been watching us and had overheard my incautious remarks; however, as there was no help for that now, I cut him short, and turning abruptly away, hurried back to Ben. Throwing the keg into the boat, in a few minutes we had her afloat, and rowed off round a projecting mass of rock where we were quite out of sight and hearing from above.

'I hope that sneaking scoundrel didn't hear all, Ben,' said I as we rested on our oars. 'It's lucky he betrayed his whereabouts before I had got any further; so let us hope there's no great harm done, after all.'

'What's done can't be helped,' quoth Ben philosophically. 'But, as you haven't told me yet what you've found out, I can't give an opinion.'

'Well, Ben, you remember that your sister said her father told her he had a snug nest put away in a bank, but that she could find no account of any money. This set me thinking, and I came to the conclusion that the paper I at first found in the keg referred to this money, which most likely had been hidden away. The drawing on this parchment makes me pretty nearly sure that if there is anything at all, it's in Danes' Camp. What I've got to do is to hit upon the exact spot.'

Ben had been looking intently at me while I was explaining, and now gave vent to his feelings in a long whistle. 'From what father said to Dolly—and he wasn't the man to make a joke—

it's sartin he'd put by something; and, to my mind, these charts were not drawn for nothing. But after all these years, it's likely it may have been found out; still, it's worth trying; and if we can light on the place and get the money, we'll manage to fetch it away safe enough, I warrant.'

Next morning at daybreak I was out; and taking my way over the fields, wet and heavy with dew, came to the headland that rose in a bold sweep from the level land below. Right ahead, looking near in the brightness that now overspread the sky, but in reality some three miles away, appeared the low dark line which marked the ancient bank of Danes' Camp. Going on at a brisk pace, I soon got over the intervening ground, and climbing the old earthwork, commenced my search. Though broken down in some places, and overgrown with dense patches of gorse and fern and the graceful trailing boughs of the bramble, the old ditch and bank retained much of their original form: the space enclosed being roughly square, three sides were entrenched, the fourth being the sheer edge of the cliff, which here rose to a great height. Commencing at the nearest corner, I walked round the top, the parchment in my hand, and so reached the farthest extremity of the camp. I was unable to discover anything that corresponded to the plan, which consisted of an oval with the points of the compass shown. At the south-east part were four circles, enclosing a larger one marked with a cross, while an arrow pointed to the south indicated fifty yards. I looked carefully for any object from which to measure fifty paces; but what had seemed simple on first seeing the drawing, appeared hopeless in practice now.

I sat on the bank, trying to get over my disappointment, and, to amuse myself, began rolling pieces of flint down the hill, watching as they bounded away till they were stopped by the furze bushes that fringed the path beneath. Having exhausted all the stones within reach, I tried to unearth a large flint which protruded from the turf, but found it a hard job, till, exerting all my strength, it came out at last, and slipping from my grasp, rolled down the steep slope and crashed into the bushes. At that moment I heard a footstep coming towards me, and was turning round to see who it was, when, in the hole from which I had pulled the stone, I spied a gold coin, and had just time to snatch it, when a scrambling noise caused me to close my fingers upon it, and the next instant the unwelcome form of young Jackson stood over me.

'Hillo!' said he, with what was meant to be an arch smile; 'you're taking the air early this morning, shipmet.' Prudently overcoming a strong desire to send him headlong down the hill, I took no notice of his pleasantry, but, getting up, commenced to walk homeward. I hoped Jackson would take the hint, and not trouble me with his presence; but it suited him to accompany me; and as I could not very well shake him off, I had to put the best face possible on the matter. All this time I had kept the gold piece in my hand, not daring to look at it, and on the first opportunity I quietly slipped it into my pocket.

We walked on silently for some time, when Jackson broke out with: 'I had such a rum

dream last night: I thought I was digging for a potful of money some one had hid in the ground. After working for a long spell, I finds it, when up you comes and calls out "Halves!"—"All right," said I; "that's all fair and square." So we parts the lot between us.'

There was a pause at this, and then I rather awkwardly remarked: 'What of that? It was only a dream.'

'Suppose,' said he, looking sideways at me, 'you was to find anything, and I was to come along, of course you'd do the same, eh?'—putting on a simple and friendly look.

'As it isn't very likely such a thing will happen, I don't see the good of talking about it,' I was forced to say.

'Now, look here,' said he, changing his manner and speaking in a bullying tone. 'I heard you and Quin the other day talking on the beach down yonder about the paper you found and what you expected it meant. My old grandad was a mate of Quin's father in many a run of goods, and he often said the old man had stowed away a rich cargo, which ain't seen the light since, I reckon. If you like to take me as pardner, well and good; if not, look out, for you'll come off all the worse, I can tell you.'

I was rather staggered with this; for it did not strike me at first that Jackson pretended to know more than he really did. As I did not answer, Jackson gave me another threat, and then dropped behind, but followed me home at a distance.

After breakfast, as there was nothing to keep me at home, I got leave from my father to stop for a night or two at my cousin's. Jackson was not in sight when I got out again, not expecting me so soon, I suppose; so I quickly gained the hill-top, and after walking some distance, sat down where there was no fear of being overlooked, and taking out the coin, proceeded to examine it. It was as big as two of our guineas, and as it had a hole bored through it, had evidently been used as a charm. On one side were scratched the letters T. Quin. Hastily getting up, I started at a run, and did not stop till I came to the place where I had found it. The bank at this part was thickly covered with bushes, and I now noticed for the first time that they almost hid a low mound. I made out its shape to be oval; and turning my face to the south, I took fifty long paces, which brought me to a large moss-covered stone, which did not rise above the level of the ground, so that I had not noticed it before. A huge bush overshadowed the place where I had discovered the coin, and this proved to be at the south-east part of the oval mound corresponding to the positions of the five circles in the chart. It struck me that old Quin must have dropped the gold piece while working at this spot.

All excitement, I pushed on as fast as I could to Shingle Bay, and found Ben at home. Taking him aside into the garden, I told him of my discovery, and showed him the coin, which he remembered having seen his father wear. When I spoke of what Jackson had told me, he looked rather grave; but brightening up after a bit, said he had a plan to deceive him. Lighting his pipe, and seeming to be greatly assisted thereby, he went into details.

'Now, as that young scamp guesses so much about this affair, it's my opinion the best way

will be to get the treasure, whatever it be, to-night. We can smuggle a pickaxe and shovel down to the boat in an old sail when it falls dark. Young Jackson is sure to be along this way after you; and if you keep indoors until the evening, he'll most like be hanging about all day. When we go out in the boat, he'll think there's something in the wind; and as he won't have the pluck, for all his stoutness, to tackle us by himself, he's almost sure to go back and get the help of that precious cousin of his. The moon will be up by the time we land the tools and are ready to work; so, all things considered, it'll go hard with us if we can't be the first in.'

We followed closely Ben's programme; and, as he predicted, Jackson was to be seen watching us; and as soon as we were afloat, he hurried away in the direction of his home. With the tools on our shoulders, we leaped on shore at the gap, and making our boat fast, we toiled up the steep path, and came to the camp just as the moon appeared over the hill; and by its light we set to work with all speed. We cleared away the earth under the bush, and had made a good-sized hole, when the pick struck with such force against a stone as almost to overturn Ben, who was wielding it. 'There's a rock or something as hard here, George,' said he ruefully, rubbing his arm and resting his back against the bank.

I shovelled away for dear life, and throwing out a lot of loose earth, laid bare a large boulder. 'Oh, that's all, is it?' said Ben. 'I was afraid I'd struck the solid cliff.'

With the help of a crowbar we prised the stone, and dragging it out, disclosed a bundle of dry ferns and heather; and eagerly removing this, we found a snug nest with five kegs lying in it.

'Stop a bit,' said Ben. 'A little more light won't be amiss.' He stooped down and lit a lantern under cover of the bush. By it we could see the barrels were arranged in the same order as the circles in the chart.

Ben dragged out the first, and giving it a shake, declared it to be full of French brandy; another proved to be similar. He then laid hold of the middle keg, but found it so heavy that he could not move it. 'Hillo!' said he, in an excited whisper; 'this is the one worth taking care of! From the weight, it must be gold. We must get it out of this before Jackson returns, for I've an idea he won't be long.'

We dug a trench through the bank, and so were able to roll out the heavy keg. This took some time, for now the moon was mounting up the sky. Happening to look over the camp, I could distinguish two dark forms making towards us. Seeing there was not a moment to lose, I quietly told Ben they were coming, and with his help, forced the keg over the edge, and sent it rolling swiftly down the slope where I had amused myself that morning. I heard it crash through the bushes at the bottom, and then all was still.

Whispering to Ben, I replaced the two brandy barrels, and shovelled back a lot of the earth, managing this so quickly, that when Jackson and his cousin came upon us, all trace of the barrels had disappeared. We went on digging as if we were not aware of their presence until they jumped down the bank.

'So you're caught, my fine fellow,' said Jackson, commencing to scrape away at the loose earth, and in a little time dragging out one of the kegs. 'As my father's substitute, I order you, in the name of the law, to hand over these 'ere smuggled goods.'

Ben roundly refused, but afterwards, on my entreaty, consented to the arrangement. The other kegs were dragged out; and the two men continued to dig deeper, but found nothing more, seeming to have no suspicion of the trick we had played; for each at length shouldered a barrel and trudged off silently the way they had come.

We waited until they were out of sight; then, getting our precious keg into a strong basket, and placing some fish on the top to conceal it, we landed at the quay, and carried it between us, with some difficulty, to the cottage.

We said nothing till after breakfast, and then, with bolted doors, we forced in the head of the barrel, disclosing to our wondering eyes a glittering mass of gold pieces, which when emptied out on to the floor made a perfect hillock of guineas. When we had recovered our breath, we counted the treasure; but I am afraid to tell how much we made it, lest my veracity should be doubted.

The neighbours were very curious to know the cause of my cousins' sudden rise in the world; and though young Jackson never heard anything about the fifth keg, yet he evidently in some way connected my cousins' prosperity with Danes' Camp.

A S U N S E T.

A SOFT sweet ripple comes over the sea;
The sun sinks slow to his golden rest;
And you are walking alone with me,
While a glory falls on the crimson west.

A tender light over moon and hill,
Like a mystical veil of beauty lies;
And our hearts in the silence stir and thrill,
And your soul looks out of your dear blue eyes.

The things too subtle and rare for speech,
An exquisite sympathy can divine;
Our spirits wing off on an upward reach,
With your little hand lying clasped in mine.

See yonder, Love! where the lights begin
To faint and fade in the purple air,
And the strange sweet sorrow creeps dumbly in
That the heart of the Beautiful aye doth bear.

Darling! I know that your soul grows chill,
And your heart is full of a vague regret,
As the glory fades from each radiant hill,
And the shadows fall where the sun has set.

Yet, dear, in the future you cloud with doubt,
Our hearts will love as they love to-day;
The light of our loving can ne'er die out,
Nor our souls, unheeding, walk far away.

MYRA.

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SOUTHWARK IN THE OLDEN TIME.

LONDON is one of the oldest cities in the world, and no authentic date can be assigned to its foundation. Many treatises have been written since Tacitus on the one hand and Milton on the other severally propounded their Trojan, Celtic, and British theories. Its name, legends, and renown, together with its marvellous growth, have awakened many an historic echo, and inspired eloquent and poetic pens.

It is a startling thought, as we look on the myriad buildings, churches, and warehouses, with the rushing crowds which surround them, that there was a time when forests came down to the margin of the river Thames, and wild beasts roamed about in them—when the rising grounds and partially cleared glades were occupied by rude huts scattered here and there, and skin-clad aborigines herded their cattle and mended their nets on the site of the greatest city the world has ever seen.

The record of the gradual growth of London abounds with interest, whether we regard the causes or their operation. Its history is closely connected with civilisation, liberty, and art; and many a landmark remains by which we can trace its progress and recall its ancient features. Our imagination is enabled to rebuild its massive walls and to repeople its civil and ecclesiastical edifices—to follow the footsteps of Britons, Romans, Danes, and Normans, as they successively lorded over it, and thus to learn something of their habits and customs; and although the fragments are fast vanishing before the march of modern improvements, enough remains to afford pleasure and profit in our researches. We can disinter noted spots and describe their hallowed memories; can explore their highways and byways; and can adduce much collateral evidence as to men and things connected with the Great Metropolis.

It is impossible at the present time to define the beginnings and endings of London. 'As well,' says a writer, 'might we try to determine the lines of demarcation in the distinct yet blended

colours of the rainbow.' The suburbs melt and fade into the country, and each year the circle around the city grows wider. It has been said that the inhabitants of the mighty conglomeration of houses, streets, squares, and warehouses which make up the royal city have hardly more definite ideas of its vastness than have the fishes of the wide Atlantic of the immensity of the ocean in which they swim.

Our minds cannot adequately grasp the enormous area, or properly apprehend the meaning of a circuit of one hundred and twenty square miles, containing more people than the whole kingdom of Scotland. Were the houses set less than a yard apart, the line would reach from Land's End to John o' Groat's, thence to the South Foreland, and back again along the coast to our starting-place; in all, a vast triangle of about two thousand five hundred miles.

It is not, however, the London of to-day to which we seek to introduce our readers, but the London of medieval times. We will suppose that our first traveller hails from the Continent—perhaps a soldier returning from the wars of Germany, France, or Italy. He may be a scholar or learned doctor from Padua, or a merchant from the Low Countries, Genoa, or Venice. He has crossed the narrow sea, and being a man of knowledge and intelligence, has gathered folklore as he journeyed from Dover through the pleasant fields and gardens of Kent. It is summer-time, and the orchards, vines, crops, and flowers are in full bloom or promise amidst the quiet beauty of the landscape. He has marked with the keenness of the archaeologist and the reverence of the Christian the many village churches, which add charms to every succeeding prospect, and which well repay close and careful examination. Then, as now, the chime of their sweet and sonorous bells sounded through the quiet air. He sees the gabled cottages with clustering vines and creepers, the picturesque rambling farmhouses, with tall chimneys and far-projecting eaves—the more substantial granges with quaint oriels, bold porches, and high roofs, surrounded by moats, now dry and

green—and the stately mansions of England's chivalry, bristling yet with battlement and bastion, but becoming pierced by external openings for exit and for light—sure sign of dawning security and peace.

As he passed through Canterbury, our traveller pauses to pay his devotions in the majestic cathedral, venerable in age and associations. He has knelt before the glittering shrine of St Thomas à Becket, soon to be despoiled; and has provided himself with relics as mementoes at Harbledown. He pursues the well-trodden pilgrim-way under the white cliffs and the breezy downs, through many a straggling village and sleepy town, till he reaches Dartford, the first posting station out of London. Here all is activity night and day with relays of post and pack horses prompt for the service of courtiers, couriers, and merchants. Black—then Bleak—Hill is reached and left behind, and Eltham's royal palace in the height of its splendour—now, alas! a farmhouse, and its high festal Hall a barn. Many conventual buildings repose around with full array of monastic appurtenances.

Entering the Kent Road or Street, he arrives at the boundary of London liberties, St Thomas-à-Watering, the precise spot being at the present junction of Albany Street with the old road. Hither the Lord Mayor and sheriffs were wont to come annually in civic state to inspect the boundaries, and, as a stream flowed over the road, the citizens used jocularly to speak of 'going over the water.' This spring was dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury, and gave the place its name. King Henry V. was here welcomed on his triumphant return from France after the victory at Agincourt; and Hall records 'the solemn procession lauding and praising God for the high honour and victory to Him given and granted.' A gallows was erected near at hand, on which frequent executions took place. One of the quarters of the unfortunate and misguided Sir Thomas Wyatt, who led the Kentish men against Queen Mary, was exposed at St Thomas-à-Watering in 1554; and the last execution took place in 1760. All signs of the locality have long been obliterated, and few among the passers-by have any knowledge of these scenes of pageantry and of blood. Gerarde, the great herbalist and botanist, who died in 1607, says the wild willow-herb is to be found nigh to the place of execution at St Thomas-à-Watering.

Southwark begins where the country road ends, and comprises an area larger than the city itself. It was in far-off times mostly a dull and dreary marsh or swamp, where the wildfowl and bittern found a home, and extended from the river southward to those rising grounds now known as Clapham, Streatham, and Brixton. Islets rose above the waste of ooze and water; and a straggling forest, affording lurking-places for evil-doers, grew around. In 1578 there was a presentment made to Burleigh by Fleetwood the Recorder, who urges that 'the south side is dark and shadowed with trees, affording an admirable place for such doings, a bower for conspirators,' &c.

The Romans had embanked the shore of the Thames, had formed the broad highways of the Watling and Ermine Streets through the morass and forests, and had probably constructed a bridge to connect the shores. Remains of villas and other buildings, together with arms, urns, tiles,

and coins, have been found in abundance all along the road in the stratifications of two thousand years. The Danish vikings afterwards moored their war-galleys in the creeks and along the shore, when, in their frequent and audacious descents, they ravaged London, carrying desolation and dismay alike into the home, the palace, and the church. The Saxons subsequently fortified the suburb, using the old Roman material, whilst they in their turn were dispossessed by the conquering Norman William in 1066, who speedily bestowed the best and richest portions of the land on the priests. From Lambeth westwards, to Bermonds-Eye on the east, nearly all belonged to the Church, as did also about two-thirds of the city of London. Then arose abbeys, priories, and monastic institutions of all kinds, stately edifices and palatial dwellings, with all the appurtenances of ecclesiastical domination and wealth.

The name Southwark has been spelled by chroniclers in twenty-seven different ways; but the meaning is the same—the south work or fortification of London. The place has share in the great history of the times, and was the avenue along which most foreigners came. Many notable personages are associated with its chronicles; and innumerable processions, regal, civil, ecclesiastical, and military, have flitted in rapid succession over its raised causeway.

At the time of our traveller, disorders abounded, and the neighbourhood was rendered unsafe by reason of a loose and riotous class inhabiting the rude hovels scattered around the low-lying districts on each side of the highway. The reputation of Southwark has always been more or less questionable. In the reign of Edward III. the manor was bestowed on certain religious fraternities, 'that they might take order with the lawless population, and bridle the naughtiness of the said malefactors.' Sundry prison-houses had been called into existence, to aid in this laudable mission; and as years went by, they multiplied on every hand. There was the Clink in the liberty of that name, belonging to the bishops of Winchester, situated westward of their palace; the clink, or prison, being especially provided for 'the incarceration of those who would bray and babble, or otherwise break the peace of our lord the king.' This dismal prison was near to the Bank-side, the street still called by its name recalling the site. Near by dwelt Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger and Oliver Goldsmith, the last of whom in later times had earned a scanty and precarious living as a doctor. Many a righteous man was confined in this noisome jail, and endured with high constancy unjust and cruel treatment; and some prisoners of note languished for years unpitied and alone.

The Marshalsea was so called 'as pertaining to the Marshals of England.' Offences committed within the verge of the Court, and matters of contempt and of debt, were purged here, often with the whole life of the offender and forfeiture of all his property. The *White Lion*, also an old hostelry, was one of the many jails; and Stow tells us that it had been so since 1550, and was generally filled with murderers and malefactors; and in the seventeenth century, with those oftentimes misguided though sincere men known as Puritans and Quakers. Outside

these abodes of horror, filth, and starvation, clamoured an array of utter vagrants, gathered in numbers to ply by day and by night the trade of theft and of beggary, wandering about either singly and silently, or in companies when robbery upon a larger scale was designed.

Through such scenes and amidst such uproar our traveller makes his way, never heeding the scowling looks of evil-disposed men gathered round the doors of low taverns, or under the pent roofs of the stalls scattered sparsely along the highway—a good quarter-staff, a stout heart, and a strong arm standing him in stead amidst the scenes of riot and lawlessness.

He called to mind the various industries possessed by Southwark: at one period the pickled herring business, which promised to bring much wealth and commercial prosperity; but from jealousies and sundry unexplained causes, it languished, and was carried by the promoters to Holland. There were also vinegar manufactories and breweries from a very early period, the latter taking deep root, and the largest passing through the hands of Thrale, Dr Johnson's friend, with whom he frequently abode both here and in Streatham, to its culmination in the gigantic establishment of Barclay and Perkins, whose premises cover many a spot of renown in the middle ages, civil, ecclesiastical, and theatrical—for part of the Globe playhouse, the old Non-conformist chapel, and portions of the grounds of abbots and priors, have been from time to time absorbed by these immense works.

A large area was occupied by the Mint, which at first was a sanctuary for insolvents, and afterwards contained a sumptuous mansion, built by Charles, Duke of Brandon, in 1518, shortly before the time of our traveller's visit. This edifice was nearly opposite to St George's Church, and portions belonging to it—parts of the staircases, doors, and other fittings—have been found built into neighbouring houses. When the Duke fell by attainder, and the property reverted to the king, money was coined there, hence the name given to the region around. Queen Mary bestowed the domain for a residence on the Archbishops of York, when the see was deprived of York House, Whitehall; but it was found to be out of the way and otherwise inconvenient; and, permission being obtained, it was sold, and shortly afterwards pulled down for the purposes of trade.

The Mint was 'a refuge for the worst and lowest' of the people, and was called that 'unhappy country.' Violence often resulting in death was not uncommon, and deeds of darkness occurred daily within its precincts. Travesties of Church rites were permitted, and marriages and christenings took place in taverns and shops similar to those which created so much obloquy in the Savoy, the Fleet, and in Mayfair. These nefarious transactions were legal and binding; but so much scandal ensued, that an Act of parliament was passed which suppressed them early in the eighteenth century. In the Mint was a gallows for executions, stocks, and many minor lock-up-houses and prisons. The very names all around, many of which have survived, were suggestive of the bad repute of the neighbourhood—such as Barefoot and Labour-in-vain Alleys, Hangman's Acre, Dirty Lane, Harrow Dunghill, and many more of similar import.

Southwark Fair was in full swing, and our traveller beheld its sights, amusements, and orgies with amazement and dismay. The scene has been immortalised by Hogarth, whilst both Pepys and Evelyn enlarge on the tricks, mummeries, and immoralities practised there. The Fair lasted three days by statute, but generally extended itself beyond a week, often for fourteen days. It was suppressed in 1762. Being held the day after that of St Bartholomew in Smithfield, the excitement and uproar were simply transferred across the water. One feature in this yearly carnival consisted of playacting in inn yards, taverns, and elsewhere. Some representations were good, and others tolerable, but the greater part low and of the very worst tendency.

The great inns were said to possess secret chambers, to which citizens and the young were enticed by guile and stratagem, for the purpose of robbery and injury. In the courtyard was often to be seen a movable theatrical stage, the galleries and windows being crowded with the guests, and with spectators drawn in from all parts. There were also booths reared on vacant ground, where plays were performed.

Local courts were granted for rough-and-ready justice on offenders caught redhanded. They were exclusively for enforcing the laws and regulations of the Fair, and were erected only within its precincts. They were called Pie Powder, or the dusty foot, referring to the people coming and going. It is supposed that this tribunal might have been located in the town-hall, which was in the midst of the racket and noise.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XIII.

CUMMERHAYS, in one of the most northerly of the northern counties of England, although it considers itself to be a place of no small importance, has not the good fortune to be situated on any of the great main lines of railway; consequently, to most people it has the air of being somewhat out of the world. Of late years, however, a branch line has found it out, and has thereby enabled it to emerge from the state of semi-torpor in which it seemed destined to languish for ever. The branch line in question, of which Cumerhays is the terminus, is about twenty miles in length, and leaves the main line at Greenholm Station. About halfway between the two places, but about a couple of miles distant from the line itself, are certain important collieries, to meet the requirements of which a secondary branch has been constructed, which turns abruptly from the main branch at a point dignified with the euphonious title of Cinder Pit Junction. Here a signalman's box has been fixed, a wooden erection, standing about six feet above the ground, with an arrangement of levers inside it, for working the points and signals in connection with the traffic to and from the collieries. At the time of which we write two men were stationed at the box in question, who came on duty turn and turn about, in each case a week of day-duty alternating with one of night-duty. The cottage of one of the

signalmen was about half a mile from the box, on the road leading to the collieries; while that of his 'mate' was about a quarter of a mile down the road in an opposite direction.

Into this second cottage, which stood by itself in a lane a little removed from the high-road, and having no habitation near it, we will venture, Asmodeus-like, to take a peep on a certain April evening. It was already dusk in the valleys, although a soft rosy light still made beautiful the tops of the distant fells.

In half an hour James Maynard, the signalman, would be due at his box to take his 'spell' of night-duty. His thick blue overcoat was hanging behind the door ready to put on, his wife was washing up the crockery, and Maynard himself was smoking a last after-tea pipe before leaving home. He was a well-built stalwart man, with a jet-black beard and moustache, and close-cut hair of the same colour, to which his dark-blue eyes offered a somewhat striking contrast. He had been about three months in his present situation, and among the drivers and guards who worked the traffic between the junction and the collieries he had come to be known by the sobriquet of 'Gentleman Jim.' It was not that he ever set himself up as being in anyway superior to or different from his mates; indeed, he was universally popular; but these grimy-faced men, who in their way are often keen observers of character, had an instinctive feeling that, although necessity might have made him one of them to outward seeming, he was not so in reality, and that at some anterior time his position in life must have been widely different from that which he now occupied. But genial and good-natured though 'Gentleman Jim' might be, he was a man who brooked no questioning, and no one thereabouts knew more about him than he chose to divulge of his own accord.

Maynard and his wife had been chatting pleasantly together. Suddenly the latter laid a hand on her husband's arm to bespeak his attention. 'What is it?' he asked. 'I hear nothing.'

'There was a noise of wheels a moment ago, and now it has ceased. It sounded as if some vehicle had stopped suddenly at the end of the lane. Do you remain in the background, dear, while I go and ascertain whether any one is there.'

She opened the door and went out quickly. There was still light enough in the valley to see objects a considerable distance away. One side of the lane in which the cottage was built was bounded by a high bank. Up this Mrs Maynard now clambered, assisted by the branch of a tree; she knew that from the top of it she could see not only the lane, but a considerable stretch of high-road on either hand. After gazing for a moment or two, she leaped lightly down and ran back to the cottage. 'A carriage with two horses is standing at the corner of the lane,' she said to her husband. 'A lady has got out of it and is coming towards the cottage, and—oh, my dear—I'm nearly sure it's Lady Fanny Dwyer.'

'Lady Fan! Well, I shall be very glad to see her. No doubt she is visiting at Seaton Park; and as she knows we are living in the neighbourhood, she must have made inquiries and discovered our whereabouts.'

'I hope she has not made her inquiries in such a way as to arouse any suspicion that we are at all different from what we seem to be?'

'I think you may trust Lady Fan for that. She generally knows pretty well what she is about.—But had you not better go and meet her?'

Clara hurried to the door; but as she opened it, Lady Fan appeared on the threshold. She looked a little white and scared, adventures with a spice of risk or romance in them not being in her usual line. Making a step forward and grasping Clara's hand, she said in a whisper: 'Is it safe to speak aloud? Is there any one but yourselves to hear me?'

Reassured on this point, Lady Fan threw herself into her friend's arms and burst into tears, holding out a hand to Gerald as she did so. 'I can't talk to either of you till I have had my cry,' she said between her sobs. 'What a wicked, wicked world this is!'

She grew calmer in a little while, and sat down close to Clara, holding a hand of the latter while she talked.

Here it may be remarked that it was through the influence of Lady Fan's husband that Gerald Brooke had obtained his present situation as signalman at Cinder Pit Junction. The mode of life was of his own choosing. He wanted something to do that would take him out of himself as much as possible, and while not entirely isolating him from his fellow-men, would not bring him into contact with too great a number of them. In this out-of-the-way valley among the fells and moors, if anywhere, shelter and safety might surely be found.

'O my dear, my dear,' cried Lady Fan as she dried her eyes and looked round her, 'and has it really come to this, that this dreadful poky little hole of a place is your home—the only home that you have!'

'It is not a dreadful little hole by any means, dear Lady Fanny,' answered Gerald with a smile. 'It is a substantial well-built cottage of four rooms—quite large enough for a family without encumbrances. You don't know how snug and comfortable we are in it. Economy of space is not half enough considered in a small world like ours.'

'I am glad you keep up your spirits,' retorted her ladyship; 'though how you contrive to do so under such circumstances is a mystery to me.'

'We have really and truly been very comfortable since we came here,' answered Clara. 'I have conceived quite an affection for our little house, and somehow, I hardly know why, I feel as if we were safer here than elsewhere. Probably it is the loneliness of the place that gives one this feeling of security; and then the air that blows down from the moors is so pure and invigorating that both Gerald and I feel as if we were growing young again.'

'Oh, of course you try to make the best of everything—it's just your aggravating way,' retorted Lady Fan. 'But if I were in your place, I should fret and fume and worry, and make myself and everybody about me as miserable as possible. That would be my way.'

'I don't believe it,' answered Gerald with a laugh. 'You don't know how many unsuspected

qualities you possess that go towards making a capital poor man's wife.'

Lady Fan shrugged her shoulders. 'And so you, Gerald Brooke, the owner of Beechley Towers, are living here as a common railway signalman,' she said; 'finding your companions among a lot of engine-drivers and—shunters, don't they call them?—and grimy people of that kind. What is the world coming to!'

'My companions may be grimy, as you say; but I can assure your ladyship that they are a very hard-working, good-hearted, decently behaved set of fellows, and that among them is more than one of whose friendship any man might be proud. And I can further assure you, Lady Fanny, that I am quite satisfied with my mode of life—for the present and till brighter days return, if they ever will return. And that reminds me that I have had no opportunity of thanking Dwyer for the trouble he must have been put to in procuring me my present situation. Is he here with you?'

'Oh dear, no. His last letter was dated from Cairo; where his next will be dated from, goodness only knows.'

'Well, I hope you won't forget to thank him for me when next you write.'

'By the way, how did you succeed in finding us out?' asked Clara.

'To tell you the truth, my dear, one of my chief objects in accepting an invitation to Seaton Park was the hope of seeing you and your good-for-nothing signalman. I knew you were living close by, but not exactly where. I also knew that you were passing under the name of Maynard. Accordingly, I set my maid to work to make certain inquiries, telling her a white fib in order to stifle any curiosity she might feel in the matter; in fact, my dear Clara, I gave her to understand that before your marriage you had been in my service, and that I was desirous of ascertaining how you were getting on in life. It was the most likely tale I could think of, and I've no doubt it answered its purpose; anyhow, this morning Simpkins brought me your address, and here I am.'

'How it brings back the memory of old times to see you and hear your voice!' said Clara. 'It seems years since I left the Towers, although it is only a few short months ago. I am often back there in my dreams.'

Lady Fan squeezed her friend's hand in silent sympathy. Then she said: 'By-the-by, what has become of darling, quaint Miss Primby? I hope she is quite well?'

'She has gone to stay for a time with some friends in Devon. This place was too bleak for her during the winter months; but now the spring is here, she will be back with us again before long.'

'You talk as if you were likely to remain here for ever and a day,' answered Lady Fan. 'And that reminds me that I have done to-day as our sex are said to do habitually with their postscripts—that is, I have left mentioning till the last the most important of the reasons which brought me here. Algy, in the last letter I had from him, charged me to either see or communicate with you as early as possible, and tell you from him that his banker is at your service for any amount you choose to draw upon him. He has a lot of

money lying idle, and would only be too glad if you would favour him by making use of it.'

'Dwyer is a noble-hearted fellow, I know, but'—

'But me no buts,' broke in her impetuous ladyship. 'There is no reason why you should not end this mean and sordid way of life at once. There are plenty of charming nooks on the Continent where you and Clara might live with everything nice about you while waiting for better days; and really you would be doing Algy a great kindness at the same time.'

But this was a point on which Gerald was not to be moved. He combated Lady Fanny in almost the same terms that he had combated Karovsky when the Russian had made him an almost identical offer. He would never leave England, he said—on that he was determined—till the mystery that enshrouded Von Rosenberg's death should be cleared up and his own fair fame vindicated before the world. There was within him a hidden faith that, like an altar flame, sometimes burnt high and anon died down to a mere spark, but was never altogether extinguished, that one day his long waiting would be rewarded.

Lady Fan fumed and lost her temper, and then recovered it again with equal facility, but in no-wise shook Gerald from his purpose. The striking of the hour startled them both.

'Eight o'clock and Sir William's horses waiting for me all this time!' exclaimed Lady Fan.

'And I'm a quarter of an hour late,' said Gerald to his wife. 'Lucas will begin to think something has happened to me.'

Lady Fanny's last words to her friend were: 'To-day is Tuesday. I'll come again on Thursday, when we will have a good long talk together, by which time I hope that obstinate and wrong-headed husband of yours will have come to his senses.'

Gerald Brooke had kissed his wife and had gone off to his duty at the signal-box, leaving her alone in the cottage. But not long would she be left in solitude. Margery, who had gone to Overbarrow, a village about two miles away, to purchase some groceries, would be back in a little while.

But half an hour passed after her husband's departure without bringing Margery, and Clara began to grow seriously uneasy. Never had she been so late before. When the clock struck nine and still the girl had not come, Clara could contain herself no longer. Putting on her bonnet and shawl and locking the door, she hurried down the lane, and turning into the high-road in a direction opposite that which led to the railway, she went quickly forward along the way by which she knew Margery must come. The night was dark and moonless, but the stars shone clearly, and by their faint light Clara could just discern the black outlines of the hedge which bounded the road, and thereby keep herself to the line of narrow turf-bordered footway which ran by its side. She had not gone more than a quarter of a mile when her heart gave a throb of relief. She heard footsteps advancing towards her, and her fine ear recognised them as those of Margery, even while the latter was some distance away. 'Is that you, Margery?' she called, so that the girl might not be startled by coming suddenly upon her in the dark. A moment later they

had met. Margery had been hurrying home at such a rate as to be nearly breathless.

'O mum, he's here! I've seen him, and heard him speak,' were the girl's first incoherent words.

'Who is it that you have seen and heard?'

'Muster Crofton, mum—Muster Geril's cousin—him as the Frenchy tied up in his chair.'

'George Crofton here!' murmured Clara, her heart seeming to turn to ice as she spoke. 'Surely, surely, Margery, you must be mistaken.'

'I only wish I was, mistress,' responded the girl fervently; 'but he only need speak for me to pick him out of a thousand men in the dark. Besides, I saw his face with the cut in his lip and his teeth showing through.'

For a little while Clara was so dazed and overcome that she could neither speak nor act. In that first shock her mind had room for one thought and one only: George Crofton was on the track of her husband! No other purpose could have brought him to this out-of-the-world place. Gerald must be warned and at once; but first she must hear all that the girl had to tell. She had turned mechanically, and was now retracing her way to the cottage.

'I suppose Mr Crofton saw you at the same moment you saw him?' she said anxiously.

'I saw him, but he never set eyes on me.'

'How could that happen?'

'I'll tell you all about it, mum. I had got my groceries and had left the village, and was coming along pretty fast, 'cos I was a bit late, when just as I was getting near the end of a lane I hears two men coming along talking to one another. I was not a bit a-fear'd; but still I thought I might as well keep out of their sight; so just before they turned out of the lane, I slipped into the dry ditch that runs along the hedge-bottom and crouched down. They passed me without seeing me, still talking, and then I knowed at once that one of 'em was Muster Crofton. "We are before our time," says he to the other one; "we shall have nearly an hour to wait." Then says the other: "Better be afore our time than after it." After going a bit up the road, they crossed it, and passing through a stile, got into the fields, I making bold to skulk after 'em, first taking off my shoes so as they shouldn't hear me. On they went, I following, till they came to a hollow where there's a lot of trees, and in the middle of the trees a little house that seems, as well as I could make out, as if somebody had pulled it half to bits and then left off. When they were well inside, I followed on tiptoe; and then I heard one of 'em strike a match, and then I saw a light through the broken shutter of a little window. Going up to the window, I peeped in. Two lanterns had been lighted, and by the light of one of 'em I could see Muster Crofton's face quite plain. I couldn't make out much of what they talked about, only that they were waiting for somebody, and once the other man said: "We shall be quite time enough if we leave here by half-past ten." Then Muster Crofton, he swore, and said that he never could a-bear waiting.'

'Did you hear them mention your master's name?' asked Clara anxiously.

'No, mum, not once.'

Clara was puzzled. To her wifely fears it seemed impossible that Crofton's presence should

not bode danger to her husband. It was almost incredible that he should be there unless he were on the track of Gerald. Yet, on the other hand, what could be the nature of the business which took him at that late hour to a ruined cottage buried among trees? It almost looked as if he were concerned in some dark and nefarious scheme of his own. Suddenly a fresh thought struck her, and as it did so she came to an abrupt halt.

'Margery,' she said, 'you shall show me the way back to the cottage among the trees. I will go and endeavour to find out for myself what it is that has brought Mr Crofton so far away from home. Come.'

'O mistress!' said Margery with a gasp. It was her only protest: with her to hear was to obey.

TOYS, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

A TOY is perhaps best defined as a trifling object, designed for the amusement of the young; and we may safely infer that wherever children have existed, they have not been without playthings. From the earliest historical times we find traces of toys, many of them of complicated and ingenious construction. Among the specimens disinterred from Egyptian tombs are dolls, elastic balls, round pellets, evidently used in the same way as our modern marbles, and footballs securely covered with leather. Movable puppets have also been discovered, consisting of jointed figures capable of working rollers, kneading bread, &c., when pulled by a string. Models of animals of all kinds seem to have been pretty abundant among the Egyptians. The crocodile is not unnaturally one of the most common of these, and some wooden crocodiles have been found with the upper jaw hinged.

The tombs of Golgoi and Idalium in Cyprus have supplied us with some specimens of the toys of ancient Greece, such as painted dolls of clay modelled with the fingers, mounted cavaliers armed with shields, and cars to which horses are harnessed four abreast. We also know from Suidas that the Greek lads anticipated our own in the use of whipping-tops.

The Roman toys were of various kinds, including popguns, bows, and arrows, and many varieties of dolls and puppets, some of the latter being loose-jointed and movable by a string, like our modern marionnettes. The whipping-top, too, which was perhaps borrowed from the Greeks, was a favourite toy, and is thus referred to by Virgil in the seventh Book of the *Aeneid* (Conington's translation)—

Like top that whirling 'neath the thong
Is scourged by eager boys along;

Bent on their gamesome strife:

With eddying motion it careers

Round empty courts in circling spheres;

The beardless troop in strange amaze

Upon the winged boxwood gaze;

The lashes lend it life.

Dr Paris, in his curious and interesting book, *Philosophy in Sport made Science in Earnest*, says that the Romans probably introduced this toy into Britain. A game very similar to marbles, but played with nuts, seems also to have been common in ancient Rome; it is stated by Suetonius that Augustus when a youth spent many hours of the day in playing with little Moorish boys 'cum nucibus.'

The same toys, with variations, seem to have been popular throughout the Middle Ages. Marginal paintings in fourteenth-century manuscripts represent boys whipping toys of much the same shape as those now in use; and a writer in 1587 mentions rattles, balls, wooden horses, and drums as among the current toys of his time. In the Harleian Manuscripts at the British Museum there is a very curious anecdote about the whipping-top, showing it to have been well known about the end of the sixteenth century; it refers to Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I. of England and VI. of Scotland: 'The first tyme that the Prince went to the towne of Sterling to meete the king, seeing a little within the gate of the towne a stacke of corne, in proportion not unlike to a topp, wherewith he used to play, he said to some that were with him, "Loe, there is a goodly topp:" whereupon one of them saying, "Why doe you not play with it, then?" he answered: "Set it up for me, and I will play with it."'

Our modern toys are so varied as to defy enumeration, and their rough classification is the most that can be attempted. Imitation being the foundation of many childish modes of recreation, we are not surprised to find that it has been largely drawn upon in the construction of toys. Horses, dogs, babies, houses, windmills, and boats form very favourite playthings, and are made in materials so widely different as iron, wood, wax, and india-rubber. Additional faithfulness to nature is obtained in some cases by adding mimicry of sounds and actions; thus, dogs are made to bark, dolls to open their eyes and utter strange noises supposed to mean 'Mamma' or 'Papa'; while monkeys climb up a pole, and mice run about the floor. Another species of toy, perhaps the most valuable educationally, as well as the most really interesting, appeals to the spirit of emulation and the love of success inherent in human nature, rather than to any intrinsic merit in the playthings themselves. To this class belong marbles, balls, cards, bricks, tops, kites, &c., in fact all toys which call for the exercise of skill and ability when played with. A third kind owes its success to exciting the feelings of wonder and surprise; but as these emotions are of a low order and are in their nature transient, such toys must take inferior rank from an intellectual point of view. Among them we may reckon the magnetic swan, which follows a lodestone over the water, the automatic figures worked by sand or hidden mechanism, and crackers, Jacks-in-the-box, &c. Lastly, come the kind which give pleasure to children by gratifying their love of noise, including trumpets, drums, pistols, and squeaking abominations of all sorts. These probably give more annoyance to the elders than pleasure to the youngsters.

At the present time, the production of toys employs a large number of persons in Europe, and some in the United States. During the five years 1882-86, the imports of this country alone amounted to £2,898,147, an annual average of £579,629, a sum nearly equal to our annual expenditure on foreign watches. Germany has the lion's share of our import trade (£320,000), Holland being a bad second with £125,000. France sends us toys to the value of about £90,000 per annum; and the rest of the trade

is principally done in Belgium, though a small quantity is now received from the United States. We also make a great many at home, and do an export trade estimated at about £60,000 a year, principally to the colonies, Africa, and South America. Wooden carved toys are chiefly made in Germany and Switzerland, the cheaper kinds in the neighbourhood of Nuremberg, and the better qualities at Sonneburg, in Thuringia, from which latter place about twenty-four million articles, valued at £800,000, are annually exported. Large quantities of wooden toys are also made in Saxony, where an ingenious process is in use for diminishing the labour involved in the production of animals. A circular block of soft wood is turned into a ring of such a pattern that by slicing it vertically a rough representation of an animal (say an elephant) is secured. Each rudimentary figure is then trimmed by hand, the ears, trunk, tusk, and tail, all of which are separately turned and sliced by the same method, are inserted; and when the animal has been painted and varnished it is ready for use. Clay marbles also come exclusively from Saxony, being made from a clay not found elsewhere. The better qualities come from Holland, where they are made from fragments of alabaster and other stones. *Taw* and *ally*, the common names for the two qualities principally used in this country, are abbreviations of *tawny* and *alabaster*. A great ten days' toy-fair is annually held at Leipzig, when more than six thousand merchants exhibit their goods in every available inch of space, even in the garrets of the six-storied houses. Marburg, in Hessen, is chiefly occupied with the manufacture of musical toys; while Biberach, in Württemberg, is noted for substantial metal articles, such as carriages, locomotives, furniture, &c. The specialty of Switzerland is wooden cottages, models, &c. Some of the large dealers do very well out of the industry; but the actual toymakers in both countries are miserably paid, and find it very hard, even by the most unremitting toil, to gain a subsistence from their employment, many of them being obliged to supplement their earnings by engaging in outdoor labour during the summer. The productions of Holland are very similar to those of Germany.

The best and most expensive toys are always of French origin, that nation being noted in all branches of manufacture for its taste and skill. In mechanical toys of all kinds the French are specially pre-eminent, and have been noted for many centuries as makers of automata. As early as the thirteenth century one Willars de Hancourt constructed an angel that 'would always point with his finger to the sun'; and in the time of Louis XIV. Philip Camuz invented a wonderful group of automata for that monarch. It consisted of a coach and four horses, which started off at the crack of a whip, the horses prancing, trotting, and galloping in turn. It ran along until it arrived in front of the king, when it stopped, and a toy footman descended, who opened the carriage door and handed out a lady. The latter courtesied to the king and presented a petition, after which she re-entered her carriage and was driven away. In the eighteenth century, Jacques Vaucanson, known as the king of automata constructors, made a flute-player which was one of the wonders of the time. D'Alembert tells us that this remark-

able figure stood upon a pedestal in which a portion of the mechanism was concealed, and not only blew into the instrument, but increased and diminished the sound with its lips, performing legato and staccato passages admirably, and fingering with complete accuracy. This automaton made a great sensation when exhibited in Paris in 1738; and Vaucanson was encouraged to make more toys of the same kind, including a flageolet-player and a mechanical duck. The latter waddled, swam, dived, and quacked, besides picking up and swallowing its food.

Modern French toys are chiefly made in Paris, especially in the Quartier du Temple, and great subdivision of labour is practised. One man, for example, is entirely occupied in making animals which strike drums with their paws, and there are six factories which produce nothing but brass trumpets. Like the rest of his countrymen, however, the French toymaker does not understand the art of selling, and he thereby gives an opportunity to the enterprising German, of which the latter readily avails himself. So it happens that the less skilful but more wily Teuton lives a good deal on the Frenchman's brains by imitating his novelties on a cheaper scale, and a French invention originally brought out at eight or nine shillings is speedily undersold by a German imitation at a shilling.

The English toymaker is reproached with being unenterprising and inartistic, but he does very well in some branches of the trade. He is especially good at wooden horses in general and rocking-horses in particular, exporting the latter even to Germany. Carts and vehicles of all kinds, drums, dolls' houses, and most heavy toys are made in London, as are also those made of glass, stone, pewter, and india-rubber. Wax and rag dolls are also English specialties, and give rise to a considerable export trade. For a long time our supply of this toy was almost entirely derived from the Netherlands, which caused dolls to be known in this country as 'Flanders babies.' The dolls had round cannon-ball heads and curiously articulated limbs, and the fact that they were to a great extent made by children gave rise to the old couplet:

The children of Holland take pleasure in making
What the children of England take pleasure in breaking.

At the present time, however, the bulk of our foreign supply comes from France and Germany. In wax dolls our export to America is considerable, as, owing to climatic reasons, they cannot be made there. It seems that wax will not set in very hot weather, and cracks in severe cold, so that a continent which suffers from both extremes is obliged to obtain its supply from abroad. We also send a goodly number of rag dolls for the amusement of the little negroes in America and Africa. These latter have faces of wax, covered with an outer skin of muslin, and the heads, both for them and for the wax dolls proper, are made in moulds, and require skilled workmen to conduct the operation. The bodies are mostly made by women and children, and are paid for at very low rates, owing to the pressure of unskilled competition. Readers of *Our Mutual Friend* may have suspected that the occupation of Jenny Wren the dolls' dressmaker was one invented for her by the author; but such was not

the case, as the larger firms in the trade regularly employ dressmakers to clothe their toys.

Two minor branches of the doll-industry form distinct trades—the making of shoes and eyes. The shoes are made from the waste material of children's ornamental shoes and boots; but this branch is a smaller one than that of eye-making, as many dolls are sent out with merely painted boots, while all or nearly all have proper eyes. M'Culloch says in his *Commercial Dictionary* that a manufacturer of the latter has been known to receive a single order for five hundred pounds' worth: and although this statement was afterwards disputed, it seems certain that large orders are sometimes placed. Dolls' eyes are of two sorts, known technically as common and natural. The common are simply coloured hollow glass spheres of white enamel, black and blue being the only colours used; the natural eyes are of similar composition, but have the pupil and iris correctly represented. Considerable quantities are exported, especially to French doll-makers. The black eyes are used for dolls exported to South America, and blue eyes for those used at home, children naturally preferring their dolls to have eyes of a similar hue to those most common amongst themselves.

A LEGAL SECRET.

CHAP. III.—SIDNEY'S CLIENT.

THE little inky parlour in Took's Court grew more inky than ever; for Abel Norris sat there at his old desk copying diligently from morning till night. He was completely in his element.

Not unfrequently—more often towards the afternoon—Sidney Trench would look in; and sometimes, Rosa being there, he would exchange a few words with her. And if the young girl was absent, Sidney never failed to inquire after her of the old clerk. They sometimes met—but this was on rare occasions—in New Square or Lincoln's Inn Fields; for Rosa was much impressed with the number of carriages which drove up to the door of Trench, Pilkington, and Trench's office. They suggested quite a fashionable reception. From ten in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon clients never ceased to come and go. She tried to gain a glimpse of Mr Pilkington more than once, but only succeeded in obtaining a distant view of his bent figure when stepping in or out of his carriage.

Some weeks passed by. One afternoon towards six o'clock, when the days were growing longer, Rosa strolled round New Square. It was an afternoon that she long remembered; the trees were beginning to grow green, and the sparrows chirped over the coming summer. She was sauntering within these legal precincts, lost in thought; for the spring days revived, with greater vividness each season, the imperfect reminiscence of her childhood; and in the vista of these misty scenes there had reappeared a handsome youth, her companion in sunny fields and shady woods. This youth had now grown into a likeness of Sidney Trench, and she began to associate him with this companion, as though they were one and the same. Could this be possible? One and the same! She had not the courage to question the young lawyer; she dreaded lest he should

destroy by a contradictory word this fanciful image of himself which she had built up from memory in her own mind. She conceived that those sunny fields—more of a dream than a reality—were too far distant from Took's Court ever to be reached again, except in imagination.

Rosa had never become reconciled to this humble life, to which she knew that she had not been born or bred. But her affection for Abel Norris had curbed her impulse to rebel. Was he not always meditating how he could best please her? She had the warmest of hearts, and the old clerk never appealed to her better nature in vain. He had constructed a window-garden in her garret; and when the seeds which she had planted there began to show signs of bursting into leaf, she could not repress her sense of gratitude and delight. She would sit for hours in this garret-boudoir; and she would almost forget for the moment her cravings for a more congenial home. A gleam of sunshine would sometimes linger for a brief half-hour in her 'garden,' though never a ray looked in at the windows below; the old clerk's inky parlour was always in shadow.

Happening presently to look up, the girl caught sight of Sidney Trench. He was crossing New Square and coming towards her. Having met more than once since the evening upon which he had first called at Took's Court, Sidney had naturally been often in her thoughts; not only playing a part in the dreamy recollection of her childhood: she regarded him as their benefactor. Had he not extended a helping hand at the moment when they needed it most? She had frequently wished to express all the gratitude with which her heart was overflowing; for she had meditated and composed many a pretty speech to which she believed that she would have the temerity to give utterance. Fatal deception! Now that he was standing before her with outstretched hand, Rosa had not the courage to utter one word.

He walked slowly beside her within these quiet precincts of New Square. The clock over the ancient Hall had struck six, and the place was comparatively deserted. And now the chirping of the sparrows grew louder; and the retreating rays of the setting sun—that ascended obliquely the weather-beaten stone walls—seemed to increase in brightness.

'Would it surprise you, Rosa,' said Sidney, who felt impelled to address the girl as he had done his little playmate in early days, 'if I told you that I had been making all sorts of schemes about you?'

Rosa looked up laughingly, and said: 'Is not scheming part of a lawyer's profession?'

Sidney smiled. 'It is the way of the world. But I wish, seriously, to consult with you. A lawyer seldom schemes without his client's permission.'

'Am I your client?'

This question brought an odd laugh from Sidney. 'I suppose so. Shall we assume it, for argument's sake?'

'Yes! And then we must suppose,' said Rosa, with a brightening look in her eyes, 'that I've got a great black deed-box at your office, full of documents, with my name'— She stopped, and the colour spread over her cheeks. She

had not reflected when she spoke that 'Rosa' was the only name she could recollect.

'Ah! The deed-box and documents,' said Sidney, as if to reassure her, 'will come—all in good time. Meanwhile, your legal adviser has one or two questions to ask his client.'

Rosa curled her pretty lips half-seriously and half in play. 'Must I submit to a cross-examination?'

Sidney again laughed. 'I merely want to discover,' said he, 'whether my schemes meet with your approval.—To begin, then! Is not this life in Took's Court a little dreary?'

'Sometimes. Yes, very dreary indeed.' Then she added: 'I know how wrong it is to be dissatisfied. Poor old dad is so good; I think he loves me more than he ever did. He thinks that I am quite happy and contented now. I love him too. And yet I sometimes think—but that's only when I'm in a wicked mood—that I shall run away.'

'Where would you run to, Rosa?'

'How should I know? I should stop as soon as I reached the country. Is that very far?'

'No.—Would a country life content you?'

'If there were lots of wild-flowers: that is all I think about.—'But,' she added, 'how could I leave poor dad? That would be selfish: it would be ungrateful.'

The young lawyer looked grave. 'My scheme, I'm afraid, would take you from Mr Norris. But you could come and see him whenever you liked.'

'Could I?' said Rosa dreamily.

'Yes.—My scheme is,' said Sidney, 'that you should become the companion to a rich lady who'—

'Does she live in London?'

'No; in the country. But the house where she lives is little beyond the suburbs. There is a large garden, and shady walks, and wild-flowers; and on all sides are open heath and wooded hills.'

Rosa made no reply. If the young lawyer had known all her thoughts—thoughts to which she had never given expression—he could not have touched upon a more genial subject. Could he possibly comprehend her?

It had only been from a strong sense of duty that she had successfully resisted the temptation to leave Abel Norris months ago and accept some situation out of London where she could breathe the pure country air that would remind her of happier days. How she longed to look upon the 'open heath and wooded hills!' Would they not revive—did not the very words revive—her memories of childhood? She bent her head thoughtfully. 'What shall I do?' said she in a low voice.

She eagerly desired to confess her craving for such a home. But she thought again of Abel Norris and the lonely life he would lead without her. He had befriended her for twelve years past: he had never ceased to exert himself, for her sake, to find work that would lift them out of their poverty. Some show of gratitude, some sacrifice of her own happiness, was due to one whose self-abnegation, out of love for her, had been so pathetic.

'Take your time,' said Sidney, noticing her hesitation, 'to arrive at some decision. Events

may possibly decide for you; so do not answer impulsively. You would do well to talk the matter over with Mr Norris; and when you have made up your mind—after listening to his view of the subject—you can again consult your lawyer.—What does my client say to that?’

‘She will follow your advice.’

‘Excellent!—And now,’ said Sidney, ‘won’t you come and sit down in the clients’ room? Mr Norris is at the office. You can wait there, if you like, and go home with him.’

‘The clients’ room?’ said Rosa with an eager look. ‘I should like to see that.’

While talking together, they had wandered out of New Square into Lincoln’s Inn Fields; and they now found themselves at the very entrance to Trench, Pilkington, and Trench’s office. It had often occurred to Rosa that a peep inside the old house would be deeply interesting; for her curiosity had been roused by all that had reached her ear about the great Mr Pilkington and the wealthy clients who so often grew weary of waiting, like so many doctors’ patients, in the octagonal room on the staircase. It was towards this very room that Sidney now led the way. With a certain feeling of trepidation, for which she could not account, Rosa followed. Her first impression, as she seated herself in the chair which Sidney placed for her, was that she had been here before, but not in childhood: at some remote period too shadowy to recall even as she had recalled a half-forgotten dream. It was something so dim, so confusing, that it vanished from her memory when the young lawyer spoke.

He had stepped towards the door leading into Mr Pilkington’s room. ‘I will tell Mr Norris that you are here,’ said he; and before Rosa could answer he was gone.

She now looked about her with eager curiosity. Suddenly her eyes fell upon the deed-box upon which was written ‘Rosamond Gage.’ The girl sprang from her chair with a suppressed cry upon her lips. She remembered all now. Rosamond Gage was her own name! Sidney Trench had not spoken idly: she was indeed his client. But why had he never told her of this?—why had he left her so abruptly without a word of explanation?

Rosa placed her hand upon Mr Pilkington’s door, opened it, and stepped forward. But there was a green baize door beyond, firmly closed: the sight of it cooled her impetuosity. She retreated into the waiting-room in alarm at her own action. Had she thought to discover the secret there? She sank back in her seat, as many a client had done before her, with impatience expressed in her whole attitude. There was no remedy: she must wait.

Sidney Trench, who had a moment before passed into Mr Pilkington’s room, was evidently expected there; for the old lawyer expressed no surprise at seeing him enter so abruptly.

Mr Pilkington glanced towards the green baize door. ‘Is she there?’ He was standing near his desk, leaning one hand upon it, and looking half over his shoulder towards Sidney.

‘Yes; she is waiting, sir, for Abel Norris.’

The lawyer turned and came towards Sidney; he placed his hand kindly upon the young man’s shoulder. ‘Sidney,’ said he with great earnestness, ‘I spoke harshly to you the other evening in the library; I regret having done so.’

‘Why speak, sir, of that now? I took it, as you intended I should, as the advice you believed I needed.’

Mr Pilkington looked anxiously into the young man’s face. ‘You do not doubt, Sidney, that I love you as much as if you were my son? I was vexed—deeply troubled, that evening. The thought had taken hold of me that you, whose frankness no one could question, had become secret like myself. I viewed the situation with horror; I could not look at it calmly. And yet, no sooner had you left me than I saw plainly the cause: it was my own evil conscience at work. You were keeping no secret from me. It was I who feared being questioned—it was I who was hiding a secret from you!—But we understand each other now: do we not? It was I who needed the advice I gave so freely. I will profit by it, if not yet too late.—Where is Norris?’

‘In my room.—Will you see him?’

‘At once,’ said the lawyer, seating himself at his desk. ‘Will you send him to me?’

Sidney found Abel Norris in his room downstairs waiting his return. ‘Will you step upstairs?’ said the young lawyer. ‘Mr Pilkington wishes to see you.’

‘Mr Pilkington, sir?’

‘Yes. His room is at the top of the staircase: the door on the left-hand side. Mr Pilkington wishes to make your acquaintance.’

Norris, who had never seen the great Mr Pilkington, though he had made several visits to Sidney Trench, felt a certain awe of the senior partner. Nor was the old clerk alone in this respect; many a client had experienced the same disrelish for a private interview. Norris stopped half-way on the staircase and took a pinch of snuff to steady his nerves, and then hastened to knock at the senior partner’s door.

Norris found himself in the oblong room. Still at his desk, with his white head bent over some papers, sat Mr Pilkington. He did not raise his eyes; but a stern expression came over his face, as if to hide some possible sign of emotion. ‘Your name is Abel Norris?’

The old clerk bowed his head.

‘Sit down.—No, no,’ said the lawyer, as Norris took a seat near the door. ‘Bring your chair close to my desk—closer still. I cannot see you at that distance.—Do you remember me?’ he added, abruptly raising his head.

Norris sat down within a respectful distance of Mr Pilkington, on the edge of a chair, and looked at him hesitatingly at first; but gradually a change came over the old clerk’s expression; he half rose from his seat, and bending eagerly forward exclaimed: ‘Good gracious, sir! Why, I thought of you as dead.’

‘Ah!’ and the old lawyer flashed a look at Norris under his eyebrows.—‘So, you *do* remember me?’

Norris still continued to examine Mr Pilkington’s features. ‘I cannot be mistaken. It’s twelve years ago,’ said he. ‘But how could I forget you, sir? How could I forget your face—or that day?’

Mr Pilkington seemed from his manner to be demanding ‘What day?’

Norris understood him. ‘That day,’ he hastened to explain, ‘on which you came to our

cottage near St Albans and placed a little girl under my wife's care.'

Mr Pilkington leaned back in his chair. But he neither glanced up nor made any answer.

'Why, sir—why did you never write to me?—Did you think,' said the old clerk pathetically, 'that *she* was dead?'

This question brought a quick and somewhat angry retort. 'What does it matter to you,' said the lawyer, 'what I might think? It will not alter the situation. The girl is alive and well: is she not?'

'Yes; she is alive and well.'

The lawyer reflected a moment. 'Has she any recollection of me—any impression of her life previous to being placed with you?'

Norris looked earnestly at Mr Pilkington. 'So strong a recollection of you, sir,' said he, 'that were she to meet you now—though it is twelve years ago—I doubt not she would know you again. She has a wonderful memory.'

Mr Pilkington grew still more thoughtful. 'We shall see,' he muttered—'we shall see.' While speaking, the lawyer slowly rose from his chair and walked towards the green baize door. Norris rose also and stood watching his movements with curiosity. Mr Pilkington, without inviting the clerk to follow by sign or glance, stepped into the octagonal room.

Abel Norris was puzzled. What was Mr Pilkington's object in quitting the room so suddenly? He had left the door ajar; and the old clerk could not fail to hear the sound of voices. Was that Rosa's voice? Norris went towards the door with eager outstretched hand. Something impelled him: he passed through, and stood with the further door wide open before him. The dusky light was looking in at the little barred window in the octagonal room; Abel Norris saw Rosa half kneeling at Mr Pilkington's feet and clasping his hand in both her own. 'My dear,' the old lawyer was saying in a firm though kindly voice, 'we must have no tears, if you please.'

QUARANTINE.

QUARANTINE, as the isolation of infected shipping is termed, is by no means an institution of modern growth, inasmuch as its origin has been traced to the fourteenth century, when laws enforcing it were promulgated by a Council of Health at Venice. These restrictions, so onerous to the shipping community, were introduced for the purpose of preventing the importation of infectious diseases by crews and passengers of ships arriving from unclean ports. It was in the first instance supposed that a period of forty days ought to elapse between the date on which a vessel set sail from a suspected seaport and that on which those arriving in her might land at any other place without endangering the health of the inhabitants. The term quarantine itself is said to be a corruption of an Italian word meaning forty. In Pepys' *Diary* there is an entry, dated November 26, 1663, to the effect that the spread of the plague at Amsterdam was the cause of all ships coming

thence being compelled to perform a quarantine of thirty days.

In recent times, the period of close surveillance varies with the exigence of each case, as set forth in a vessel's bill of health, which is a document bearing the signature of a consul or other competent authority of the port she last left. The interval of compulsory seclusion is sometimes only two days, but, under exceptional circumstances, may be prolonged indefinitely. Publication in the *London Gazette* of the Order in Council declaring quarantine to be enforced against ships arriving from specified ports is deemed sufficient and satisfactory notice in this country to all concerned; but shipmasters are otherwise well informed, and ignorance is no excuse for evasion of the regulations.

The provisions of the Quarantine Act, which received the royal sanction in 1825, gave almost unlimited power to the authorities to place obstructions in the way of the importation of epidemics by shipping. Ships could be detained at their moorings with passengers and freight for such time as the Privy-council might consider necessary. The Public Health Bill of 1872 endowed the local sanitary authorities with power to make visitations from ship to ship on a similar plan to that pursued with respect to shore-structures. They fumigate vessels with sulphur and charcoal, isolate the sick either afloat or on shore, let the healthy depart about their businesses, and disinfect or destroy all articles of apparel and bedding which may be presumably infectious. All woodwork is carefully scrubbed with diluted carbolic acid and in most cases repainted. Customs' officers have somewhat similar powers; but they have to give notice to the sanitary officials, who at once take the necessary steps to minimise the danger. Perfect quarantine is almost impossible; and imperfect isolation is worse than useless, as it does not effect the desired end, and only tends to disarrange the carrying-trade of the country. The new system seeks to substitute sanitary inspection, giving a maximum of safety with a minimum of inconvenience, for an irrational quarantine of indefinite duration and uncertain result.

Cholera, yellow fever, and the plague are the three principal evils against the spread of which quarantine is specially directed. Since the Great Plague, which Daniel Defoe has described, this pestilence has not visited our islands. In 1879, however, immediately the plague was supposed to be in Russia, the continental nations adopted the old rule, and subjected all vessels coming thence to a quarantine detention varying from twenty to forty days. Yellow fever has its breeding-places in the West Indies, the southern parts of North America, the north-east districts of South America, and the west coast of Africa between ten degrees north and fifteen degrees south latitude. It requires fairly hot weather for development, and cannot thrive where the temperature is below seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit. It has reached this country several times,

but is an exotic. Southampton being a West India packet station is liable to occasional importations; and Cardiff had it about thirty years since, when the advantage of modern sanitary supervision over old-fashioned quarantine was most marked.

In the end of June 1889, the dread of yellow fever had caused most stringent quarantine to be enforced by the United States government against all arrivals from Brazil and other fever-spots. Some ships had been refused entrance on any terms; and editors of shipping journals were constantly being asked whether under these circumstances a shipowner might throw up his charter and send the detained ship seeking for cargo elsewhere. Officials over there have demonstrated that yellow fever may be restrained within bounds by completely isolating the sick; that strict sanitary precautions limit the severity of an attack; and that a fall of temperature is followed by an immediate decrease in the numbers attacked. An international system of sanitary surveillance over arrivals from all ports is, in their opinion, the only practical means of preventing the spread of an epidemic from port to port. Cholera was in Europe in 1873, and actually made its appearance in London, but was skilfully eradicated by the sanitary authorities. Besant and Rice, in one of their realistic novels, bring in a chapter on the cholera at Palmiste. Two coolie-ships entered the port with cholera raging on board, and were sent to perform quarantine at an anchorage some twenty miles distant. News shortly came that the English officers and seamen had succumbed, and the coolies were dying uncared for by any one. A young army surgeon volunteered to go out and remain with the stricken ones. Certain death seemed to await him; but his heroism was rewarded by the saving of the lives of half the Indians and the retaining of his own health.

Our own experience of quarantine has been gleaned under many skies, and we quite agree that 'Cœlum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt.' There is always a disposition on the part of a shipmaster to dish the sanitary people. About twenty years ago we were making a passage in a sailing-ship laden with currants and rags, bound from the Ionian Islands to New York, when persistent head-winds compelled us to anchor in Gibraltar Bay, and there await a more favourable opportunity for proceeding through the strait. A health-officer soon came alongside, and administered interrogatories to our commander, which elicited replies that seemed a studied suppression of the truth. Our clean bill of health had been mislaid, and we were rightly looked upon with suspicion. Some of our documents were read by the officials seated in their boat, who exercised great caution lest, inadvertently, contagion should be communicated by contact with our harmless-looking manuscripts. Each sheet was taken from us and grasped by means of a long pair of tongs, then placed in a box containing disinfecting powder, and after much motion therein, withdrawn to be read at arms-length. This part of the programme being completed, all hands had to appear at the ship's side, so that our visitors might count polls, in order to make sure that every one was in good health whose name appeared on the crew-list furnished them. All would have gone well,

but for a little accident. A seaman had joined at Patras, whose name had not been placed on the articles of agreement. He, however, was on view with the others, as this discrepancy had been provided for by concealing a Maltese boy. The temptation to have a sly glance at his strange surroundings proved irresistible to the dark-skinned youth, and while hurriedly gazing, he was promptly noticed by the men in the boat alongside. We were at once ordered to hoist up a yellow flag at the fore, as a warning to all around that we were quarantined, and strictly forbidden from landing or going on board any of the ships at anchor near us. Shore-boats brought off fresh provisions to us, and we were not precluded from lowering a boat into the water and rowing round the shipping to have a chat with those we knew. This doctor's visit—or giving *pratique*, as it is termed—is often a nuisance to business men, who may have the supreme pleasure of seeing their train steaming out of the station while awaiting a dawdling *pratique* boat. It is almost unnecessary to add that the native of Malta soon suffered much bodily pain in consequence of his curiosity.

A second experience of quarantine was far less irksome; in fact, it was a delicious reprieve from hard labour. Having arrived at St Thomas, West Indies, during a sickly season, when the population of this Danish dependency were decimated by yellow fever, it was but natural that several of our seamen should be carried off by this terrible visitant. Sailing thence, we reached the Cuban port Guantamano, where the Spanish-speaking pilot declined boarding the vessel, but directed her movements from his skiff, towing astern. As she passed a large fort situated at the entrance to the harbour, a military officer hailed us; and on learning whence we came, was good enough to order us forthwith into strict quarantine at a remote anchorage for twenty-one days. There had not been any sickness on board during the passage, so that all danger having passed away, we were able to spend a most enjoyable three weeks. Ballast was furtively heaved overboard; and after all had been prepared for taking in cargo at the expiration of our period of seclusion, those who felt so disposed made daily boat excursions up limpid fresh-water streams meandering beneath leafy canopies formed of graceful creeping plants, which had somehow drifted across from tree to tree on either bank, and intertwining their foliage, almost shut out from view the azure vault of the tropical heavens. We could, however, have dispensed with the predatory mosquitoes which hummed unceasingly. We were sorry when the time came round and we hauled into the wharf to load sugar for Philadelphia.

Smallpox in its most virulent form was ravaging the filthy Chinese quarters of San Francisco, California, and many white residents were similarly suffering when we passed out of the Golden Gate bound for an Oregon timber-port. All hands seemed in robust health; but we had scarcely lost sight of the well-known landmarks when one, and he an utter stranger, fell ill with this loathsome disease. No sick quarters existed, as in a man-of-war, so that the poor fellow in his delirium crept into every sleeping-place in the seamen's house on deck. A noble-hearted shipmate, when it was his watch below, cleansed and fed the

doomed man, who was missed one day in the absence of his unpaid nurse, and subsequently found dead with his head jammed into one of the hawse-holes, whither he had crept in his last agony. Sewn up in the remnant of an old sail, his body was hurriedly cast into the deep without even the semblance of a religious ceremony. That afternoon we dropped anchor at our destination.

Like many another self-styled city in remote settlements of the United States, Empire City consisted of not more than a dozen wooden edifices, including the sawmill where all the citizens worked. Health-officers and *pratique* were unknown in this out-of-the-way spot, and our captain fondly hoped that having got rid of the corrupted body, he could keep the people on shore in blissful ignorance of the event. A boat came alongside from the mill to give us information respecting our cargo. The vessel being a regular trader, our crew and the shore-gang fraternised. Jokes and laughter were prevalent, until one of the newcomers asked if small-pox was still on the increase at San Francisco. 'Well, I guess so,' drawled out a down-east Yank, 'for we have just thrown over a very bad case outside the bar.' His words resulted in a stampede, and the deck was cleared of strangers almost in the twinkling of an eye. They pulled away for the wharf, and soon returned with an intimation, couched in strong terms, that the vessel was to remain at her anchors for fourteen days, and no communication allowed with the shore. The mill-hands had a wholesome dread of smallpox; and although there were no powers to enforce their commands, yet the fear of recourse to Judge Lynch was equally deterrent to our captain. Our owners grumbled at the detention; but the loss was nothing in comparison with that suffered by having a large steamship stopped, such as the *Neva*, lately quarantined at Southampton. Capital lies idle, and extra expenses are incurred the whole time of quarantine. In November 1877, Sir Donald Currie's *Taymouth Castle*, having had a case of smallpox during her passage out, was kept in quarantine, with a goodly number of passengers on board, for twenty-one days at the Cape. It is no small expense to cater for the modern steamship passenger.

Eminent authorities affirm that the prolonged detention of the sick and the healthy on board an infected ship often fails to attain its supposed effect. It is a well-established fact that fear predisposes persons to infection; and being shut up in the same ship with dying fellow-creatures is not conducive to strong nerves and longevity. The yellow quarantine flag which must be displayed at such a time serves the purpose of the red cross on the houses during the Great Plague. Continental ports are very strict with arrivals by sea, but altogether lax in their treatment of persons coming overland from infected places. A British ship went from Genoa to Sestri while the cholera was raging; but on arrival at the latter place her master was not allowed to land. Her cargo came off in lighters; and when laden, her master went back to Genoa by steamer, thence to Sestri by rail, where he was well received by the very people who refused to have any communication with him by sea. This is one of the anomalies of continental quarantine, as wittily related in one

of Mark Twain's works. It is probable that in this country quarantine will only be enforced in future for yellow fever, cholera, and the plague, and then in a much modified form.

A NIGHT'S SPORT IN CASHMERE.

BY AN OFFICER'S WIFE.

WE were making a tour in Cashmere for pleasure and relaxation, after many months of hard work in a hot and dusty station, and had decided not to make the search for game our first object. Those who have done the latter know how fatiguing the chase is apt to be for travellers with limited time and limited health at command. The yearly increasing number of English visitors bent on sport, and the consequent activity of the *shikaris*—or huntsmen who are expected to find and report the quarry—are driving the larger animals farther back into their mountain fastnesses, so that long and arduous journeys must often be taken to follow them. Many of the lower ranges where the magnificent markhor were once common are now quite deserted by them; and the goorul, ibex and ovis ammon are becoming equally scarce. We resolved, therefore, not to attempt the pursuit of any of these wary creatures in the short leave at our disposal, but to wander about in an easy and leisurely fashion, merely taking such chance of occasional sport as might come in our way.

So we had done more sight-seeing than shooting. We had been towed by our boatman and his family up the river, lying in restful luxury in our thatch-covered boat, and remarking at intervals on the delicious contrast between this calm coolness and the heat and worry and fret of life at Ghurrumpore. We had glided under the hanging balconies of Sirinuggur, the Venice of the East, and had looked down from the little hill above the city called Solomon's Throne upon the windings of the Jhelum, stretching serpentine and silvery through the verdant plain—the windings which are said to have given the first idea of their famous pine pattern to the Cashmere shawl weavers. We had visited the crazy wooden galleries where these weavers, or rather embroiderers, sit stitching exquisite designs into shawls for the Queen. We had seen the caves of Boomzoo with their rush of myriad bats; and the tanks of Bawan, where the sacred fish have been so allowed to accumulate that the water will no longer cover them, and when the priest approaches to feed them there rises from the basin a solid mass of writhing coiling horrors, which look more like snakes than fish, for they are of a long-shaped scaleless kind and all black. We had seen Avantipore and Martund and many other splendid ruins; had shot wild-duck on Lake Woolar and snipe at Manusbal; and without leaving our route had met with two bears and a stray barasingh, and added their skins to our trophies of former days. When I say 'we' in this case, I mean, of course, that my husband, whom I will here call Tom, shot the game, for although always much interested in his exploits, I had never killed anything larger than a scorpion.

We had now reached a beautiful glen near the

entrance to the Naoboog ravine, and pitched our tents in a grove of walnut-trees, meaning to move on quietly up the valley, where *barasingh* or stags were reported to have been seen. The shikari, who, notwithstanding our resolve, was an energetic and important member of our following, went into the nearest village, after his custom, to ask for news of game, and came back much elated with tidings that a large panther was in the neighbourhood, had become very bold by reason of impunity, and was scaring the villagers every night with its undesired visits. It seemed at once a duty to rid the poor people of this pest, and a fortunate thing that Tom had arrived in the nick of time to do so. Further inquiries elicited the direction from which the panther generally approached and other particulars of its raids; and the shikari was despatched to survey the ground and make preparation for a night attack. He was absent all the afternoon, and returned towards sunset, saying he had found a tree at a bend of the nullah down which the panther would certainly pass to reach the village, and in this tree he had constructed a small *maichan* or shelter of branches, where the Sahib might lie in ambush to await the foe. There was a stir of excitement all through the camp, the servants eagerly discussing the shikari's arrangements and adding advice of their own with hearty wishes for the Sahib's success and the death of the common enemy. I caught the infection; and disliking the idea of being left alone in camp while this attraction was going on close by, I asked—at first doubtfully—if I also could not be accommodated in the *maichan*. The all-powerful shikari at first demurred, but in the end was graciously pleased to consent, reflecting that as the tree was in full leaf, I should be well concealed, and my only care need be to sit monumentally still.

Delighted with this concession, I arrayed myself in a plain dark costume; and when night had fallen, we set forth from camp in solemn order. Never shall I forget that walk. The night was dark and moonless; thin clouds drifted over the faint stars, sometimes obscuring them altogether, and a light gusty wind made the place seem alive with fancied shapes and moving shadows. The shikari went in front, to show the way, carrying in his coat a wretched pariah puppy, that must have been half-strangled and half-smothered by his effectual suppression of its yelpings. Tom and I followed, but tried in vain to imitate the man's soft catlike tread over the broken ground. There was no sign of a path, and I confess I longed for a lantern as we groped along, stumbling over boulders and tearing our clothes on cactus thorns and running momentary danger of treading on a sleeping snake. From the moment of our start not a word was spoken; we progressed in perfect silence, save for the sound of our cautious footsteps; and the way seemed so long and so rough, I was tempted to wish myself quietly in bed. To return, however, was impossible; and at last, to my relief, the shikari signed to us that we had reached the tree. He left us standing at its foot for a few moments while he advanced to a tent peg which he had previously driven into the ground some twenty paces from the tree, and to this he tethered the reviving puppy. Released from his repressive control, the little beast at once began to howl dismally after

its kind, and I verily believe it was then as happy as any pariah can be out of sound of its howling brethren.

The next step was to climb into the tree, and this proved an easier task than I had expected. There was a low branch to which Tom clung while he drew me up towards him: the *maichan* was not at any great height from the ground, and with some further assistance, I was soon safely lodged in it. From the accounts I had read of these structures, I expected to find a sort of open platform; but it was in fact more like a semi-circular nest, the side of which formed a thick leafy screen. Tom stood on the strong bough supporting it with his rifle resting on a higher branch, its muzzle covering the dog. I crouched at his feet and looked out through a gap in the side of the *maichan*, while the shikari wedged himself into a fork of the tree close above our heads. And now began a long trial of patience. The night wore slowly on, and we saw no trace of the panther. The wind, which had been moaning drearily, died away, and a strange stillness descended on the world. The rustling leaves hung straight and motionless, the soft noises in the wind-swept grass became hushed, and even the small insect voices all around ceased to chirp and grind. We did not dare to change our positions, and hardly felt the cramp they occasioned. It seemed to me the whole region was listening intently, and straining towards a sound which did not come; and for a long time 'the beating of my own heart was the only sound I heard,' except, indeed, the constant howling of the pariah, which fell like the wail of a spirit in prison upon the silent night. I am confident the creature heard in his imagination the melancholy cries of his friends in the far-off village, and felt constrained to do his friendly duty and answer them while he had a breath left, as he wandered up and down at the length of his tether; but his laments did in fact attract a very different auditor.

The clouds, though filmy, did not disperse, and the uncertain starlight that filtered through them only allowed us to descry dimly the white body of the restless dog. I feared that when the moment arrived, Tom would be unable to see where to aim. My own excited fancy kept me trembling with eagerness and false alarms. A dozen times I thought I heard a stealthy step approaching down the nullah; once I felt sure the panther was climbing into the tree; and when a little sleepy bird fell off its perch and fluttered down amongst the branches, I started so as nearly to fall off my own. That, however, was my only transgression in the way of movement; and then again for an hour, that seemed like six, we remained as motionless as lizards on a sunny wall. I then became persuaded the panther had taken a different route and we should see nothing of him that night.

At last there was a change. The pariah ceased howling, retreated to the farthest limit of its string and cowered shivering on the ground. A silence that might be felt now fell around; not the slightest whisper broke the stillness. I thought the little beast had at last made up its mind to seek a little well-earned repose, and this I regretted, because the quietude, oppressive before, had now grown almost insupportable. But suddenly I became aware that the panther was

there, a stone's throw from the dog. Its velvet footsteps, quite inaudible to us, had been accurately measured for some moments by the terrified puppy; and now its large dark form, vaguely to be discerned against the ground, was creeping stealthily nearer. In breathless horror I watched it, not daring to distract Tom by the slightest sign, and yet consumed with fear that he might fail to see it, or aim wrongly in the deceptive light. The end came soon. A scarcely perceptible signal from the shikari, a flash and report from Tom's rifle, and then the most unearthly yell that ever fell on mortal ears. There was a bound of the dark body through the air, then a heavy fall, and then for the first time one of us spoke. 'Well done, Sahib!' exclaimed the shikari in exultant tones. 'You have killed him.'

But Tom was cautious, and bade the man not descend till they were more sure his single shot had proved effectual. There was no movement, however, in the fallen mass; and at last they both got down from the tree and approached it with loaded weapons. The panther was quite dead; the bullet had penetrated its heart, and death must have been instantaneous. Tom had hit it just in the act of springing, when its breast was exposed, and it had fallen right on the top of the unlucky dog. The shikari assured me that the fearful yell we had heard proceeded from this animal, and not the panther, which must have dropped like a stone without a gasp. I have no opinion on the point myself, as the sound seemed to me utterly unlike all possible cries from either of those creatures.

The dog was extricated with some difficulty from its dreadful situation, more dead than alive; and I am sorry to say the shikari was for turning it adrift then and there, it having served our purpose. But this we would not hear of, and insisted on his carrying it back to camp, whence it was duly restored next day to the congenial company of its mournful fellows in the village, with which it doubtless exchanges piteous salutations to this day.

Our walk back seemed short and easy, since we were allowed to talk and use Tom's pocket lantern; and the panther's beautiful spotted skin—a very fine one—made an ornamental addition to our mementoes of Cashmere.

WANING DAYS.

BETWEEN the glowing beauty of the short-lived 'Indian summer' and the dull sharp cold of the final setting-in of winter there are frequently a few days of a distinctive character, that have a sober charm attached to them, unlike any other time of the year, when 'Autumn, like a faint old man, sits down by the wayside aweary.' Not like the warm humid mistiness of the atmosphere incidental to the waning of the September harvest moon, or the crisp clear frostiness seen in the sharply defined clouds and orange sunsets of mid-October, that presage the fitful storms of rain and sudden gushes of wind that have stripped the forests of their richly tinted foliage, and spread a thick carpet of russet and gold at our feet. But rather as if Nature, having 'borne the burden and heat of the day' from seedtime till harvest, was at last content to rest for a short season in utter

peace and silence; when the short darkening days are so full of grave quiet, so colourless and voiceless as to wear an almost sullen aspect; when the few belated yellow leaves flutter noiselessly to the earth, and wreaths of vaporous exhalations rise from the low-lying valleys, and float sluggishly away over the bare stretch of hills and fields of stubble, moving about like disembodied spirits 'haunting the dying days' of the year.

Sometimes in the early days of February there comes one of these sullen misty days during a sudden thaw; but though nearly akin, there is still a subtle difference to be felt in the air, when the very blades of grass seem instinct with a faint thrilling breath of spring-life. But in the soft brumal days of early November, before the sun has pierced the mass of vapour, the cobwebs hang in thick clusters over every leafless hedgerow; they cover with a filmy network the interlacing branches in the copses and thickets, and lie in long trails over all the grass and stubble. Everything looks dim and mysterious in the haziness over surrounding objects, both far and near.

During the mid-day hours there is a sudden change: the rolling mists clear away imperceptibly; the slanting sunbeams shine through the bare branches of the trees with faint gleams of pale yellow light; and it becomes very pleasant to stroll into the lanes and along the more sheltered hedgerows. A gentle wind sighs with melancholy sound through the aspens and poplars; the intricate tracery of ash and elm is defined against the misty blue of the sky. The decaying foliage sends up 'a moist rich smell of rotting leaves,' as the feet sink deeply into the heaps of dun, russet, and brown. The oaks still retain most of their rich tawny leaves, through which the light wind rustles sadly and fitfully. Along the bare hedgerows in sheltered corners still hang the fluffy white blossoms of the sweet-scented 'traveller's joy.' Here and there are later trails of blackberries, with some ripe luscious fruit still worth picking; and heavy heads of elderberries hang limp and black. Great boughs of crimson haws show brilliantly when they catch the lowering sun; a tangle of nightshade has its scarlet-orange berries in wild profusion contrasted picturesquely against the dark glossy green leaves of the ivy; farther along, bunches of 'pale-faced yarrow' gleam amongst the russet-brown and crimson ling; yellow hawkweed flourishes amongst the thick tufts of rank hummocky grasses; and across the corner of the common the wild barrenness of the scene is lighted up with patches of golden gorse, those 'lights set upon a hill,' the 'bonnie gorse,' that braves wind and weather from Land's End to John o' Groat's.

How still and sweet the air is; and so pleasantly warm, that the frost has hardly touched, in this sheltered lane, the low-growing plants; and the pungent scent of wild thyme directs the eyes to the busy ant-hill, where, blooming in fragile loveliness, is a bunch of harebells.

Through a gate in the hedge are the beech-woods, where the air always seems warm and dry, and the short fine grasses grow luxuriantly. The hills and hollows are full of brown leaves that have long fallen, and amongst which the busy squirrels are sorting out the nuts to store for winter, instinctively picking out the sound ones, and rushing away with sharp warning laugh

when observed. The cushat doves still 'Hoo, hoo' amongst the branches; and the sharp 'Pink, pink' of a flock of chaffinches startles as they take sudden flight from among the berried hawthorn hedges. You catch a glimpse of the gleaming golden-brown wings and brilliant blue-green neck of a cock-pheasant hovering in the lower branches of a tree; and a covey of brown partridges steals through the undergrowth to the clearing, where they suddenly rise with swiftly whirring wings and fly across the stubble-fields. The pretty creatures have a brief respite, for to-day the sportsmen are engaged some distance off, and the reports of the guns are but faintly heard in the far-reaching woods.

Among the low-growing shrubs and brushwood the hares scuttle nervously into hiding; and the rabbits scurry about in all directions at the sound of a strange footstep amongst the heaps of leaves. Standing quietly near the clap-gate, the clear sweet notes of that winter songster, the robin, trill out pleasantly from his perch on a lichen-covered tree-stump, from the decayed roof of which springs a cluster of bell-shaped ash-gray toadstools. Under the plank by the gate flows a bright little streamlet; amongst the smooth-worn pebbles are still a few pale-blue forget-me-nots; and long trails of 'creeping jenny' with bright yellow blossoms here and there. A little farther along, the brown reeds and sedges rustle with a whispering sound of brown foaming water, where it whirls and eddies round the corner of the woods towards the mill-stream. Just round there the banks are deep and thick with moss and lichens; and here grow huge bunches of hartstongue ferns, with their long glossy-green leaves bending from either side of the narrow stream till they intermingle and hide the rippling water from view.

But the sun has wandered towards the horizon, and shines through the rapidly thickening fog with but feeble lustre; and there is a sudden raw cold in the atmosphere as you hasten from the side of the mill-stream into the high-road again, and in the growing twilight, walk as speedily as possible towards home, where the brightly dancing firelight gleams through the crimson-curtained windows with a cheerful welcome.

'WORK DONE' BY MOUNTAINEERS.

A most interesting calculation has been made by Dr J. Buchheister on the 'work done,' or physical force spent, by persons in ascending heights. Supposing a mountaineer weighing twelve stone, or 168 pounds, is ascending a summit 7000 feet high from the point of starting, he has to expend an amount of physical force found by multiplying his weight by the height to be ascended; in the case assumed, a weight of 168 pounds \times a height of 7000 feet = 1,176,000 foot-pounds; or, in other words, 1,176,000 pounds have to be lifted one foot, or one pound has to be raised 1,176,000 feet. This is work performed by the muscles of the legs; but, besides this, the contractions of the muscle of the heart have to be taken into account. Its function consists, as is well known, in propelling the blood collecting in the heart, on the one hand, into the arteries, and, on the other, into the lungs. This is effected at an estimated initial velocity of a foot and a

half per second, which represents, in the case of an adult, a work of rather over four foot-pounds for each contraction of the heart. The pulsations of an adult are, on the average, seventy-two per minute; but in ascending heights, owing to the additional exertion, their number is increased to an extraordinary extent. Assuming, for the sake of simplicity in calculation, only 100 beats of the pulse per minute, this would give 400 foot-pounds per minute, 24,000 foot-pounds per hour, and 120,000 foot-pounds for the five hours supposed to be required in ascending a height of 7000 feet. The work performed by the muscles in breathing, by the expansion and contraction of the chest, may also be estimated at four foot-pounds. Further assuming that the number of breathings per minute is, on the average, only twenty-five, although, as a matter of fact, it will be found to be higher in a mountain ascent lasting five hours, we have to add further work of 30,000 foot-pounds. The total work performed during five hours by a mountaineer consequently amounts to 1,326,000 foot-pounds. In this estimate are not included the physical force spent in overcoming the friction on the ground, the exertions to be made in keeping the body erect at dizzy heights, and in dragging heavy boots and foot-irons, nor the loss of muscle power in cutting steps in the ice, not to reckon the work performed in carrying an ice-axe, or the physical force exerted in crossing fresh, loose snow. Taking all these conditions into account, Dr Buchheister arrives at the conclusion that the work done by a mountaineer in ascent of 7000 feet, lasting five hours, cannot be placed at less than 1,380,000 foot-pounds.

HER FAULTS.

I KNOW she has a score of faults;
Ah, count them o'er to me,
And if by chance your memory halts,
I will your prompter be.
Her faults, I own, the worldly wise
Must ever loudly blame,
Though it may chance to spirit-eyes
They bear another name.

So frank she will the truth attest
Though it be ill received,
And ready she to think the best
Though constantly deceived:
So prompt the absent to defend,
She oft but idly pleads;
So loyal to a stricken friend,
For self she little heeds.

All careless of the world's applause,
Unless 'tis fairly won,
She judges of another's cause
As if it were her own.
I love her for such faults as these,
And own the reckoned score;
And that she loves me, you may please
To count as just one more!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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THE JENOLAN CAVES OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

CAVES are common in all countries where limestone rocks abound, and caves of some kind and dimensions are doubtless familiar to everybody. The most famous caverns of the world are the Grotto of Antiparos of Greece, the Adelsberg Caverns of Carniola, and the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky. All these have been frequently and fully described by various travellers; and tourists are tolerably well acquainted with the subterranean wonders of the limestone regions of our own country, in Derbyshire, Yorkshire, and Somersetshire. But comparatively few people in the colonies, and still fewer at home, are acquainted with the wonders of the Cavern region of New South Wales, the extent of which rivals that of the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky. An Australian writer, Mr Samuel Cook, has recently published a descriptive account, with photographs, of what he calls 'Australian Wonderland,' and we shall avail ourselves of his guidance.

But first, what are caves and how are they formed? They are not necessarily confined to limestone strata; but it is in limestone that the most beautiful and extensive examples are always found. They are also the most interesting by reason of those wonderful freaks of nature called stalagmites and stalactites.

Limestone is soluble in water, and that is the whole secret of the formation of caverns. The rain penetrating through the upper crust reaches the rock, and dissolves some portion of it. Through the crevices, the water has continued to percolate for countless ages, enlarging, multiplying, and beautifying tunnel after tunnel. But it has done more. While wearing away the strata, the water has also saturated itself with carbonate of lime, which it carries along until forced to re-deposit some of it. The passage of air through the caverns causes evaporation and consequent deposit. This deposit may be added to drooping portions of the roof, and thus form stalactites;

or to risings from the floor where a drip takes place from above, and thus form stalagmites.

In short, caverns, and the beautiful columnar and other devices found in them, are simply the result of a natural process of removal of particles of limestone from one place and their re-precipitation in another. 'Caverns,' says Dr Brande, 'originate in crevices formed by the irregular fracture of the rock. Out of these hollow spaces are concocted, by the action of running water, natural chambers of all dimensions. Into these hollow spaces, again, are packed away the most fanciful and singular examples of Nature's handiwork, imitative as it were of human devices. Columns, pilasters, churches, sculptured groups of men and animals, organs, curtains, and almost all conceivable objects, are found or fancied by those who thread the narrow passages or cross the lofty walls with a few glimmering lights to guide them on their way.'

So much for the general, and now for the particular. The extensive series of caverns in New South Wales, now known as the Jenolan Caves, were formerly called the Fish River Caves, although why so is not very evident, since they are some considerable distance from Fish River. They were, however, discovered by a squatter of the Fish River district, a man called James Whalan, who had been robbed by a notorious bushranger called M'Ewan. Following up the trail of this desperado, Whalan tracked him to his lair in the very centre of the wonderful area now called the Cave Reserve.

This was in 1841; and although it is probable that the caves had been known to and used as hiding-places by other outlaws, Whalan was the first to bring them into public notice. The name of M'Ewan, the bushranger, was given to the creek on which the caves are situated, and these last were collectively called the Fish River Caves down to 1884, when the government of the colony officially changed the name to the Jenolan Caves. Some twenty years previously, the area of the caverns was 'reserved' by special decree, and taken in charge as public property under a Cave-

curator, whose duty it is to explore the recesses as yet unmeasured, and to conduct visitors over the known portions.

The area thus properly protected is about six and a quarter square miles. To reach it from Sydney, one has to go by rail some one hundred and twenty miles over the famous Blue Mountains to Tarana, a small township, some two thousand five hundred and sixty feet above the level of the sea. From Tarana to the caves is a distance of about thirty-five miles, partly through an agricultural district and amid fine scenery, and partly through the primeval bush, still the home of the opossum, the wallaby, and the bandicoot. The road rises to a height of four thousand three hundred and sixty-five feet, and then descends suddenly, and by sharp zigzags, some two thousand feet down the mountain-side until the mouths of the caverns are reached.

The portion of the limestone dike in which they are found runs six miles north and south, and the two principal 'day caves'—that is, those which open to the light of day—run right through the mountain east and west. The first of these, called the Grand Arch, is about one hundred and fifty yards in length, sixty to eighty feet high, and from seventy to two hundred feet wide. It is described as gloomily impressive and awe-inspiring, with walls varied by many peculiar rocky formations. On one side is a mammoth lion in stone. Other formations are called the 'Pulpit' and the 'Organ Loft.' One recess is called the 'Bacon Cave,' because the rock-formations resemble 'sides' and 'fitches' of bacon. The roof appears covered as with rich bold tracery, and from it depend enormous honeycombed masses of limestone. Branching out from this Arch are caves of various depths, forming a succession of rocky halls in which millions of wallabies have made their homes for ages. The floors of the caverns are thick with their debris. In the 'Organ Loft' there is a fine formation of stalactites and stalagmites by way of organ-pipes, tapered with remarkable grace. Near the eastern end of the Grand Arch is a spot where the water bursts out of the ground in a sparkling fountain of considerable volume, and rushing down a rocky defile, leaps into a deep pool, and thence finds its way through the Nepean and the Hawkesbury to the ocean.

The other great daylight cave is 'the Devil's Coach-house,' an immense cavern, lighted from the roof as well as the sides. At a height of two hundred feet in the roof there is a large orifice fringed with trees, which gives it a fine effect. The floor is strewn with blocks of black and gray marble, and the walls are partly composed of black marble with white veins. The roof is fringed with stalactites, as are also the sides of the entrance, and in several places there are stalagmites covered with projections like petrified sponge. Pellucid drops at the ends of the stalactites illustrate the process of formation. Some of them are said to be twelve to fifteen feet long, and they are in many beautiful hues—shades of blue, salmon colour, delicate fawn, gray, and white. As the rocks are decorated with many-toned patches of moss, the whole arrangement of colour in this cavern is wonderfully beautiful—combining a series of Nature's lessons in the art of decorative design.

The interior caverns of Jenolan are called col-

lectively the 'night caves,' because they can only be inspected by artificial light. They are both the most numerous and the most picturesque of the series.

To reach the first of these, the Nettle Cave, involves a climb of some one hundred and seventy feet from the Grand Arch, and then a descent through a funnel-shaped opening resembling the mouth of an extinct volcano. A slip on this perilous descent would shoot the explorer a distance of seventy feet into the Devil's Coach-house. Along this shaft there are some remarkable stalagmites, shaped like cones, hats, mushrooms, &c. In the cave itself stalactites are in rich profusion. In one part there is a pillar about ten feet in diameter rising from floor to roof, a height of thirty feet, formed by the constant dripping of lime-water uniting stalagmite and stalactite. It would be a fine calculation to estimate its age. Along the sides of the cave are other beautiful pillars, some gnarled and knitted like trunks of trees, others like elaborately carved columns. The water has here formed lovely grottoes and alcoves, terraces, Gothic arches, and cunning carvings. Here and there are narrow chasms, disappearing into darkness as yet unexplored, although one tortuous passage has been followed to the Imperial Cave, to be hereafter mentioned. At the end of the cave the roof rises, and is pierced by an inverted pinnacle, and the walls here are composed of imperfectly developed stalactite formation. In places, liquid substances have fallen and petrified so rapidly as to resemble streaks of lava. The eastern end of the Nettle Cave runs into the Devil's Coach-house at about one hundred and twenty feet above the floor-level of the cavern, and the *coup d'œil* presented is said to be unexampled in cave scenery for weird beauty and strange grandeur. An upper section of the Nettle Cave is called the Ballroom, and is notable for the stalactite formations, resembling vultures, mail-clad warriors, bearded sages, &c. One of the figures is strikingly like an orator with arm upraised in the act of speaking; and to deepen the effect, there is just beneath him a sort of stone reading-desk fringed with stalactites.

From the Nettle Cave there is a passage into the Arch Cave, about a hundred yards long, noted for its beautiful columns and roof. Some of these pillars, however, have been destroyed by rude visitors before the government took the caverns in charge. When this cave was first opened, the floor was white as snow; but it is now black and greasy by the tread of feet and the drip of candles. Perfect silence and profound darkness still brood in the Arch Cave. Connected with it by a narrow passage is 'the Belfry,' in which are some large stalactites which give out when struck sounds like church bells. One of them in especial has a deep *C natural* tone.

The Elder Cave has to be reached down a sort of shaft or pit, the entrance to which was long hidden by the foliage of the elder-trees. It contains a number of large chambers connected by small passages, and some remarkably fine stalagmites and stalactites. Many of these last hang from the shelving roof to the floor, and form an alabaster palisade. Great bunches of snow-white limestone droop from the roof, and portions of the floor are covered with beautiful coral. It was in the Elder Cave that, ten years ago, the curator

discovered a shaft which led to the discovery of the Imperial Cave. He made three separate attempts to reach the bottom of this black hole, as it appears to be. The first time he was lowered until all the rope was paid out, and left him dangling in mid-air. The second time a longer rope still left him suspended in black darkness. The third time he descended, and was 'paid out' until his feet finally touched bottom, and he found himself in what is now called the Imperial Cave. The experiences of the curator in descending apparently fathomless pits, wriggling through apparently impassable ridges are among the romances of exploration yet to be written. A man must be born for that sort of work, which needs altogether exceptional nerve, coolness, and endurance, as any one who has ever tried penetrating a rock-hole for the first time well knows. The Jenolan Cave-keeper, Mr Jeremiah Wilson, is an Irishman by birth, has been over forty years in the colony, and has had charge of the caves for twenty years.

The Imperial Cave is considered one of the most magnificent of the series now opened. It is described as 'graced with myriads of lovely objects. Darkness brooded over them for ages, as drip by drip and atom by atom they were formed into things that charm and shine in chambers whose walls are clad in beauty of a thousand stars. There are underground gullies terrible enough to be the home of Apollyon with legions of goblins, and strangely elfin palaces where Titania might be supposed to reign and Robin Goodfellow carry on his frolicsome pranks.'

By the entrance of the Imperial Cave is an excavation some seventy feet long and twenty feet wide, which is called the 'Woolshed' because the formation over the walls and roof resembles the fleeces of sheep hanging about and spreading over the shelving rocks. From this a descent is obtained into the 'Architect's Studio,' a cavern which is a marvel of beauty, with large masses of stalactites hanging from the roof and along the walls, column after column profusely decorated with coral and tracery and natural carvings. Most of the formation is white or gray, but some of it is richly coloured.

Then in the Imperial Cave there are a succession of marvellous apartments, called respectively the Margarita Cave, the Helena Cave, the Grotto City, the Lucinda Cave, and Katie's Bower, either after some famous colonial lady, or from some special characteristic. The Imperial Cave, indeed, is full of enchanted grottoes and fairy palaces, which it is practically impossible to describe.

Those which we have just named form the left-hand branch of the Imperial series. In the right-hand branch occur some more gloomy caverns, through which one reaches a subterranean river about ten feet wide which flows at the bottom of a fearful chasm. It is not so big as the underground river in Kentucky, but is even more weird. The water is apparently motionless and very smooth; but it is really moving at considerable speed. Its rocky ledges are ornamented with stalactites, which are mirrored in the water by the light of the magnesium lamp, which is here used with wonderful effect. 'Human imagination could not conceive a freak of Nature more wildly grand or mysteriously beautiful. There are large ornamented pillars near delicately-

tinted formation drooping from overhanging rocks like pensive boughs of weeping-willow. Some of the twigs skim the surface of the stream, and others are bathed in it. Beyond is a water-hole about forty feet long and from sixteen to twenty feet wide. Because of its wonderful clearness, it is difficult to judge of its depth; but it has been tested to the extent of five feet; and probably at the extreme point, where the water flows from the tunnel, it may be six or seven feet. The effect of the brilliant light is superb. The ornamentation on the roof of the tunnel is reflected and transposed in the mirror below, each reflected stalactite having the appearance of a twin stalagmite rising from the river-bed, which may be traversed for about one hundred and fifty yards.'

Near the underground river is the Fossil Bone Cave, the roof of which is some five hundred feet beneath the surface of the mountain. In this cave have been found many fossil bones, which do not seem to have yet been sufficiently examined and described. Other caverns in this portion of the Imperial Cave are named the Sparkling Rock, the Crystal Rock, the Crystal Cities, the Show-room, Nellie's Grotto, &c.

It is impossible to describe all these; but a word must be given to the Shawl Cave. This is about twenty-five feet long by fifteen feet high, and from twelve to fifteen feet wide. It contains three magnificent masses of limestone formation resembling shawls pendent from the roof. One is fourteen feet long, eighteen inches deep, and one-sixth of an inch thick; and the other two are only slightly smaller. They are straw-coloured, varied with rich brown, having in some portions the appearance of tortoiseshell. They hang at right angles from the side of a sloping roof, and the colouring runs in parallel lines. A fine effect is produced when the light is placed behind the shawls.

'Lot's Wife' is another curiosity of the Imperial Cave. It is an alabaster figure standing in solitary grandeur within a gloomy cavern. This figure is wonderfully suggestive, and has not been produced in the ordinary way by drippings from one stalactite, but by two small stalactites combining in working this strange effect.

Almost equal to the Imperial Cave for grandeur and beautiful effects is the Lucas Cave, the entrance to which is very imposing. After advancing into it a short distance, 'the Cathedral' is reached, an immense domed cavern, rising to a height of three hundred feet, which is only one hundred feet short of the height of St Paul's. The limestone walls are terraced with tier upon tier of stalagmites, and in the centre of the floor there is one immense stalagmite. There are many holes which indicate the existence of yet unplumbed recesses, the immense depth of some of which can be partially gathered by dropping pebbles. At one end of this natural Cathedral is the Music Hall, to which access is obtained through a steep passage. It is called the Music Hall because of its fine acoustic properties, the secret of which has not yet been learned, but which would be very valuable to architects.

In another cavern is 'the Piano,' a group of stalactites remarkable for the resonant qualities of their separate parts. Each stalactite gives out a note, which varies in pitch and quality

according to the part on which it is struck. Some of the notes are fine, others imperfect, and the stalactites do not harmonise. Thus, as musical instruments they are not a success, but as stalactites they are astonishing.

But we cannot penetrate farther into this underground of wonders, which spreads, as we have said, for six miles beneath the mountains of the colony of New South Wales. Even Australians, as a rule, do not seem to be aware of these subterranean marvels; but those who desire to know more of them cannot do better than consult the work of Mr Cook, an edition of which has just been issued in this country by Messrs Eyre and Spottiswoode.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XIV.

VARLEY'S COTTAGE, which place George Crofton and his confederates had fixed upon as their rendezvous, was a spot of ill repute for miles around, and one which no inhabitant of the district would willingly go near by day, much less after dark. A grim tragedy centred round the spot. Some quarter of a century previously the cottage had been the home of a certain game-keeper, Varley by name, who had made himself specially obnoxious to the poachers of the district. One night he was shot dead on his own threshold and his cottage fired in two places. The crime was never brought home to any one, neither was the cottage ever rebuilt. But of all this neither Clara Brooke nor Margery, being newcomers in the neighbourhood, knew anything.

The elder woman hurried feverishly onward, the younger leading the way. Scarcely a word passed between them. Presently they reached the stile through which Margery had followed the two men, and crossing it, took a winding footway through the fields. They went swiftly and silently, walking not on the path itself but on the soft grass which bordered it. Not a creature did they see or hear, and before long the path began to dip to a hollow, then came some straggling patches of brushwood, and presently they were in the spinney itself, with trees and a thick undergrowth on both sides of them. Margery led the way as by a sort of instinct, only pausing for a second now and again to listen. To Clara, the adventure, with its darkness, its silence, and its mystery, had all the complexion of a nightmare. Again and again she had to ask herself whether it were indeed a reality.

'We are nearly there now, mum,' said Margery presently in a whisper. 'Do you wait here among the trees, while I creep forward and try and find out what they be about.' So saying, the girl stole forward, and was at once lost to view.

The young wife waited with a heart that beat high and anxiously. The moments seemed terribly long till Margery returned, although in reality she was not more than three or four minutes away. Clara trembled so much that she could not speak.

'There's four of 'em now, mum,' said the girl. 'I could see them quite plain through the crack in the shutter, and from what I could make out, there's more to come. O mistress, I wouldn't go near 'em if I was you; they're a desperate bad

lot, and if they found you there, nobody can tell what might happen.'

Of a truth, Clara might well hesitate, and it was only the thought that some new and unforeseen danger might possibly at that very moment be closing like a net round the husband she loved so devotedly that nerved her to the task she had set herself to do. 'Margery,' she said after a brief silence, 'where you can go with safety I can surely go. I must see and listen to these men for myself.—Now, attend to this. Should I be discovered by them, or should anything happen to me, you will fly as for your life and warn your master.'

'I understands, mum, never fear,' was the girl's earnest response.

Then the two crept together through the trees, almost as silent as the shadows of which they seemed to form a part, and presently Clara found herself under the walls of the ruined cottage. Margery guided her to where a rickety shutter still guarded a small square window, from which, however, the glass had long since disappeared. Through a chink in this, the interior of the room, such as it was, was plainly discernible. Two old-fashioned lanterns threw a dim weird light over the scene. Clara's eyes sought instinctively for the face of Crofton before taking any note of the others; it may be that some faint hope had all along lingered in her breast that Margery had been mistaken. But if that were so, the hope at once died out. George Crofton himself was before her. He was the only one of the party that was seated, and his seat consisted of nothing more than a pile of loose bricks, with part of the stone shelf of the mantel-piece laid across them. He was smoking, as were also two of the others, and seemed deep in thought. The rest of the party were utter strangers to Clara; they talked in low tones among themselves, and, much to her surprise, she saw that one of them was in the garb of a clergyman.

Scarcely had Mrs Brooke noted these things, when a low whistle sounded from somewhere outside. Crofton sprang to his feet, and all were instantly on the alert. The whistle was answered by another from within, and then one of the men left the cottage carrying a lantern. Clara and Margery sank noiselessly back into the undergrowth of bush and bramble by which the cottage on three sides was surrounded.

When, two or three minutes later, Clara ventured to resume her post of observation at the window, she found that the party inside had been augmented by two fresh arrivals. The men had now grouped themselves round Crofton in various attitudes of attention, listening to the instructions he was evidently impressing upon them. Whatever the objects of this strange company might be, there could be little doubt that George Crofton was the leader of it. One man, who bent forward a little, had made an ear-trumpet of his hand, and it might be for his benefit that Crofton now pitched his voice in a higher key than he had previously done. Clara hardly breathed as she strained her senses to catch the words that fell from his lips.

What she heard, gradually piecing the plot together in her own mind as Crofton issued his final orders to the men, was enough to blanch the heart of any woman with terror and dismay.

The train to Cumberhays was to be attacked and robbed; some great treasure—Clara could not make out of what nature—was to travel by it to-night, which these desperadoes had determined on making their own. As a preliminary step, the signalman at Cinder Pit Junction was to be seized, bound, and gagged, his box taken possession of, and the telegraph wires cut. A member of the gang who answered to the name of Slinkey, and who understood the manipulation of points and signals, would install himself in the box. Then, when the train came up on its way to Cumberhays, passing the box at a speed of about twenty miles an hour, by a reversal of the points it was to be turned by Slinkey on to the branch leading to the collieries. As a matter of course, the driver would bring his train to a stand as speedily as possible, and then would come the opportunity of the gang. It was well known that, except at holiday times, passengers and officials together by this train rarely numbered half a score people. It would be strange if half-a-dozen desperate men, armed with revolvers, could not so far intimidate the driver, the guard, and a few sleepy passengers as to have the whole train at their mercy. Five minutes would suffice to successfully achieve the object they had in view, after which the train might go on its way again as if nothing had happened.

Such were the chief features of this audacious scheme, as gathered by Clara from Crofton's instructions to the others. Of course, each man had known beforehand what he was expected to do, and what passed at the cottage was merely a sort of final rehearsal of the scene that was to follow.

Crofton now looked at his watch and announced that it was time to start. The lanterns were extinguished, and the men filed silently out of the cottage, half of them taking one road and half another. Clara and Margery had but just time to draw their shawls over their heads and crouch on their knees amid the brushwood, when three of the men passed within as many yards of them. When all was silent again, they stood up. Never on any previous occasion when danger threatened her husband had Clara felt so utterly helpless as she did now. What could she, one weak woman, do to confound the machinations of six armed and desperate men?

'O Margery,' she cried, seizing both the girl's hands in the extremity of her distress, 'there seems no help either in heaven or on earth. We are lost—lost!'

The faithful girl could only kiss with a sob the hands that held her own. 'What be they going to do, mistress?' she asked a moment or two later. She had not been able to see and hear what had passed in the cottage, as Clara had done.

'They are going to seize and bind your master, and then they are going to stop and rob the train. O Margery, if there was but some way by which the train could be warned in time! Think, think; is there nothing we can do?'

'Why, o' course there is, mum,' answered the girl with one of her uncanny chuckles. 'You just let me run home as fast as my legs'll carry me and get three or four singles—they things, you know, that Muster Geril used to fasten on the rails when the fog was bad in winter. I

know how to fasten them, 'cos I watched Muster Geril do it one day when I took him some to the box. Then I'll take the short cut across the fields to where the line turns sharp round more'n half a mile away from the box, and I'll fix the singles there.—But what am I to tell the driver, mum, when he stops the train?'

'Tell him there are half-a-dozen men with revolvers who are going to stop and rob the train, just beyond your master's box. After that, he will know what it will be best to do.' She could have flung her arms round Margery's neck and kissed her, such a weight had the girl's words lifted off her heart.

'But what about pore Muster Geril, mum?' urged Margery.

Ah, what indeed! Clara shivered as though an icy wind had struck her. She had not failed to notice that her husband had never been mentioned by name by Crofton, who had spoken of him to the others as though he were an utter stranger. Could it be possible he was unaware that Gerald filled the position of signalman at Cinder Pit Junction? It was possible, but by no means probable; but in that faint chance lay her only hope of her husband's safety. In that case, should he and Crofton not encounter each other, the rest of the gang would merely regard Gerald in the light of an ordinary railway servant; and although he might chance to be assailed and maltreated by them, that would be but a minor evil in comparison with the other, and one which an hour or two at the most would set right. These thoughts passed through her mind far more rapidly than she could have given them utterance in words. The only question now was, had she time to warn her husband before the attack took place? The gang were on their way already: could she overtake them, pass them unseen, and reach the signal-box before they did? The chance was a desperate one, but she must attempt it—no other course was open to her.

'Come!' she said, grasping Margery by the hand. 'Let us hurry—let us hasten! While you go and fix the signals, I will go and warn your master, only pray heaven I may not be too late!'

With scarcely a word more they sped swiftly back along the starlit fields; but when they reached the stile, Clara said: 'Is there no nearer way to the signal-box than going round to it by the high-road?'

'There's a way through the fields, that cuts off a big corner. I've walked it onst; but I dunno, mum, as you could find it in the dark.'

'I must try,' answered Clara desperately. Every second was precious.

The near cut in question was through a second stile somewhat farther on. At this point, after a few last words, the two parted, each going a separate way.

Clara's way led her through more fields; but the track was so faint that she was utterly unable to distinguish it, and had to trust to her vague local knowledge that she was going in the right direction. In a little while she surmounted a rising ground, and then, to her utter dismay, she saw, from the position of the signal lamps in the valley below, that she had wandered a full quarter of a mile too far to the right of them. It was a thousand chances to one now that Crofton and his crew would be there before her.

Anguish lent wings to her feet, and she flew down the slope like a creature pursued by the Furies. She could see the lighted window of the signal-box shining in the distance, a faint yellow disc. The next thing she knew was that she had reached the boundary of the line, but at a point still some distance from the box. It now became needful to exercise more caution than she had hitherto done, lest she should be seen by any of the gang, who were doubtless somewhere near at hand. The line at this point was bounded by a wooden fencing put up to prevent the straying of cattle, close to which, on the field-side, grew a thin straggling hedge. Under the shelter of this hedge Clara now stole softly and cautiously forward, with eyes and ears preternaturally on the alert. Step by step she drew nearer without being disturbed by a sight or a sound, till at length she faced the box with its lighted window where it stood on the opposite side of the line. Then with a heart, the pulsing of which sounded like a low drumming in her ears, she parted the bushes and peered through.

For a moment or two a mist dimmed her eyes, and all she could discern was that there was some one inside the box. Then the mist cleared away, and she saw that the man standing there with one hand resting on a lever was not her husband, but the man Slinkey, whose sinister face she had seen through the broken shutter. Gerald was nowhere to be seen. She had come too late!

WOOD-CHARCOAL.

WE all know that if a piece of wood be placed in the fire, there will very shortly be nothing left of it but a little incombustible gray ash: its other component parts, carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, have combined with the additional oxygen of the air to form carbonic acid and water, which have been dissipated into space. If, however, instead of allowing the air free access, we to a certain extent confine the burning wood, no true combination can take place, and we shall find it impossible to reduce it to ash: it will instead be converted into a mass of charcoal, or *carbo ligni*, of similar form to itself, its elements having undergone what chemists call 'destructive distillation,' which means that, under the action of heat out of contact with air, they have arranged themselves into different forms of combination. This change can readily be observed by heating to redness a piece of wood in a glass tube closed at one end, and will serve as an illustration of the method of preparing charcoal for fuel, by burning the wood in heaps closely covered with turf and sand or mould, with only a few openings for the entrance of air sufficient to carry on the imperfect combustion required, and leaving it to smoulder for three or four weeks. Notwithstanding the intense heat employed, no part of the wood appears to have been consumed when the pile is 'drawn,' as it is termed; not only the bark but even the moss upon it comes out as entire as it went in, the only change apparent being its deep velvet black colour, and its having been rendered friable; in short, the wood seems only to have been very highly dried. True, it has shrunk a little, but there is no visible

derangement of parts; its brittleness alone proves that its nature has been altered. The quantity of charcoal derivable from a given quantity of wood is affected by its age and dryness; on an average, one hundred parts of wood will yield twenty-two of charcoal; but this amount will be considerably reduced if great care be not exercised when 'drawing' that none of the pieces ignite on being exposed to the air, for every particle burnt is so much waste; every piece still retaining fire must be at once quenched with water. The heat attending the drawing of a charcoal pile is intense; an ancient authority thus wrote of it: 'The drawing is an infernal business, the men working among fire and heat enough to suffocate Satan himself.'

The useful properties of charcoal—or, as it is scientifically termed, *amorphous carbon*, from its non-crystalline nature—depend for the most part upon its very great porosity, occasioned by the expulsion of the bodies volatilised during combustion, which endues it with the power of absorbing great quantities of gas. The microscope shows the pores to be disposed in order, and to traverse it lengthwise; and there is no piece of charcoal however long but it may be easily blown through; and if a piece be broken pretty short, it can be seen through with the microscope. It has been reckoned that in a piece of one inch diameter there are no fewer than 5,724,000 pores. Its porosity may be strikingly exhibited by attaching a weight to a stick of charcoal so as to sink it in a vessel of water, placed under the receiver of an air-pump, on exhausting the air from which, a brisk effervescence will ensue, caused by the innumerable bubbles of air escaping from its pores. A cubic inch of it will absorb one hundred cubic inches of ammonia gas, or fifty of sulphuretted hydrogen, the two most conspicuous among the offensive results of putrefaction; the knowledge of which fact has led to its employment to sweeten meat, fish, game, and other food that is beginning to go bad, as well as to deodorise, that is, to rob of their offensive smell all kinds of putrefying substances. The harder the wood from which it has been prepared, the greater this power: logwood charcoal, for instance, can absorb one hundred and eleven times its own volume of ammoniacal gas; while that made from the shell of the cocoa-nut is even more absorbent, though its pores are quite invisible. To give an example of the process. A piece of charcoal whose pores are full of oxygen imbibed from the atmosphere, is exposed to the action of air containing sulphuretted hydrogen, a gas capable of undergoing oxidation: within its pores the sulphur will combine with the oxygen to form sulphuric acid (SO_3), and the hydrogen to form water (HO).

Since all gases given off by decaying matter are poisonous, this property of charcoal is of paramount importance. The best form to apply it is in that of a coarse powder, and to strew it thickly over the rotting mass. In this form, before the days of improved antiseptics, such as chlorine gas, Condyl's Fluid, Sanitas, and many others, it used to be exposed in hollow trays in our hospital wards and dissecting-rooms, to sweeten the air. It was, of course, not nearly so effectual, as it can act only on air in immediate contact with it. It has also been inserted as a ventilator

in windows, contained between two sheets of fine wire-gauze, to afford protection against contaminated air, on the same principle as in a respirator. The ventilators of our street sewers are fitted with cases of it for a like purpose. Water is filtered through it, not only to remove mechanically suspended matters, but also to free it of the sulphuretted hydrogen sometimes developed. The insides of casks are often charred, so as to reduce the lining to a kind of charcoal that shall keep the liquor sweet and good; and in toast-and-water we see yet another example; the surface of the bread having been converted into charcoal, purifies the water, rendering it palatable, and at the same time preventing its contamination by the impurities of a sick-room. For all such cases as those mentioned, the charcoal should be heated to redness in a covered vessel prior to being used, in order to drive off the moisture it has attracted from exposure to the air.

This power of absorption is not, however, confined to gases. Many liquid and solid substances that have been dissolved in water can be removed by it. If we shake up a coloured substance, say port wine, with powdered charcoal, and then filter the mixture, the wine will be found to have lost its colour; the resulting liquid will be as limpid as water: the colouring matter has adhered to the grains of charcoal, from which it can be extracted by treatment with a weak alkaline liquid. The filthiest and most putrid ditch-water can in like manner be rendered perfectly clear, inodorous, and insipid. The decolourising power of wood-charcoal is, however, very feeble in comparison with that possessed by animal charcoal, obtained by calcining bones, with which the sugar-refiner takes the colour out of his syrup, and the distiller deprives the rancid oils which contaminate his spirit of both their smell and taste.

We need not dwell on the value of charcoal as an ingredient of gunpowder, and will pass on to some of its other uses. When burnt, it produces just double the heat of an equal weight of wood, due to its being nearly pure carbon, and to the fact that much of the heat evolved in the combustion of wood is rendered latent in the steam and other vapours produced by the action of heat. It possesses, however, the serious drawback of emitting those suffocating fumes of which we are too often reminded by the sad deaths resulting from burning it in a brazier in an unventilated apartment. If steam be passed over red-hot charcoal, carbonic oxide, a highly inflammable gas, resembling in many respects the carburetted hydrogen we burn in our houses, is produced: it is of so poisonous a nature that one volume of it diffused through one hundred volumes of air renders the latter totally unfit to sustain life; and only a few years back, quite a panic was caused in Paris by the proposal to employ such a poisonous agent for illuminating that city.

Mathematical instrument makers and engravers find charcoal of great service in polishing their brass and copper plates. The artist employs it for sketching in the preliminary outlines of his great picture. Combined with iron it produces steel. It supplies the most durable and useful black of the painter and varnish-maker. The Anglo-Indian is dependent on it for the cooking of his food. Being the most perfect solid non-conductor of heat known, it is largely applied

to the packing of refrigerators and for covering boilers to prevent the radiation of heat. It is an excellent conductor of electricity. The medical man employs it in various ways both internally and externally, chiefly that made from a light porous wood, such as the young shoots of the willow and poplar: from its antiseptic and vital properties it is useful in many forms of fever; it is of service in dyspepsia, dysentery, &c.; taken in the form of a biscuit, lozenge, capsule, pill, or powder, it is good for indigestion and flatulency; mixed with bread or linseed it is a favourite poultice for ulcers. It furnishes an excellent dentifrice, being sufficiently hard to remove the concretions from the teeth without injuring the enamel; while it neutralises for the time any fetor arising from a carious tooth; and from its before-mentioned property of carrying down from solutions many colouring matters, it has been recommended for cases of poisoning by corrosive sublimate, arsenic, morphia, strychnine, &c.

One of its most remarkable features, which it possesses in common with other varieties of carbon, is its unchangeable solidity, being insensible to both fusion and evaporation, nor has any substance yet been found capable of reducing it to the liquid state. It was anciently used to distinguish the boundaries of estates, as being supposed incorruptible when let deep into the ground, and many pieces have been found entire in the tombs of the Northern nations. Charcoal made of corn has been discovered, probably as old as the days of Cæsar, so well preserved that the wheat may still be distinguished from the rye.

One little historical incident connected with this all-serviceable material, and we have done. In the early part of this century charcoal gave its name to a certain secret political association that flourished in Italy during the French régime in Naples. Its members sought refuge in the mountainous regions of the Abruzzi, where they took the name Carbonari (charcoal-burners), from the ordinary vocation of the inhabitants. Napoleon III. when a youth was a member of this society, which has been assigned as one of the causes that led to the Franco-Sardinian war against Austria.

A LEGAL SECRET.

CHAP. IV.—THE OLD HOME.

ONE sunny afternoon, some days after the meeting between Rosa and Mr Pilkington in the octagonal room, the two were seated side by side in the lawyer's carriage, and driving rapidly across the broad heath which led towards the gates of the senior partner's villa. Never had Rosa, pretty as she was, looked so pretty as she did to-day. She was leaning out at the open window in dreamy wonder. The expanse of blue sky over the great common was interspersed with fleecy clouds: their soft shadows floated over the heath, giving a changeful expression to the scene. Birds fled by with a flash from their swift wings; and frequently a lark would flutter upwards, and with its sprightly song bring tears of delight to the young girl's uplifted eyes. She longed to spring from the carriage, and run among the bushes of yellow gorse, and chase the white butterflies and gather wild-flowers, as she had often done in

childhood ; for she felt as though she were again a child.

'Ah! there is my old home!' Rosa exclaimed, as she suddenly caught sight of the solemn sphinxes. 'Are not those the gates?'—

'My dear'—and Mr Pilkington's voice seemed to remind her that she was no longer so very young—'you have not forgotten, I hope, what I told you?'

Rosa bent her head and pouted her pretty lips. 'I am to ask no questions?' said she in a slight tone of rebellion.

'Precisely. We are to ask no questions;' and the old lawyer patted the young girl's hand approvingly. 'There must be no manifestations of surprise. It is time that we began at our age to suppress our feelings. Are we not agreed on that point?'

Rosa gave him several rapid nods.

'We are apt to be impulsive, my dear, and consequently we must keep a guard upon ourselves. In good society—that is to say, among well-bred people—there never should be any undue display of sentiment. The impulse must be checked; for the great aim among cultivated classes is to hide every sign of emotion.'

The girl sank back in her seat. She could not utter a word; for there was a great lump in her throat that almost choked her. The situation was overpowering: with every turn of the carriage-wheels she realised more distinctly that her dream—the dream of her early girlhood—was coming true. Hide every sign of emotion? She felt crushed and broken in spirit, as if a heavy weight had been laid on her heart. This beautiful heath had been her playground; and beyond—where the great gates stood invitingly open—the rest of her dream lay, as it were, buried behind the green and massive foliage of shrubs and gigantic trees. The twelve years that had intervened, with all the wretched poverty and discontent that had arisen out of it—even Abel Norris, for whom she had so genuine an affection—had for the moment gone out of her life. Suddenly, she looked up. They were driving in at the gateway. Through her tears she caught a glimpse of the grave sphinxes; and they seemed to be silently reiterating Mr Pilkington's words: 'It is time we began to suppress our feelings. Are we not agreed on that point?'

As they drove up the avenue, with its patches of sunlight shimmering through openings among the leaves—an avenue that seemed almost endless—Mr Pilkington continued: 'It is difficult'—and Rosa thought she recognised a touch of emotion in his voice—'I am ready to concede that—very difficult to suppress one's feelings—sometimes almost impossible. But you are a sensible girl. Had I not been convinced of that, my dear, should I not have acted differently?—You will not object,' Mr Pilkington added with a slight smile, 'to remain in your own rooms until to-morrow? Remember! I do not insist; but I think—taking everything into consideration—that it would be advisable. Are we agreed on that point also?'

'It is what I would have asked: I long to be alone,' said Rosa. 'All that has happened—all that I now see around me—brings back to my memory that dear face'—

'Rosa! At our age? Remember!'

The girl was silent; but she clasped her hands tightly together and bit her lips to suppress a flood of tears.

'You will be pleased, I think, with your rooms,' said the lawyer cheerfully after a moment's pause. 'They look out upon a choice bit of scenery; and should you be disposed to take a stroll in the grounds, my dear, pray do not hesitate. My suggestion merely referred to the house. I would not wander about the house; we have a good many guests this evening. That is all I meant. And at dinner-time—as we have this company—you shall be served in your own little sitting-room. Company is fatiguing—until one has learnt to suppress one's feelings. Ah, well! all in good time.'

The carriage now drew up at the entrance to the villa. A flight of broad steps led to the front door, with vases full of growing flowers, and marble pillars on each side, like a temple. A large conservatory stood on one side, and the doors being wide open, Rosa caught a glimpse of the most beautiful exotic plants. A cry of delight rose to her lips. But a glance from Mr Pilkington, who seemed to be repeating, 'My dear! At our age? Remember!' quickly recalled her.

But Rosa at last found herself alone in her own rooms, with no Mr Pilkington to restrain her expressions of joy or sadness. They were prettier rooms than she had ever seen: a sitting-room with a bedroom adjoining. And her rapture increased when she found them tastefully decorated with flowers—doubtless gathered from that wonderful conservatory. Both rooms looked upon the park; and the girl stood for some minutes gazing out, lost in dreamy admiration at the scene. The windows gave upon a terrace with steps leading down into a garden, where all the brilliant colours of the rainbow seemed to be repeated in flower-beds of every size and shape. There was a paddock beyond, enclosed with iron railings; and beyond this paddock there were wooded valleys and hills that appeared all the more reposeful from the rapid change of sunlight and shadow that passed over them.

Rosa unclasped the window and stepped out upon the terrace. The summer breeze touched her cheeks; the colour crept into them like a blush; and her lips, half parted, drank in the balmy air. There was a wildness in the flash of her dark eyes. Was not this her old home? She flung her hair back from her forehead, as she had often done in her dismal home in Took's Court when giving way to her natural emotion; and she stood glancing about her like a captive fawn that has not yet had time to realise that it has gained its freedom.

But presently she fled down the steps and across the flower-garden, and entered a pathway beside the paddock leading into a wood. On she ran into the deep shade. Snatches of half-remembered songs escaped her and found an echo overhead in the songs of birds. The lawyer's admonition was forgotten. Her one thought was to review the scenes of her early days; to refresh the fading recollection of this old home, which she no longer thought of as in a dream. She came at last upon a bench at the end of a long pathway. It was a very rustic seat; but a shadier spot could scarcely have been found. On the

back of this bench, cut in the woodwork, Rosa discovered these initials: R. G.—S. T.; and underneath was inscribed the date. The carving had been executed thirteen years ago; and she remembered the boy who had done it. Had not this place been the favourite haunt of Rosamond Gage and Sidney Trench in bygone days? There was no need of this rough record to remind her of that. Few moments in her young life were more crowded with pleasant memories than those which had been passed in this silvan spot. In a book of goblin tales which Abel Norris had given her, it had been here that she had pictured the moonlight gambolings of airy sprites. And while she now sat drowsily pondering these things, with her eyes closed in a light sleep, the wood became once more a scene in fairyland. Laughing imps looked at her in crowds from behind the trunks of trees and among the leaves and branches overhead; and some of them, growing bolder, danced into the pathway, and poised themselves upon the bench behind her, and peeped over her shoulder, as if playfully welcoming her to this goblin home.

But where was the Prince, her devoted lover, who lived in this fairy wood? She listened. Was not that his footstep? Rosa started and opened her eyes. Had she been dreaming? The goblins had vanished; but the footstep was still in her ear. She glanced towards a patch of blue sky in the opening at the end of the path. It was like a mirror framed in green leaves and arching branches; for presently a figure was standing reflected there; and Rosa at once recognised the figure as Sidney's. She ran to meet him as she would have done in childhood; no sense of restraint entered into her thoughts. It had been different when they met in New Square; for it was all visionary then—a dream that she believed could never come true. Was not all this reality?

'Ah, Rosa! I thought I should find you here.'

Rosa made no immediate reply. She walked at his side through the shady pathways, as if scarcely yet fully awakened. Her head was bent; but she knew that he was glancing down at her with deeper curiosity than when they had met in Lincoln's Inn. And the tone of his voice seemed changed: he was more like the old Sidney that she had known in bygone days, when they ran here together with the light and thoughtless step of childhood. She looked up at last.

'Do cultivated people,' said she—'people who are taught to suppress their real sentiments—ever come here?'

Sidney laughed. 'The very place,' he answered 'that they would be the most likely to choose. I come here—frequently.'

'Not to dream, do you?'

'To indulge the wildest dreams!' was the reply.

Rosa's face became thoughtful. Did he ever dream of her? Did he ever recall, as she recalled them now, their sunny hours here together? How she longed to take his hand, as she had often done, and speak of those moments which could no more have escaped his memory than hers.

'Did you think me such a prosy lawyer?' he continued. 'Did you think that I never had one romance—an uncompleted one—in my life?'

'Yes,' she replied with candour; 'I thought you very matter-of-fact.'

Sidney hastened to ask: 'Why so?'

'Only because,' she answered unhesitatingly, 'Mr Pilkington is—or was—your guardian. He must have taught you, for years past, never to give way to sentiment, to suppress all emotion. He has not, or professes not to have, any feeling at all. At least,' added the girl, 'so I judge from what I have seen of him so far.'

'Perhaps,' said Sidney, 'Mr Pilkington has acted towards you so far as a man of business. We are very matter-of-fact in Lincoln's Inn during office hours.'

'But he was the same,' said the girl, 'when crossing the heath. He has such a horror of tears.'

'There may be a motive. Are you not our client?'

Rosa suppressed a sigh. 'Ah, yes; I had forgotten.'

They now reached the edge of the wood. She caught sight of her windows across the lawn. 'Good-night,' said Rosa, holding out her hand; 'I shall not see you again to-day.'

Sidney glanced inquiringly into her face.

'There is company this evening,' said Rosa; 'so Mr Pilkington tells me: I have agreed not to appear. He is right, I suppose,' she added peevishly. 'One must learn to hide one's feelings.—Is it very difficult—I mean in society?'

'No. The difficulty is—— But I'll tell you another time. Good-night.'

Sidney stood watching the girl as she ran across the lawn. She waved her hand to him from the terrace, and then went in quickly, as if conscious of having done wrong. Would she ever subdue her impulse?

Since their tacit recognition of each other in Took's Court, on the first day of Sidney's visit, he had thought constantly of Rosa. Had not the little sweetheart of his boyhood grown up into a lovable woman, with all the old petulance and amiability that had characterised her as a child? He had found it no easy matter to remain silent on the subject of those early days, even when they met in Lincoln's Inn. How far greater the difficulty to-day, when they had met in the old wood, which had brought back to both of them a vivid recollection of the early affection for each other? Perhaps Mr Pilkington's influence had something to do with the young lawyer's reticence as well as with Rosa's. Mr Pilkington had been closeted a good deal of late with his junior partner; and Sidney had begun to show signs of greater earnestness and discretion. Could the time be far distant now when all the weight of responsibility, which Mr Pilkington had been so silently accumulating, would fall upon his (Sidney's) shoulders? It was quite evident that some degree of caution—possibly bearing upon some legal secret—had been imposed upon him.

The dinner-party to-night at Mr Pilkington's villa, given to distinguished clients, is quite superb in its way; though the noiseless manner in which the servants move backwards and forwards behind the chairs, and the mysterious style in which the butler removes the covers—as if there might be legal secrets under them—may express more than is intended. Not that any one exhibits the slightest sign that an anxious thought

has a place in his mind. Every face is animated, Mrs Pilkington's most of all. Even Mr Pilkington indulges in pleasantries in his subdued way. He never awakens any recollection—never by look or word—of the oblong room with barred windows: his conversation is never suggestive of an octagonal room adjoining, where every one present has waited his turn more than once. There never was a better-bred set of people—people who had accomplished the art of concealing emotion to the complete satisfaction of Mr Pilkington, and society at large.

It is only when all the guests are gone and the old lawyer has retired to the library, that Sidney notices a change in Mrs Pilkington. He is watching her, unobserved, from the conservatory. His face has an altered look too. Presently—not without an expression of purpose in the action—he steps into the drawing-room. The glance with which Mrs Pilkington greets him is full of affection; for Sidney has been like a son to her ever since she became Mr Pilkington's wife. 'Sidney,' she says, indicating a place beside her, 'I have been wishing to speak to you the whole evening.'

He sits down and takes the hand that she holds out tenderly towards him. 'I have read the wish in your face,' he replies. 'Is it not about Mr Pilkington?'

'Yes; for my dear husband tells me,' says she, 'that you are going to take his place; that he has decided to retire. It is a grave responsibility.'

'More so,' Sidney answers, 'than I imagined. There are many secrets.'

'Do they trouble you?'

'One of them does; it requires such delicate handling.'

'Mr Pilkington will advise you.'

'He cannot, in this case. Among other secrets, distressful enough in their way, he has told me his own—the one that he hid from you.'

Mrs Pilkington glances at Sidney with surprise. 'Has he told you that?' Her voice is scarcely audible. 'Is it that which troubles you?'

Sidney's look confirms it.

There is a moment's pause. 'It is the one, then—the secret contained in some correspondence—in a packet of letters?'

'Yes; that is the one,' is Sidney's reply.

'Those letters are destroyed,' she answers hurriedly. 'I burnt them, Sidney, in my dear husband's presence. Did he not tell you that?'

'Yes; and your goodness of heart—your boundless confidence in him—was almost more than he could bear! If you had only suspected of whom those letters spoke—what secret they contained—you would never have thrown them into the fire.'

Mrs Pilkington clasps her hands tightly together and looks up eagerly. 'What are you telling me?' says she in a piteous voice.

Sidney answers thoughtfully: 'We have sometimes spoken together—though on rare occasions—of her whose memory is very dear to you and to me. We have both grieved over the loss.—Can you bear to speak of her now?'

Mrs Pilkington bows her head. The tears are rolling down her cheeks; she cannot answer him in words.

'All hope,' Sidney continues, 'of ever seeing

her again—though our love for her has never lessened—died out of both our hearts years ago. We have mourned for her as one who is dead.'

Still the tears fall fast. What better confirmation that she acquiesces in all that Sidney is saying?

'More than once,' the young lawyer resumes, 'it has been suggested by Mr Pilkington that—although it would be impossible to replace her—by hunting the world over, it still might be advisable for you to have some companion'—

'Not to replace her, Sidney; that can never be.'

'Still, dear Mrs Pilkington, you have at last consented. A young girl—one that no one could help loving—has been found.'

'It was to please him'—

'But—will you not see her?'

Mrs Pilkington looks up quickly. 'To-night? Is it my husband's wish?'

'It is mine.'

Something in Sidney's voice brings a keener glance into her eyes; she searches his face more closely; she speaks in a soft tremulous voice: 'She is some one you love. Is she not, dear?'

'Yes;' and Sidney rises slowly from his chair. 'I loved her when a child.'

Mrs Pilkington utters a suppressed cry.

'I love her more deeply now. She was—and still is—my little sweetheart.'

Starting up with an eager look in her eyes, Mrs Pilkington steps towards the door. Sidney, in sudden alarm, overtakes her; and but for his supporting arm she must have fallen.

It is past midnight now. Rosa is lying with wakeful eyes watching the tremulous circle of light thrown upon her bedroom ceiling by the dim night-lamp on her table. Her thoughts are busy still with all that has happened since the morning. She almost dreads to close her lids, lest she should fall asleep, and presently wake again to find herself in her little garret in Took's Court, as she had many a time done after dreaming happily of her old home.

The parting with Sidney Trench to-day at the edge of the grove has awakened a feeling of sadness. Nor does the thought that they must soon meet again—probably on the morrow—remove this sense of unhappiness. She cannot complain of his attitude towards her; it is everything that she could have wished. Any reference to their childhood would have displeased her: this tacit understanding between them—the drifting back slowly into the past—is all she craves. Can their meeting in the old wood again, now that they have both reached a more romantic age, have unconsciously roused a deeper love in her heart?

Rosa knows that all the guests must be gone; for there is a stillness in the house that assures her that even the servants have retired. But still she feels no inclination for sleep: her brain is feverishly active. There is one face—one that is the most distinct in the memories of this home—which she has not yet seen: the face that had bent over her in bygone days.

While Rosa is still meditating, with her eyelids sinking slowly at last, her door is softly opened, and an eager figure is coming towards her with keen look and outstretched arms. A face bends over her and whispers to her in the softest voice: 'My little Rosa—my child!'

Rosa quickly opens her eyes. The face that she looks up into is intensely beautiful; for there is expressed in every feature wonder and adoration. It is the face she has seen a hundred times in her dreams.

MARGINALIA.

THE practice of annotating one's books with marginal notes is, within certain limits, an excellent one. Striking passages often suggest thoughts which, if not immediately jotted down, are lost for ever; and many literary workers who draw inspiration from the past have reason to be grateful for marginal notes in books which have finally found a resting-place in our great public libraries. Some of these notes are indeed of infinitely greater value than the works in which they are written. It has, from time to time, been proposed to publish in an accessible form some of the more important of these anonymous notes; but so far, except one or two contributions to periodical literature, the suggestion has not been carried into effect.

Several authors have, however, given to the world their marginal notes, and in not a few cases their best ideas are to be found in them. Those of Hartley Coleridge, for example, extending over most of the British poets, are more valuable than his set Essays. Mr Theodore Watts, too, has a copy of the Life of Haydon, containing, in the form of marginalia by Dante Rossetti, the best criticisms ever made on Haydon's life and genius. Poets, indeed, have ever been great annotators. Writing to a correspondent, Burns declared that he would not give a farthing for a book unless he were at liberty to blot it with his criticisms. Coleridge read little without making marginal notes, each of which was signed by his initials, 'S. T. C.,' and like Carlyle, he willingly performed this service for his friends. In one of the best of his Essays, Charles Lamb has embalmed this characteristic of the philosopher in his own inimitable way. 'Reader,' he says, 'if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C. He will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury, enriched with quotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious manuscripts of his (in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not infrequently, vying with the originals), in no very clerly hand—legible in my Daniel, in old Burton, in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruse cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands. I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, against S. T. C.' Many of Coleridge's annotations are published in his *Literary Remains*.

Leigh Hunt covered all his books with delicate markings, liberally underscoring passages of which he approved, even if they extended down the whole of the page, and jotting in the margin such remarks as, 'This is Chaucer-like,' &c. To this habit we are doubtless indebted for those excellent handbooks to English literature, his *Wit and Humour* and *Imagination and Fancy*. Shelley, Campbell, John Mitford, and Poe were likewise prolific annotators. The author of the *Raven* liked his books with wide margins, so that he

could jot down any ideas suggested by the text; and when they were not wide enough for all he wished to write, he committed his thoughts to a slip of paper, and fastened it between the leaves with gum.

Among miscellaneous literary men, it is much easier to enumerate those who were not, than those who were, fond of copious marginal notes. A few of the great annotators—such as Burnet, Porson, and Carlyle—must, however, be mentioned; nor can Macaulay and Thackeray be passed over. The great historian, although he disclaimed the critical faculty, made voluminous notes on everything he read, from the Fathers to the trashiest novel. Trevelyan tells us that to one of his favourite works of fiction he compiled a table showing the number of catastrophes throughout the volumes; and as an instance of his scrupulous attention to the minutiae of the press, it is recorded that he prided himself on a slight correction of his in the first page of *Persuasion*, by which he turned into sense a passage which had puzzled, or which ought to have puzzled, two generations of Miss Austen's readers. Some of Macaulay's suggestions and notes, of a much more pretentious character than the two examples we have given, were undoubtedly of permanent value; but at his death his library was scattered, and consequently what might have benefited mankind has fallen into the hands of only a few persons. Thackeray's marginalia were of a novel and singularly interesting nature, being indeed pencil or pen-and-ink sketches, all faithful conceptions suggested by the text. In one of his text-books, Thucydides, used by him when at the Charterhouse—the 'Grey Friars' of his novels—there are scribbled some boyish verses. Throughout nearly all the other works sold at his death there are scattered droll marginal pencillings, after the style of those charming little vignettes in his novels. Some of them, as in the *Punch* drawings, show the familiar broken nose, while in the right-hand corner of one or two of the larger and more ambitious efforts the inseparable spectacles are so arranged as to form a 'W'—his first initial.

The custom of annotating books, though not of great antiquity, is thus sanctioned by many great names in literature; but as a rule, the true book-collector, the gentleman who does not buy his books solely for the utility and pleasure he can derive from them, is very much opposed to anything of the sort. Of Chancellor Kent, known in this country as the author of Kent's *Commentary*, a writer says that to a lawyer the Chancellor's written remarks on his books are perhaps their most interesting feature. Having quoted this statement, John Hill Burton, in the *Bookhunter*, adds: 'The practice attributed to the Chancellor of annotating his books is looked upon by collectors as in the general case a crime that should be denied benefit of clergy. What is often said, however, of other crimes may be said of this, that if the perpetrator be sufficiently illustrious, it becomes a virtue. If Milton, for example, had thought fit to leave his autograph annotations on the first folio Shakespeare, the offence would not only have been pardoned, but appreciated, greatly to the pecuniary benefit of any one so fortunate as to discover the treasure.' The genial writer then narrates an anecdote of a collector who lent a set of rare tracts connected with the

religious disputes in Queen Elizabeth's reign to a gentleman who deemed himself a distinguished poet, and he 'thought proper to write on the margin the sensation caused within him by the perusal of some of the more striking passages, certifying the genuineness of his autograph by his signature at full length in a bold distinct hand.'

This offence is really unpardonable, though by no means rare, and the sympathies of all librarians will be with the collector. Since Cobbett made the columns of the *Times* his happy hunting-ground for grammatical errors, his example has been followed by many people possessing not a tithe of his qualifications. From newspapers such people have gone to literature, until now it is quite common to see a valuable book defaced by pencil corrections of what the scribe conceives to be false grammar, with an indignant dash of the pen through them from the hand of a subsequent and better-informed reader. This form of marginalia is quite bad enough; but what can be said of the 'profound and critical annotations' that are too often seen in nearly every volume of imaginative literature in a library?

After all, it is not easy to write good annotations of a critical kind. Difference in taste is never more strikingly exemplified than in literature; hence, unless to correct a date or a serious typographical error, readers should not write upon books which do not belong to themselves. To write upon the books of a public library or those borrowed from friends, one's own opinions as to the merit or otherwise of any particular passage, is little short of an impertinence. There is nothing more painful and annoying to a reader of intelligence than the marginalia of ignorant or half-educated critics, whose notes but too plainly exhibit their unfitness to express an opinion on the subject-matter of the book. In the case of the reader's own books, he may of course do as he pleases, with this caution: that if he is young—say in his student days—when he jots down his annotations on his books, and comes upon these same jottings twenty years afterwards, he may receive a slight shock. 'What an idiotic prig people must have thought me, if I talked the same rubbish I have written down here,' will probably be his comment upon himself. He would have been wiser to have jotted down his early thoughts on the leaves of his note-book, which leaves, in his maturer years, he might, if he chose, tear out and destroy.

THE PILOT'S CLOCK.

I.

'MIND, Dolly, you must be home by six—not one minute later.'

'Wouldn't a quarter past six do, aunt?'

'Well, Dolly, I do believe if you were to get Ireland for an estate, you'd be asking for the Isle of Man, just to make a little potato-garden. Instead of being thankful to me for sparing you for a whole day, you begin to grumble because I won't let you stay out part of the night as well. But you always were ungrateful, from the time you were a baby.'

'But, aunt'—

'I won't listen to another word about it, Dolly! Back at six you must be; or, so sure as you stand there this blessed day, I never again will let you go to see this grand friend of yours. It's little good you'll get from her company, I'm thinking—a fine lady, set up with book-learning.' And Mrs Lynch, strong in the consciousness of being herself quite uncontaminated by book-learning, disappeared through the back-door, leaving poor Dolly standing in the middle of the spotless kitchen with a woe-begone face and eyes from which the tears were just ready to fall.

'Tis too bad, uncle,' she said, addressing an elderly man in a blue knitted jersey, who was seated on a bench just outside the open door, smoking a short pipe and reading the newspaper.

'A quarter of an hour won't make much difference, my girl,' he answered placidly.

'No difference to aunt,' replied Dolly; 'but it makes the difference of an hour and a half to me.—Don't you see, uncle, if I have to be back at six, I must leave Marshport by the half-past three train; but if I might stay out till a quarter past, the five train would do? It's very hard.'

'It do seem hard,' said her uncle in a meditative tone.

'If you were to speak to aunt'—

'Why, then, Dolly, haven't you lived long enough with your aunt to know that once she says a thing she sticks to it? She's a right good woman; in fact, there's few like her; but she do make up her mind uncommon tight.'

Perceiving that her uncle's intervention was not to be counted on, and indeed quite aware that it would be of little use, Dolly abandoned her attempt at coaxing him, and turning her attention to a little looking-glass that hung in a corner of the kitchen, began to readjust her black straw hat and crimson neck-ribbon. In spite of the plainness of the aforesaid hat, from which her aunt had just insisted on the removal of a large bunch of poppies, the picture that met her view was so satisfactory that Dolly for the moment forgot her grievance and smiled back at the reflection of her own round childish face. Presently her uncle, who had apparently been revolving the matter in his mind, spoke again.

'I tell you what, Dolly; if you were to ask Martin Delany to meet you at the railway station with his car, you might wait till the five train and be here by six all the same.'

Dolly paused to consider this scheme. 'No, no, uncle,' she said after a moment's hesitation. 'I'd sooner come by the early train than ask Martin Delany to do anything for me.'

'There's no one would do it more willingly, my lass, if you'd only think so. However, please yourself about that. I hope you'll have a pleasant day, even if it's not to be a long one.' And the old pilot, putting his pipe, still alight, into his pocket, took his way by a steep path cut in the cliff to the beach below.

It still wanted some minutes of the time at which Dolly ought to start in order to catch a train at the railway station, some two miles off, and she remained standing at the window, looking out over the sun-lighted sea and watching the tall masts of a ship in full sail sink below the horizon. She was roused by the recollection that it was time to be off, and looking up at the old-fashioned clock which stood in a corner of the

kitchen, she saw that it wanted five minutes to the hour when she should start.

'You old busybody!' she said half aloud, addressing the clock. 'But for you, aunt would never know whether I came home at six or half-past. If I could but stop you, or even— Oh! I wonder could I?' She hesitated a moment; then softly opening the back door, peeped cautiously out. Her aunt was in the little field behind the cottage, busily engaged in spreading clothes upon a hawthorn hedge to dry. Closing the door, Dolly mounted a chair in front of the old clock, and with trembling fingers moved back the hands exactly a quarter of an hour. Then, terrified at her own audacity, she hastily left the house and set off at a brisk pace in the direction of the railway station.

'I declare,' said Mrs Lynch as she entered the kitchen a few minutes afterwards, 'it's earlier than I thought.—What a hurry Dolly was in to be off. She might have waited a little longer. Not that she'd have been a bit of use dressed out as she was. Them girls are a terrible trial, to be sure.'

II.

According to the opinion expressed by the old clock, it still wanted four or five minutes of six when Dolly reappeared. Her aunt greeted her with a sniff of surprise. 'So you managed to be home in good time, after all. I hardly thought you would. So much the better for you, though. Here, take off your things at once. I'm ready to drop, from all I've had to do this blessed day.'

'So you waited for the five train, after all,' whispered her uncle as she passed, laden with the tea-tray. 'You must have run all the way from the station, child.'

'I did come very fast,' said Dolly, turning red.

'Twas a risk, my lass. Supposing now that the train had been a bit late, run your best and you would not have been here in time. However, you're all right, as things turned out.—Who's that coming up the path?' he added, as he caught sight of a dark figure at a little distance.

'It's Martin Delany again,' said Dolly in a tone of annoyance. 'I can't make out what he wants coming here so often.'

'It's easy to see what he wants,' said the old man with a chuckle; 'he wants you, Dolly.'

'I'm thinking he'll have to go on wanting me, then,' said Dolly, continuing to arrange the cups and saucers with a good deal of superfluous clatter.

'It's a pity you couldn't turn your mind to him, then; a fine young fellow like him with a good farm of his own.'

The entrance of its subject cut short this discussion. He really was a good-looking young fellow, tall and well built, with an open honest expression of countenance. He greeted Dolly with a mixture of friendliness and shy embarrassment, receiving decided cold-shoulder in return. Old Lynch and his wife, however, fully made up for their niece's want of cordiality, and in a few minutes all four were amicably seated at the tea-table.

'Did you see your friend, Dolly?' asked her uncle.

'O yes, uncle; and she's not a bit changed.

You wouldn't believe how glad she was to see me.'

'Who was that, Miss Dolly?' asked Martin.

'Don't you remember Ellen Farrell?' said Dolly, turning to him with more friendliness than she had hitherto shown. 'Her that was pupil-teacher in the National School here. She went to be nursery governess to some people at Marshport, and they took her abroad with them, and now she's come home quite a lady. Only think—she's able to speak French! I heard her talking to the French maid they brought home with them, and Ellen's French sounds nicer somehow than the Frenchwoman's.'

'Speaking French doesn't make a person a lady, Dolly,' said her uncle in a moral tone. 'There's sailors down at the port can curse and swear in half-a-dozen different languages. By-the-by, talking of sailors, we had a visitor to-day while you were out.'

'A visitor, uncle?'

'Yes, a sailor chap, a foreigner. Italian, I take him to be by his speech. He was a handsome fellow, with big dark eyes and white teeth, and dressed in bright colours like a girl. He had on a blue shirt, as bright, or brighter than Dolly's gown, and a scarlet cap and gold rings in his ears. He was a civil-spoken chap too; that is, as far as he could speak English at all. He had fallen on the rocks below, and cut his hand, and he came here to have it looked to. The Missus always has a soft spot in her heart for a sailor, because of our boy Tom, that's in foreign parts—so she bound it up for him, and tied one of my best handkerchiefs around it to make it look smart—and then she made him sit down and eat a bit of dinner with us. He was walking on to Marshport, he said. I couldn't make out what ship he belonged to; some foreign name that I couldn't catch.'

'I'm sorry I wasn't here to see him,' said Dolly.

'Well, Dolly,' said her aunt, 'let it be a lesson to you to stay at home in future.'

'Miss Dolly doesn't often take a holiday,' said Martin.

'She doesn't often get one, Mr Delany,' said Mrs Lynch, 'nor won't, while I have the charge of her.'

Tea over, the two men established themselves, with their pipes on the bench outside the cottage door, while Mrs Lynch and Dolly put away the tea-things. The latter contrived to seize the opportunity of her aunt's momentary absence from the room to rectify the little bit of mischief she had accomplished in the morning, and enable the clock to maintain its hitherto unimpeachable character for veracity. Precisely as the usual nightly salute boomed out from the Admiral's flagship in the bay, the clock gave the first stroke of nine.

'Well,' said old Lynch, 'that is a wonderful clock, to be sure. There's hardly ever half a minute's difference between it and the gun; and when there is, I think it's the gun that do be wrong and not the clock.'

III.

Next morning as the Lynches were at breakfast, a neighbour rushed in breathless: 'Mrs Lynch,

ma'am, did you hear the news? Old Nelly Byrne's been murdered !'

'The Lord preserve us !' cried Mrs Lynch, 'Murdered ! Do you mean to say she's dead ?'

'Why, then, what would she be but dead ; and her money, that she kept hidden in the thatch, all gone. Sure, 'twas a foolish thing, as I often told her, to keep money by her in that way, and she living all alone. Couldn't she have given it to some one to keep for her ? But she was always that suspicious that she couldn't trust a human being.'

'She oughtn't to have been living alone at all,' said Mrs Lynch. 'Why didn't she go and live with Jim ? He asked her often enough, I know.'

'She didn't get on well with the daughter-in-law. She always thought that she, and Jim too, for the matter of that, were looking after the bit of money. Sure, 'tis she that's paid dear for her obstinacy.'

'Have they any notion who it was that done it ?' asked Michael Lynch.

'Little Maggie, Jim's little girl, was coming to see the grandmother, and just as she got to the top of the hill, she saw a man in a red cap coming out of the cottage. He came along the road towards her, and as he passed, she saw that he was dressed like a sailor. He was very pale, she said, and seemed scared like. She thought that he had gone into the cottage, as many a one does, just to ask for a drink of water or a light for his pipe ; but she never once thought of anything being wrong with the grandmother until she got to the cottage and found her stretched on the floor. Poor Maggie was so frightened that she set off at a run, and never once stopped until she reached home ; and by the time Jim and the police got to the cottage, the sailor of course was miles away. However, the police are after him, and they say they'll have him yet.'

'I hope they will,' said Mrs Lynch.—'Poor Nelly ; 'twas an awful end for her surely. A decent hard-working woman like her.'

The neighbour went away, anxious to be the first to impart such sensational news to as many as possible, while Mrs Lynch went about her work muttering inarticulate sounds expressive of pity and consternation.

Old Lynch smoked in silence for some time ; then he said : 'A sailor in a red cap. I hope it wasn't that chap that was here yesterday. I liked the looks of him.'

'So did I,' said his wife. 'He reminded me of Tom. I'm afraid, though, it must have been him.'

Later in the day two policemen called at the cottage bringing a coloured cotton handkerchief, marked with Michael Lynch's name, which had been found on the floor in poor Nelly's cottage. Lynch and his wife at once recognised it as the one given by the latter to the foreign sailor. The man had not yet been arrested, the police said, but would soon be, no doubt. They served Lynch with a summons to appear next day at the inquest, and, as they were going away, one of them said : 'You couldn't recollect, I suppose, sir, at what hour the man left this ?'

'I can then, just,' answered Lynch. 'He turned round at the door, just for all the world as you are doing now, and began asking some question. I couldn't understand him, his English was so queer,

and while I was trying to come at his meaning, the clock struck two. The moment he heard it, he nodded and smiled, and made signs that that was what he wanted to know. He went away at once after that.'

'The clock was right, I suppose ?'

'Quite right ; 'twas with the gun last night and the night before. There's not a clock in the three kingdoms that's more to be depended on.'

Next day, an Italian sailor, giving his name as Antonio Tedesco, was arrested, and at once identified by little Maggie as the man whom she had seen leaving her grandmother's cottage, and by the Lynches as the person to whom they had given the handkerchief. A curious old-fashioned thimble, known to have been among the old woman's treasures, was found in his pocket, and his clothes were slightly stained with blood. Another link in the chain of evidence was that some curly black hair, exactly corresponding to that of his beard, was found in the murdered woman's grasp. That there had been a struggle was evident from the condition of the cottage. The furniture was much displaced, and a clock which hung upon the wall had been pulled down, apparently by a frantic clutch at the weights. This clock had stopped at a quarter to three, thus showing the exact hour at which the murder had been committed. It was near four when Maggie Byrne had seen the man leave the cottage ; but this discrepancy was easily accounted for on the supposition that the intervening time had been spent by the murderer in a search for the money which the old woman was well known to possess. Tedesco's own story was that he had gone to the cottage to ask for assistance in securing the bandage on his injured hand, it having become loose, and had been horrified at finding the old woman stretched on the floor and covered with blood. He had gone over to her to try if he could give her any help ; but finding that she was quite dead, and fearing that suspicion might rest on himself should he be found in the cottage, he had left at once and made the best of his way onwards. The thimble he had picked up on the road. This explanation was of course generally disbelieved ; and the verdict of the coroner's jury was one of wilful murder against Antonio Tedesco.

Dolly meanwhile was out of reach of the excitement caused by this event. On the day following that of the murder, another of her aunts, Michael Lynch's sister, had taken ill, and Dolly had been sent for to help in nursing her. She went very willingly, as she was fond of Mrs Driscoll, who had always been kind to her ; and in her anxiety for her aunt's welfare she ceased to take much interest in the details of the tragedy which had been enacted so close to her home. Moreover, the Lynches were bad correspondents, and newspapers seldom found their way to Knockgrennan Farm, so that Dolly knew little beyond the fact that old Nelly Byrne had been murdered, and that the murder was supposed to have been committed by the Italian sailor.

IV.

When Dolly returned home after six weeks' absence, she found the murder again the chief subject of interest. The trial was to take place on the following day, and Michael Lynch and his wife

had been summoned to appear as witnesses. This entailed an entire day's absence from home, the assize town being some sixteen miles distant; and Mrs Lynch thought it necessary to make as many preparations as if she had been going to emigrate. Dolly, who was to be left in charge, was scarcely as much impressed as her aunt would have wished by the importance of the trust committed to her; but she made many promises of steadiness and vigilance, and bade farewell to her aunt and uncle with becoming solemnity. Then, having despatched her light household duties, she sat down to make a dress for herself, taking advantage of her aunt's absence to secure a more fashionable cut than that lady would have at all approved of. Absorbed in her work, she sat over it until past mid-day, when she was disturbed by two young men, the owners of a yacht which lay at anchor a little way off, coming to beg for a light for their cigars.

'How cool and comfortable it is here,' said one of them.—'May we sit down and rest a bit on this bench outside the door, Miss Dolly?'

'To be sure, sir,' said Dolly, resuming her own place at the window, while the two young men established themselves outside and began a desultory conversation. For a time Dolly paid no attention; at length, however, she found that they were talking of the murder, and she began to listen.

'Carroll is defending him,' said one. 'It will be a good thing for Carroll if he gets him off; but I am afraid the evidence is too strong.'

'The evidence seems little to hang a man on.'

'They hanged a man here last year on quite as little. Carroll means to maintain that it is impossible he could have walked from here to the foot of Kilforlane Hill, where the murder was committed, in three-quarters of an hour.'

'What has the time it took him to walk there to do with the case?'

'Don't you see? The clock in the old woman's cottage was pulled down in the struggle, and stopped at a quarter to three, thus marking the exact time of the murder. Now, Lynch says the man did not leave this until two; so that if it was impossible for him to walk the distance in the time, it is likewise impossible that he can have committed the murder.'

'I see. Perhaps the clocks were wrong, though.'

'Not Lynch's clock; it is infallible; never made a mistake in the whole course of its existence. Lynch would stake his own life, or any one else's, on its infallibility. Seriously, though, it must have been right on the day in question, for Lynch remembers comparing it with the gun that night and the night before.'

'I'm afraid it's a bad lookout for Carroll's client.'

And the young men, having finished their cigars, nodded to Dolly and went away.

Dolly had listened with some amusement to their assertions concerning the infallibility of the clock, remembering as she did the day on which she had caused it to bear false witness in her behalf. Suddenly the thought flashed into her mind: Was not that the very day of the murder?

Her head turned giddy and her heart stopped

beating as she remembered that it was. She put her hands before her face, trying to collect her thoughts, but for some time she was too confused to understand in what manner the knowledge in her possession would bear on the facts of the case. Being naturally clear-headed, however, she soon perceived that as she had put back the clock a quarter of an hour, at the time her uncle believed it to have been two o'clock, it must in reality have been a quarter past; and that if it were doubtful that the man could walk a certain distance in three-quarters of an hour, it was clearly impossible that he could do so in two-thirds of the time.

What was she to do, or to whom was she to apply for help? Her first impulse was to run after the two young men; but on looking out, she perceived that they were already half-way out to the yacht in their punt. Then she remembered Martin Delany. At another time, or for any more trifling cause, she would have shrunk from applying to him; but now the mere thought of him seemed to give her courage and confidence. Snatching up hat and shawl to put on as she went, she set off at her quickest pace towards Delany's farm, which was some half-mile distant. As she approached the farmhouse, she caught sight of Martin in a large meadow, giving vigorous assistance to the labourers who were saving a late crop of hay. She ran over to him at once; but by the time she reached him she was too breathless to speak. Much frightened, Martin made her sit down upon a haycock, and filling a cup from the can of milk left for the haymakers, he put it to her lips. In a few moments she had recovered breath to tell her story in short broken sentences. Martin was slower in taking in its full meaning than she herself had been; but once he did understand, his action was prompt and decided.

'We must go up to town at once, Dolly,' he said, 'and see the prisoner's lawyer. He'll know what's best to be done. Come into the house with me, and Margaret will make you a cup of tea while I put the horse in the car. We must drive straight to Marshport; it will be quicker than waiting for the next train.'

'But how can I leave the house to itself? There's not a soul in it, and the door wide open.'

'We'll ask Margaret to go and mind the house while you're away. She will, I know.'

'Aunt will be so angry,' said poor Dolly.—'O Martin, will she hear what I did to the clock?'

'I'm afraid she must, Dolly.—But never mind; she can't be very angry. Anyway, it's a matter of life and death to this poor man, and you must tell all you know about the matter, cost what it may.'

'I know that,' said Dolly. 'I'd have told long ago, if I'd understood that it made any difference.'

By this time they had reached the house; and Margaret Delany, a pleasant-looking, sensible young woman, on a few words of explanation from her brother, readily consented to take Dolly's place for the day. In a few minutes Martin had brought round the car, drawn by his own riding-horse, an animal usually considered far too valuable to go in harness; and Dolly was soon established on one side of the car, a shawl

round her feet, while Martin, whip in hand, mounted the other.

v.

At another time, Dolly would have enjoyed the rapid drive; but now her only sensation was one of terror at the ordeal before her. At the end of a two hours' drive they began to approach the city. Country seats changed into villa residences; these, again, gave place to terraces, which in their turn merged into streets. At length they reached the heart of the city, and pulled up at the door of the court-house. Making their way into the close crowded court, Martin, after a good deal of argument with a policeman, succeeded in sending a message to the prisoner's solicitor which brought that gentleman to them without delay. After a few hurried questions, he desired Dolly to follow him; and in a few minutes she found herself upon the witness table, her limbs trembling so that she could scarcely stand, judge, jury, and barristers being visible only through a mist.

A few skillfully put questions from the prisoner's counsel elicited the whole story. This comparatively easy business was, however, followed by a searching cross-examination from the counsel for the Crown, who insisted on sifting her motives for tampering with the clock, and her reasons for concealing the fact until now. The terrible truth concerning the clock once known, however, she had nothing to hide, and so came successfully through the ordeal, the fact that she had never even seen the prisoner telling in her favour as a disinterested witness. When at length she was allowed to go down, her uncle, who was waiting for her, took her out of court; and Mrs Lynch, whom nothing short of the judge's presence could have restrained hitherto, began to give Dolly what she called a piece of her mind.

'Well, Dolly, I wouldn't have believed in such wickedness even from you.'

'Don't scold her now, Mrs Lynch,' said Martin authoritatively. 'She's very tired, and she has eaten nothing since morning.—Where are you going to dine, sir?' turning to old Lynch.

'With the Missus's cousin, Mrs Burke—her that keeps a grocer's shop in the New Street.'

'Then you had better take Dolly there at once, sir. I'll wait and bring you word how the trial ends—not that there's much doubt of it now.'

Mrs Burke was a stout, kind-hearted old woman, somewhat higher in the social scale than her cousin, the pilot's wife. Knowing nothing of Dolly's iniquities, and perceiving that she was tired and upset, she made a great fuss about her, and insisted on her resting on the sofa in the parlour behind the shop. As Dolly lay there sipping her tea, and watching the elaborate manner in which Mrs Burke's servant, under the supervision of her mistress, was laying the cloth for dinner, a confused sound of cheering was heard in the street outside, and old Lynch went to see what it was about.

'It's the foreign chap,' he said, coming back in a few minutes. 'They've acquitted him, and the people are following him down the street. I'm glad he's not to be hanged, anyway.'

Martin came in soon after, bringing particulars of the verdict. 'The judge charged in his favour; he told the jury that if they believed Dolly's evidence, they had no choice but to acquit the

man; and they brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty" without leaving the box.—He may thank Dolly for that.'

'He may thank Dolly for being six weeks in jail. If she had not meddled with the clock that day, me and her uncle would have known that he didn't leave the house till after two, and we'd have said so at the inquest; and he'd have been let off then and there.'

'I hardly think he would, Mrs Lynch. The coroner's jury would have sent him for trial all the same.'

'Anyhow, Dolly's had a lesson that she won't forget in a hurry,' said her uncle. 'She'll never tell a lie again.'

'I didn't tell a lie, uncle,' exclaimed Dolly.

'You made the clock tell one for you, my lass, and that was just the same, according to my reckoning.'

Dolly turned scarlet.

'She didn't think of it in that light, sir,' said Martin kindly.

'No; I don't think she did. Whatever her faults may be—and I'm not denying perhaps that she has as many as other people—she always tells the truth.—What became of the poor foreign chap, Martin? He'll be dazed like, getting his liberty all of a sudden.'

'He's all right, sir; the Italian consul was in court, and he's looking after him.'

On the way home that evening, Dolly made an effort to express her gratitude to Martin for the kindness he had shown her.

'Don't think of it, Dolly,' was the answer. 'Any one would have done the same under the circumstances; and you know well that I'd do ten times as much any day only to give you a moment's pleasure.'

'I never knew till to-day how good you were,' said Dolly; and Martin went home that night feeling happier than he had done for months.

A fortnight later, Dolly came to her uncle to tell him that she had promised to marry Martin.

'I'm right glad to hear it, my girl,' said Lynch; 'you couldn't have a better or a kinder husband. All I'm afraid of is, that you don't rightly know how to value him.'

'I think I do, uncle,' answered Dolly.

PERFECTION.

FRET not for Fame, but in Perfection rest.
Seek not the first, but the most excellent;
For thus it proves, when toils and cares have spent,
The first is often second to the best.
With patient spirit and unyielding zest
Toil to complete each daily task, Heaven-sent,
Rather with little ably done content,
Than lost in barren fields of fruitless quest.
For as in every grass and leaf and flower
God's work surpasses man's, so man is next
To God, when, spurning gold and fame and praise,
He takes a daisy as his daily text,
Strives simply, unassumingly, each hour,
To inform with beauty Life's uncomeliest ways.

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THE PRINCESS CARABOO.

A STRANGE HISTORY.

MANY are the tales of literary impostures and of those who manufactured them. Psalmanazar, with his 'History and Description of the Island of Formosa,' and his 'Dialogues between a Japanese and a Formosan;' Lauder and his vilification of Milton in 'An Essay on Milton's Use and Abuse of the Moderns in his Paradise Lost,' the forgeries in which he admitted on the 28th of November 1750; Chatterton, whose name is a 'household word;' Macpherson with his Ossian; Ireland with his Shakespearean impostures; and the modern forgeries attempted to be sold by Shapira, are all well known to us. But Caraboo, who invented a new country and a new language, should surely rank among them, equal at least, in such questionable society, to George Psalmanazar. Yet she is little known, although her imposture was of the most daring kind, such as one would think could never have emanated from a person in her position in life; and, were it not true, the narrative of her life might well seem incredible, and be consigned to the regions of romance.

It was on the evening of Thursday, April 3, 1817, that a young woman, rather unusually dressed, entered a cottage in the parish of Almondsbury, in the county of Gloucester—a village in which is said to be the burial-place of Almond, father of King Egbert—and made signs that she wished to sleep there; but, speaking no known language, she was regarded with suspicion, and the overseer of the poor for the parish probably did the best thing he could under the circumstances: he went up to the great house of the district, Knole Park, to consult with its owner, Samuel Worrall, Esq., who was a magistrate for the county, and who had an accomplished Greek man-servant, who was conversant with several foreign languages. The upshot of their conversation was that the young person was brought up to Knole mansion; but she showed great disinclination either to go

thither or to enter the house. The polyglot man-servant could make nothing of her language, and somehow they persuaded her to empty her pockets, in order to see whether anything could be found to lead to her identity; but she could only produce a few halfpence and a bad sixpence, her bundle containing but a few necessities and a piece of soap.

She was dressed very much like an ordinary country girl, in a black stuff gown, with a muslin frill round her neck, a black cotton shawl on her head, and a red and black shawl round her shoulders; both of which, in a sort of imitation of Asiatic costume, she had put on loosely and somewhat tastefully. She also wore, as was then usual, black worsted stockings and leather shoes; so that there was nothing particularly oriental in her clothing; yet her personal appearance and manners were somewhat prepossessing. She is thus described: 'Her head small, her eyes and hair black, forehead low, nose short, complexion a brunette; her cheeks faintly tinged with red, mouth rather wide, white teeth, lips large and full, under lip a little projecting, and her chin small and round. Her height about five feet two inches. Her hands were clean, and apparently unaccustomed to labour. No earrings, but the marks of having worn them. Her age appeared about twenty-five.'

What to do with this interesting stranger they scarcely knew; but for the night she was sent to sleep at the village inn, where she had tea in preference to any other beverage. On being shown her bed, she made signs that she was used to lie on the floor; but once in bed, she seemed to appreciate it much, and retired to rest after kneeling down to her evening's devotions.

Next morning she was visited both by Mrs Worrall and the clergyman of the parish; and on being shown some prints descriptive of China, she seemed to brighten up, and made signs that it was not a boat, but a ship, that brought her to this country. Mrs Worrall kindly took her home with her, when she refused all animal food, and would only drink water, expressing great delight

at some furniture with Chinese figures painted thereon, and by her gestures intimated that they were similar to the people of her own country; also by pointing to herself, and repeatedly saying 'Caraboo, Caraboo,' endeavoured to explain that it was her name.

She was taken to Bristol, was fruitlessly examined by the mayor, and lodged in St Peter's Hospital, a refuge for vagrants and the poor of Bristol; but whilst an inmate of this institution she refused nourishment of any kind, nor would she sleep in a bed during the time of her sojourn there. Mrs Worrall, seeing this, had her removed to her husband's offices at Bristol, and there she remained for ten days under the charge of Mrs Worrall's housekeeper.

All efforts to discover her language, and thus converse with her, were ineffectual, until she was visited by one Manuel Eynesso, a Portuguese from Malacca, who happened to be in Bristol, and he said he could understand her, and would interpret for her: that the language she spoke was not pure, but a mixture of languages used on the coast of Sumatra and other eastern islands. Now that something apparently tangible was found out about her, Mrs Worrall took her back with her to Knole, where a gentleman who had made several voyages to the East Indies, and knew something of China, took a great interest in her, and elicited from her signs and gestures at various times the following extraordinary story.

Her name she said was Caraboo, and that she was the daughter of a person of rank, of Chinese origin, by a Mandin or Malay woman, who was killed in a war between the Boogoes (cannibals) and the Mandins. She lived on an island called Javasu, and one day, whilst walking in her garden attended by three women, she was seized by the crew of a pirate prahu, bound hand and foot, and her mouth being covered, she was carried off. Her father jumped into the sea and swam after her, discharging an arrow at her captors, which, unfortunately, killed one of her women who were taken on board with her. She did not tamely submit to this outrage; but, according to her own account, wounded two of the prahu's crew with a kris, one of whom died from the effects of his wound. On this prahu she was kept by the pirates for eleven days, when she was sold to the captain of a brig and transferred to that vessel. After a four weeks' voyage they arrived at and anchored in a port which was supposed to have been Batavia. Having remained there two days, and taken on board four females, they set sail; and after a voyage of five weeks arrived at another port which was supposed to have been the Cape of Good Hope, where they landed the four women. After a stay of three days, they sailed for Europe, which was only reached after a voyage of eleven weeks. The first land made was, according to this mirror of truth, some part of the coast of England; and having been ill-treated on the voyage, she took the determination of jumping overboard and swimming ashore. Her clothing, according to her own account, does not seem well fitted for such a project, for on leaving the vessel she was attired in a gown worked with gold, a shawl of similar materials was over her head, and in this costume she achieved her freedom.

She seems to have felt the singularity of her dress, for she went to a cottage with a green door and exchanged it with a woman for her present clothes. Thus disarming curiosity, she wandered about the country for six weeks, sleeping at various houses, until she found herself at Almondsbury.

After a time she became very communicative as to her antecedents, and described her mother's teeth as being blackened—probably by the chewing of betel—her face and arms painted, having a jewel in her nose, with a gold chain from it to the left temple. Besides her mother, her father had three other wives, and he was carried in a palanquin, which was borne on men's shoulders. She did not describe his costume, but only his ornaments, which according to her account consisted of a gold button in his cap, with three peacock's feathers on the right side of his head, a gold twisted chain round his neck, to which was suspended a large square locket of amber-coloured stone set in gold.

She said that in her own country of Javasu she wore seven peacock's feathers on the right side of her head. Her patrons gave her some calico, and she made herself a dress such as she had been accustomed to wear. It was somewhat short in the skirt, as it did not reach to her ankles; but the sleeves were very wide, and would reach the ground but that they were confined to the wrist. She had a scarf round her waist, which was embroidered, as was also the bottom of her dress, round her bosom, and the open part of the sleeves. She was barefoot, with the exception of sandals with wooden soles.

During her residence at Knole she cooked all her own victuals, preferring rice to bread. She would eat no meat, and only drank water or tea. But she was fond of curry, which she made in a very savoury manner, and she would also occasionally eat fowl or fish; but these she cooked herself, cutting off the heads and burying them in the ground. She always prayed night and morning, and rigidly fasted every Tuesday; but she was very fond of quasi-athletics, such as fencing, dancing, &c.

She had been three weeks at Knole, when one day she was amissing, but returned again in the evening with her hands and feet dirty and a bundle of clothes, after which escapade she fell ill. On the 6th of June she again took to flight; and it being discovered that she had gone towards Bath, Mrs Worrall proceeded in pursuit. Here she found her protégée the *soi-disant* Princess of Javasu in the drawing-room of one of the leaders of fashion in Bath, which was crowded with fashionable visitors, all eager to be introduced to the interesting and illustrious stranger. One fair lady was kneeling before her, another holding her hand, a third begging for a kiss; and she was posing delightfully when Mrs Worrall entered the room. Then, for an instant, her *sang-froid* forsook her and she burst into tears, but soon regained her composure.

This was her culminating point, and henceforward her career was downward. But before entering into the details of her antecedents, let us glance briefly at her literary forgery. She not only drew a chart or map of her voyage from Javasu, but she invented a language for this shadowy realm; and its written characters are

wonderful to behold, having affinity to nothing known on this earth. With two exceptions: she gave the name of God as Allah Tallah, and in her vocabulary it is the Arabic Alla, the other is the Arabic 'ta 'Alla' (may He be exalted). But these are the sole exceptions. Heaven was Samen; earth, Tarsa; one, two, three were Eze, Duce, Trua; fire, Apa; water, Ana; the sun, Sanatoo; and so on *ad infinitum*. The Arabic she had probably copied from some oriental book shown her, but she made a grievous error in her language; she introduced therein a few gypsy and slang words, such as Mosha, a man; Raglish, a woman; Gosha, a landlady; Tanee, a halfpenny; Win, a penny; Tanner, a sixpence; Bob, a shilling; Junk, two shillings; Bub, five shillings, &c.; thus showing that no one is at all moments wise.

Now for her fall. A Dr Wilkinson of Bath had written to the *Bath Chronicle* about this curious foreign woman, and the letter was republished in the *Bristol Journal*, where an old landlady of Caraboo's, named Neale, saw it, and communicated with Mrs Worrall on the subject. Mrs Worrall took Caraboo over to Bristol, not telling that young woman what she was going to do. Having had an interview with Mrs Neale and her daughters, she went into a room alone with Caraboo, and told her of the proofs she had obtained of her imposture. The Princess tried to mollify her by talking her gibberish to her benefactress; but the latter would stand no nonsense, and threatened to call Mrs Neale up-stairs and confront her. Then she acknowledged her fraud, begging that Mrs Worrall would not cast her off or suffer her father to be sent for. That lady promised this on certain conditions, one of which was, that she should give a faithful detail of her former course of life, disclose her real name, her parentage, and history. But although she professed to do so, her untruthful habits were so ingrained that she only mingled truth and fiction. A little time afterwards, however, she made a confession, which in many circumstances was afterwards brought out to be a true one.

She said her name was Mary Baker—it was afterwards found to be Wilcocks—that she was born at Witheridge, in Devonshire, in 1791, and had received no education, leading a sort of tomboy existence. At the age of sixteen she obtained a situation at a farmhouse, where she lived for two years, when she left because they would not raise her wages from twopenny to a shilling a week. She then returned home; but ran away because her parents used her ill for giving up her place, and went to Exeter. There she went into service as a general servant at eight pounds a year. She only stayed there for two months, when she left and went home again. With part of her wages she bought herself a white frock, which finery her mother insisted on her taking off, as she was sure she had procured it dishonestly. Unable to endure this imputation, she decamped, and returned to Exeter.

Thence she wandered about the country begging, sometimes getting assistance, at other times being chidden and threatened with the horsewhip, or imprisonment as a vagabond, so that her life being a burden to her, she thought of hanging herself. This she did not do. Having met with a sympathising old gentleman who gave her five shillings, she went into lodgings, and rested for

three days in Taunton. She wandered on until she came to London, where, sick and weary, she sat down on the steps of St Giles's Hospital or workhouse. She was taken first to the watch-house, where the hospital doctor having seen her, ordered her removal to the infirmary. There she remained for several months, ill of brain-fever. When recovering from this attack, and whilst still very weak, she attempted to carry a kettle of boiling water, which upset, and so scalded her that she had to keep her bed for a month; and afterwards, when she was sufficiently recovered, by the interest of a clergyman she got a place, which she kept three years.

During the whole of that time, she said, she never went out. Being one day desirous of going to a Jew's wedding, she forged a letter from a shopkeeper known to her employers, begging them to allow Mary to go to a christening. Of course she went to the wedding, but returning home at proper time, was questioned as to the particulars of the christening. Her mistress having some doubts as to the correctness of her answers, made inquiries for herself, and the truth came out. Of course she left. And now comes an extraordinary part of her story. She had observed the Magdalen in Blackfriars Road, and thinking it was a nunnery, resolved to enter it. Finding that application was to be made on the first Wednesday in the month, she went, and was asked many questions which she said she did not understand. But her answers evidently satisfied the authorities; she was admitted, and being clothed in uniform, was utilised as a housemaid. There she remained for six months, when she was expelled.

She then dressed in male costume and tried to get employment; but her size was against her. Whilst in this masquerade, she was met by two highwaymen on Salisbury Plain (so she said), and consented to be their servant and look after their horses. But they soon got rid of her, giving her some money. She then resumed female attire, and paid her parents a visit, got another place, stayed three months, left; entered service again, left, and started for London. Here she got a situation, and (she said) married a foreigner named Bakerstendht (which she shortened to Baker). He deserted her, and went abroad, and she went to the City Road Hospital and was confined. She got her child into the Foundling Hospital, where it soon died.

More service, another return home, which, of course, she soon left, and more vagabondage, including a stay with gypsies. This time she endeavoured to act the part of a foreigner, and tried to get a passage to America; but it was too much for her finances. She took to wandering, and turned up at Almondsbury. We know her career from this point. Her parents were communicated with; and although her statements were not altogether corroborated, they were borne out in the main points.

It often happens that much more commiseration and practical sympathy are shown to people of worthless character than to those of exemplary life suffering from misfortune; and Caraboo was an instance of this. A living fraud, yet she found helping hands, who almost gratified her every wish. She wanted to go to America; straightway an outfit was given, and a passage was taken for

her in a vessel from Bristol to Philadelphia, and she was handed over to the care and protection of some fellow-passengers, Moravian teachers, who were authorised, if her conduct during the voyage was good, to give her pecuniary assistance in addition to that with which she was already furnished. Before she sailed, she was the object of public curiosity. Noblemen came to see her; and she was visited by persons of all descriptions—natives and foreigners, linguists, painters, physiognomists, craniologists, and gypsies—all anxious to see and converse with this female Psalmanazar.

She duly arrived in America; but did not end her days there. She returned to England in 1824, and took apartments in New Bond Street, where she publicly exhibited herself at the rate of a shilling a head; but she had passed out of the public mind, and her show did not draw. A writer in the *Times* of January 13, 1865, says that she 'retired into comparatively humble life, and married. . . . The quondam "princess" died recently at Bristol, leaving a daughter.' Mr George Pryce, of the City Library, Bristol, writes in *Notes and Queries*, April 15, 1865: 'The last I heard of her, she was married, and once more took up her residence in this city, where her latter days were spent very creditably as an importer of leeches, and in applying them, when requested, by her customers. She appears to have died about the close of the year 1864, leaving an only daughter. I believe the exact date of her decease is unknown, as well as her age and place of interment.'

'Bristolensis,' in *Notes and Queries*, May 20, 1865, confirms the foregoing, and adds: 'She avoided as much as possible any conversation with regard to her former career, of which, I think, she was much ashamed; and nothing annoyed her more than when a neighbour's child ventured to call after her, "Caraboo."

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XV.

GERALD BROOKE having relieved his 'mate' Lucas at the signal-box, and having satisfied himself that his lamps were properly trimmed and set for the night, sat down in his box to read. The night duties at Cinder Pit Junction were not of a very onerous nature. The last passenger train from Cumerhays, which also carried the mail, passed at eight-thirty; and the last train to that place till the arrival of the morning mail, at a few minutes past ten o'clock. In the course of the night two or three trains of mixed merchandise and minerals passed through without stopping, and these, together with a train from the collieries bound for the South, comprised the whole of the nocturnal traffic. Thus it fell out that Gerald had plenty of spare time on his hands, and always brought a volume with him to help to while the long dark hours away.

The signal-box, the entrance to which was reached by a flight of eight or nine steps, stood on a small space of cleared ground by the side of the line. A little way back was a low embankment crowned by a hedge, overshadowed here and there by an umbrageous beech or elm, beyond which the open fields stretched far and wide. Few places could be more solitary and deserted; not a house, not a habitation of any kind was

within ken; but by day a haze of smoke in the distance told of life and labour not far away.

The last train from Cumerhays had passed more than an hour ago, the next one would be the train going the reverse way. Gerald sat reading, but with his ear on the alert for the ting of the telegraph bell which should tell him when the coming train had passed Mellingfield, the nearest station south, five miles away. All at once he was startled by the sound of some one coughing, evidently just outside his box. It was a sound so unexpected and surprising in that lonely spot and at that hour of the night, that he sprang to his feet, while his nerves began to flutter strangely. Next moment there came a loud rapping at the door, as it might be with the handle of a walking-stick. Gerald opened the door at once; and then he saw a portly middle-aged man dressed in black, with a white cravat and spectacles—to all appearance a clergyman—standing at the foot of the steps and gazing blandly up at him.

'My good man,' said the stranger in unctuous but well-bred accents, 'I am a stranger in these parts, and am sorry to say that I have lost my way. I want to get to a friend's house at Overbarrow; no doubt you can put me in the right road for doing so?'

'You must cross the line'—began Gerald.

'My good man,' interrupted the stranger, 'I am somewhat deaf, and cannot hear what you say. I wish you would be good enough to come a little nearer. With my defective eyesight, I dare not trust myself up these steps of yours.'

Gerald stepped down without hesitation. 'You must cross the line,' he began again in a somewhat louder key, 'and about twenty yards farther on you will find a gap in the hedge.'

'Yes, yes—a gap in the hedge; I understand,' responded the other eagerly.

'And after that you will find a footpath which will bring you to the high-road. Then'—

Not a word more spoke Gerald. A soft heavy cloth of some kind was suddenly thrown over his head, while at the same instant his arms were pinioned firmly from behind, and a cord with a running noose was drawn tightly round his legs. The attack was so sudden that he was powerless to make the least resistance, and in less than half-a-dozen seconds he found himself as helpless as a babe. Then a corner of the cloth that enveloped his head was raised and the sham parson said in his most oily tones: 'My friend, if you have any regard for your life you will neither cry out nor attempt to make the least disturbance. Be obedient and good, and no harm shall befall you.' As if to add emphasis to the warning, Gerald was lightly rapped on the knuckles with what he could feel to be the chilly barrel of a pistol. Then with a man on each side of him holding him by an arm, he was conducted to the background; and having been planted with his back to a tree, he was bound firmly to it with several folds of thin cord. The cloth which still enveloped his head was fastened loosely round his throat, so as not greatly to impede his breathing; but his voice would have been smothered in it had he even been in a position to call for help.

He had no means of ascertaining the number of his assailants, but as far as he could judge

there must have been three or four of them. He was lost in a maze of the wildest conjectures as to what the object of the attack could possibly be. Apparently none of the gang had recognised him as Gerald Brooke, the man for whose capture so large a reward was still unclaimed. Yet why, then, had they made him a prisoner? What object was to be gained by his capture? Never in his life had he felt so utterly perplexed. He could hear an eager conversation going on a little distance away; but all sounds now came dull and muffled to his ears.

As already stated, the gang had previously separated into two parties. Three of the men, at the head of whom was Crofton, had made their way down the branch to a point close to where, as nearly as they could judge, the driver of the train would be able to pull up as soon as he found himself on the wrong line of rails. The other three men, with the sham parson as their chief, had been detailed for the capture of the signalman, the result of which we have seen. After a little talk together, one of the three now started off down the branch to carry the news to Crofton and the others.

Slinkey at once took possession of the box, and proceeded to test the working of the various levers, in order that there might be no hitch when the critical moment should arrive. He was an ex-railway servant and thoroughly understood what he was now about.

The sham parson was known familiarly among the 'profession' which his eminent talents adorned under the pseudonym of 'Lardy Bill,' a title conferred upon him in the first instance by reason of his fondness for swell clothes, flash jewelry, and scented pocket-handkerchiefs. He was one of the most clever and unscrupulous rogues of which the great Babylon could boast; but it is pleasant to be able to record that despite his cleverness, a considerable portion of his knavish existence had already been passed in an enforced seclusion where board and lodging had been provided him free of charge. His appearance was eminently in his favour. He was a well-built, ruddy-cheeked man, with a moist and humorous eye, and a sort of hail-fellow-well-met air. He had the suggestion of a man who could tell a good story and appreciate a good glass of wine. He looked equally at home when made up as a clergyman, a gentleman farmer, a staid City magnate, or a poor tradesman who had fallen upon evil days. He had always *les larmes dans le voix* at command when the occasion needed them, and he could choke a sob in his throat as cleverly as any low comedian on the stage.

As soon as the two men were left alone, with their prisoner in the background, Lardy Bill lighted a cigarette—he liked to follow the fashion in everything—and began to stroll up and down the narrow clearing on which the box was built. Slinkey was too nervous to follow his companion's example. 'As I kalkilate,' he said, 'we ought to have had the signal from Mellingfield three minutes afore now. Can anything have happened?'

'Pooh, man—what is likely to have happened?' said the other coolly. 'These beggarly branch trains are nearly always late.'

Half a minute later they heard the welcome ting-ting announcing that the train had just passed Mellingfield.

'She'll be twelve minutes or more yet afore she's here,' remarked Slinkey as he again ascended the steps and entered the box.

Presently Lardy Bill tossed away the end of his cigarette, and crossing to his prisoner, examined his bonds and satisfied himself that they were still intact. On going back to the box he was rejoined by Slinkey, who now proceeded to go down on one knee and rest his ear on the rail. 'She's coming; I can hear her quite plain,' he said after a few moments. 'Another five minutes and she ought to be here.'

'Then I'll hurry off to the others,' said Lardy. 'I shall be wanted there when the shindy comes off, and you'll manage here by yourself all right.'

'Right you are,' responded the other. 'As soon as ever the train's past, I shall cut the wires, and then make a bolt of it, and wait for you fellows at the cottage.'

Nothing more was said. Lardy Bill started at a quick pace down the branch, while Slinkey re-entered the box.

Neither of them had the slightest suspicion that for the last ten minutes or more all their actions had been watched by an unseen witness; but such was the case. When Clara Brooke, to her intense dismay, discovered that not her husband, but a stranger, was the occupant of the box, she felt for a little while as if her heart must die within her. Then she became aware of two dusky figures standing a little distance away, whom she rightly concluded to be other members of the gang; but still her husband was nowhere to be seen. She had arrived on the spot almost immediately after Gerald had been bound to the tree; but the night was too dark to admit of her seeing him from that distance. She felt at once that she must get round to where the signal-box stood, on the opposite side of the line, and, if it were possible, approach near enough to the men to overhear their conversation, and by that means discover what had become of her husband. No sooner was the thought formulated in her mind than she began to put it into practice. Still keeping in the shelter of the hedge that ran parallel with the line, she sped as fast as her feet could carry her to a point some forty or fifty yards farther down the line, far enough, as she judged, to be out of the range of vision of any one who might be on the lookout at the box. Here, after drawing her shawl over her head—she had discarded her bonnet some time before—she broke through the hedge, was across the line in three seconds; and then, after pushing through the hedge on the opposite side, she turned back in the direction of the signal-box, she and it being both now on the same side of the line. Creeping forward foot by foot and yard by yard, she presently found herself a little way behind the box, and within a dozen yards of her husband, had she only been aware of it.

While this was happening, one of the men had gone off to join the others down the line. Clara, peering through the interstices of the hedge, could see the two remaining men walking and talking together, but was too far away to distinguish what they said. Not long had she watched and waited when she heard the ting-ting of the telegraph bell. She knew that it was a signal of some kind, but not what its precise meaning

might be. Then one of the men disappeared into the box, while the other—it was the one, she could now make out, who was dressed like a clergyman—turned, and seemed as if he were marching directly towards her. Terror-stricken, she dropped completely out of sight behind the hedge-bank, expecting every moment to feel a hand laid on her shoulder. But nothing coming, she breathed again; then her head went up till her eyes were on a level with the top of the bank; then, to her surprise, she saw that the man seemed to be carefully examining the trunk of a tree some little distance away. She strained her eyes in the endeavour to see what he could possibly be about, and then suddenly her heart gave a great bound. The trunk of the tree was defined like a faint silhouette against a background of star-lit April sky, but it was a silhouette which in one portion of its outline bore a startling resemblance to a human figure. As by a flash of divination, Clara knew that it was her husband she was gazing upon. Her breath fluttered on her lips like a bird trying to escape, and she set her teeth hard in the flesh of her arm, to stifle the cry that broke involuntarily from her heart.

After a few seconds the man went back; and after saying a few words to his confederate, he apparently took leave of him, and starting down the branch, was quickly lost to view; then the other at once went back into the box. Now was Clara's opportunity.

Half a minute later she was by her husband's side. Laying a hand softly on his arm, she said in a low voice: 'Gerald it is I—Clara.' Some smothered sounds came back to her; and then she discovered, what the darkness had hitherto hidden, that her husband's head and face were closely muffled. Her trembling but skilful fingers quickly undid the knots and removed the covering. Gerald gave a great gasp of relief as he drew a deep inspiration of the cool night-air. Then he whispered: 'You will find a knife in my outside pocket.' In a minute from that time he was a free man.

Slinkey, waiting alone in the signal-box, had tried the lever again and again by means of which the points were opened that would turn the train on to the branch, and had satisfied himself that everything was in working order. Both the distance and the home signal-lamps showed the white light, so that the train would speed on unsuspectingly with unslackened pace. Slinkey at the best of times was a nervous timid creature—a man who walked ever in trembling dread of the hand which he knew would some day be laid suddenly on his shoulder—but now that he was left alone, now that he had no longer Lardy Bill's audacious bulldog courage to help to animate his own, his craven heart sank lower and lower, and he would have given a year of his life to be well out of the adventure into which he had allowed himself to be seduced.

The low deep hum of the oncoming train grew palpably on the ear. Instinctively, Slinkey's hand closed on lever No. 3, while his heart began to beat a sort of devil's tattoo after a fashion that was far from comfortable. Suddenly he gave a great start, and for a moment or more the tattoo came to a dead stop. He had heard a sound that he remembered full well: it was the noise caused

by the explosion of a fog-signal. At the same instant the engine began to whistle its shrillest. Then came the explosion of a second signal, and then the whistle ceased as suddenly as it began. And now he could faintly hear the soft rhythmical pulsing of the engine, as it might be that of some antediluvian monster which had been racing till it was scant of breath; and Slinkey knew that the train had slackened speed and was feeling its way forward slowly and cautiously. What could be the matter? What could have happened? By whom and with what intent had fog-signals been placed on the line on a night so clear and beautiful?

Such were a few of the queries that flitted through Slinkey's puzzled brain. And now not even the faintest pulsing of the engine could be heard. Could it be possible that treachery was at work, and that the driver had been warned and the train brought to a stand? Slinkey ran lightly down the steps and, kneeling, laid an ear once more to the rails. Not a sound came to him; the train and those in charge of it might have vanished into space, so unbroken was the silence. He got on his feet again, his tongue and throat as dry and constricted as those of a man who had been athirst for days. Instinctively his eyes turned to the tree to which the captured signalman had been bound; but he was too far away to be able to discern whether the man was still there. With a heart that misgave him, he hurried up to the tree, only to find that the prisoner had escaped. The cords were there, but the man was gone. Evidently, treachery was at work somewhere. Would not the wisest thing he could do be to decamp while he had a chance of doing so? He was asking himself this question but had not answered it, when up came Crofton, Lardy Bill, and one of the other men, at double-quick time. They, too, had heard the fog-signals, and had been as much at a loss to account for them as Slinkey had been. But when the latter told them that by some mysterious means their prisoner had contrived to escape, it was evident both to Crofton and Lardy that their carefully planned scheme had met with some dire mishap. They had been betrayed, but by whom? A traitor had been at work, but who was he? Each of them stared suspiciously at his fellows.

'If I only knew who it was that had sold us,' said Lardy Bill with a fierce imprecation, 'I'd scatter his brains with a bullet, though I had to swing for it after!'

'That's all very well,' said Crofton; 'but the question is, what are we to do now?'

'Do!' exclaimed Lardy, whom danger always made reckless. 'Why, do what we intended from the first. The train's waiting there, ain't it, not five hundred yards away? Instead of its coming to us, we must go to it—that's all. Is there any one here,' he demanded fiercely, 'who would rather not go?'

Slinkey would fain have answered that he for one would very much prefer to keep in the background, only that Lardy Bill was a man of whom he stood in mortal fear.

'Now, mates, come along,' added Bill. 'We are only fooling away our time standing here. One bold stroke and the prize is ours.'

Scarcely had the last word passed his lips, when some half-dozen dark-coated figures burst suddenly

through the hedge and made a dash into the midst of the gang.

'We are sold!' screamed Crofton with an oath. 'Every man for himself,' and with that he fired his revolver at the nearest of his assailants and then turned to flee. But he was too late. He was tripped up, seized, and handcuffed all in a breath as it seemed. A like fate befell Slinkey and the other man; but Lardy Bill, slippery as an eel, after felling two of his assailants, vanished in the darkness. The remaining two men, who had been left behind when Crofton and the others hurried to the signal-box, also contrived to escape.

Crofton's shot had taken effect. The man he fired at staggered forward a pace or two and then fell on one knee. Now that the scrimmage was over, his companions had time to attend to him. They helped him to his feet; he was evidently suffering great pain, but was perfectly cool and collected. As the light of the bull's-eye which one of the men produced fell upon his face, Crofton, who was close at hand, staggered back with a cry of amazement. Next moment he had recovered himself. 'I denounce this man as Gerald Brooke,' he exclaimed, 'the murderer of Baron von Rosenberg, for whose capture a reward of three hundred pounds is offered.'

(To be concluded next month.)

THE PLANET JUPITER.

ON the evening of the 7th of August last our astronomers were on the alert, and many telescopes were focussed on the planet Jupiter, which was about then to disappear from view behind the edge of the advancing moon. More than two thousand years before, on the 18th of the Egyptian month Epiphi, a watcher near Alexandria saw the same planet eclipse a well-known star in the constellation of the Crab. Such are the ages measurable by man, and measured by the marks on the calendar of the heavens—measured, too, so accurately that we can confidently say this ancient astronomer must have risen on that long-past morning not later than six o'clock. Many travel to his historic land to gaze upon its monuments, pathetic with the workmanship of long-vanished hands. They try to realise how these must have looked as the pomp of Egypt's kings defiled beneath them, and with difficulty they in fancy erect the shattered statue and build the broken temple. And we have all sympathy with their feelings. But yet we need only raise our eyes to the southern window to see the planet which the Pharaohs watched, and to see it unchanged.

From sunset until about six o'clock in the beginning of December, this bright orb may be seen hanging low in the south-western sky. It is easily distinguished by the steadiness and brilliancy of its light, and, as our ancient observer well knew, is worthy of our close attention. Among the wanderers of the sky it holds a principal place, sometimes surpassed in lustre by the fitful and changing Venus, but more usually the brightest orb in the heavens, and worthy of its name. These old astronomers burned with desire to penetrate the secrets of the midnight sky, and sometimes they succeeded. Yet two thousand years of effort and discovery have not availed to reveal completely the mystery hidden

in that brilliant star. It was an enigma to that ancient watcher, and it is an enigma to us.

What, then, is our advantage in ages of study? Much! For, if still an enigma, the enigma is a larger and grander one. The issues of its solution are fraught with power over every department of human knowledge and activity—over the most serious and sacred of religious hopes, as well as over the smaller matters of comfort in which science ministers to us. In that brilliant planet we see a workshop where a world is being fashioned out of substance like that of our own earth. From its study we may at any time rise rewarded with some secret of our world which we cannot learn from our globe itself, whose very nearness prevents our search. Its moons, first discovered by Galileo, helped men to see how the earth could roll on its orbit around the sun, and furnished no small strength to the arguments by which at last men were convinced that the earth was not the centre of the universe, and *this* idea where it has prevailed has already changed the whole current of human thought. In that bright point of light there is much hidden. In it much has been found well worth our attention for a short time.

For example, even a cursory look at Jupiter through a good opera-glass will show us that it is not a mere point of light, but has a distinctly circular disc. And if the time be favourable, the same handy instrument will show several minute stars close by—the famous moons of Galileo. To a very powerful instrument the planet shows a broad disc, like a dinner-plate two or three yards from the eye, covered with streaks and spots. These range in depth from white to very dark gray, and in colour show shades principally yellow, brown, and reddish. They form a brilliant and beautiful sight, once seen never to be forgotten. The spectator will not fail to notice the great brilliance of the planet's light. Indeed, this strikes an observer of any celestial body at first very forcibly. The planets, especially Jupiter, viewed in a powerful telescope, do not seem so much to be illuminated as to *shine*. The light and shade of their surfaces are not like that we are accustomed to see; they seem formed of pure light. Jupiter especially looks like a world without shadow, in which the markings are simply various lights, coloured with exquisite delicacy.

So soon as telescopes sufficiently powerful to show it well were constructed, this marvellous brilliance attracted attention. In a good instrument Jupiter almost dazzles the eye, and fills the whole field of view with a bright glare. If the telescope be moved so that the planet is just out of sight at one side, this glare is still seen; and if the planet be gradually brought into view, the bright illumination which precedes it produces an effect akin to sunrise. Most stars disappear in his presence, as they do before the sun's approach. We can hardly doubt that reflected sunlight alone does not account for this great brightness, especially when we remember that, at Jupiter's distance, sunlight has less than one-twentieth of its power with us.

This impression is strengthened by the extent of the planet's influence on a photographic plate. Professor Bond, of Cambridge, United States, on testing this found a remarkable result. He

compared the surface of Jupiter with that of the moon, and found that the former had fourteen times more photographic power than the latter. The moon's surface, too, has several advantages in this comparison. It is of great reflective power, and is covered with no atmosphere to absorb its rays, yet if removed to Jupiter's distance, it would only have one-fourteenth of his photographic power. This fact has made it more easy to take the planet's picture. In a copy of this which lies before the writer, the principal markings are well shown, although the planet is depicted as only about the size of a large pea. This fine picture we owe to the splendid telescope constructed by Mr A. A. Common, of Ealing, near London. It is three feet in aperture, and concentrated such intensity of light on the sensitive plate fixed in its focus that the planet's picture was taken in a second and a half.

Whence comes, then, this intensity of the planet's light, most marked in photography, where it is most liable to be weakened by reflection? If not wholly reflected sunlight, what is it? The answer to this question was long dubious, but may now be given with tolerable certainty. Jupiter shines by *his own light*, as well as by reflected solar rays, and is so far akin to the sun and stars. And there can be little doubt that he so shines because he is intensely hot. Some bodies shine although they are not very hot, such as putrid fish, phosphorus, and the various luminous insects. Comets, too, and some nebulae shine partly by intrinsic brightness which is developed at a very low temperature. But there is a *solidity* and *yellowness* about Jupiter's light which catch the eye at once, and irresistibly suggest that he is hot even to incandescence.

Some parts of his surface are very brilliant, others more dark, and to shine as he does *on the whole*, the bright parts must be brighter than any reflecting surface known to us, except a polished mirror.

The comparative lightness of the planet also favours this theory of its high temperature. Taken as a whole, it is more than three hundred times as heavy as the earth; but if we could obtain a small piece of its substance and compare it with a similar piece of our own rocks, we should find it only one-fifth as heavy. Now, this means a great deal. It shows that any part of Jupiter's interior mass is under an enormous pressure. An enormous quantity of stuff presses down upon it, and is pressed down by an enormous force. The gravity of the planet's mass presses it thus together with a force two and a half times greater than any so exerted on the substance of our world. Yet, instead of being squeezed into a substance far denser than our rocks, it remains only one-fifth as solid as they are. There is only one agent which we know powerful enough to maintain it in this condition, and that is intense heat. If hot, Jupiter's substance will resist pressure as steam does, and remain vaporous and liquid under an enormous weight. It is probable, in fact, that a great portion of his mass consists of vaporous clouds, suspended above a surface glowing with heat, so as to mingle in its ebullition even with the vapours above it, and by its explosions to drive them higher and thither as in volcanic eruptions.

A minute examination of Jupiter's visible sur-

face confirms this. Our readers will remember his famous belts, girdling his surface on either side of his equator. These are, of course, the most marked features of the planet, and in feeble instruments they are to all appearance wonderfully steady and permanent. Cassini, a great early observer, using comparatively feeble telescopic power, said that he had watched them for forty years without seeing a change. There can be little doubt that *in position* at least they are permanent, for they have been measured micro-metrically by M. Arago in 1811, by Mr Russell of Sydney in 1876, and by the writer in 1881, with results substantially accordant. Yet, though thus steady in position, they vary much in distinctness, and are broken up by spots and markings which change with amazing rapidity. For example, on the 28th of October 1880 Mr Russell noticed two black spots on one of the belts. *Next night* they were *three* in number, and the belt was very much enlarged; a change indicating, as he observes, the action of a tremendous force, as in a few days the belt had increased in breadth from six or seven hundred miles to two thousand, and that for a part of its length extending one hundred and twenty thousand miles. In a few days after this the whole belt looked as if broken up into cumulus clouds and irregular masses of vapour. Changes such as these are indeed very common. On another occasion Mr Russell observed a large cloud of a blue colour, which he was certain was not visible a few days before, and which disappeared again in three days; showing that some very great atmospheric change had occurred in a comparatively short time.

Sometimes, however, brown, blue, or white spots appear on the planet, and last for weeks or months. These afford opportunity for determining its period of rotation, and have given the most astonishing variety of results. In fact, there is no doubt that different parts of the planet's surface revolve at different speeds; so that, if solid and inhabited, people would have time-measures of a most confusing kind, the day (corresponding to ours of twenty-four hours) being longer or shorter according to their place in latitude. Our readers may have heard of the strange phenomena presented by the famous Red and White spots during the winter of 1883-84. The great red spot appeared on the planet's southern hemisphere, and the white spot near the equator. They ran a kind of race round the giant globe, the white spot gaining on the other one at the rate of no fewer than two hundred and sixty miles per hour. So that, supposing the red spot fixed in its position, the white one must have been traversing the planet's surface at this enormous speed.

Now, just as we saw the small density of the planet demand a force to counteract the compressing power of its gravity, so these enormous and rapid movements require great energy to account for them. In both cases we can only think of heat as the power required. It is to the solar heat that our storms and hurricanes owe their origin and power of movement. But this at Jupiter is only one twenty-seventh of what it is with us, and would seem far too small to cause the enormous changes there taking place. We are therefore driven again by this series of facts to adopt the theory that Jupiter possesses vast stores of heat, which alike maintains his materials in the liquid

and vaporous condition favourable to rapid movement, and causes explosions and volcanic hurricanes amongst them which we can but feebly imagine.

No doubt our readers will ere this have noticed that this theory supposes our planet to be not unlike the sun, only on a smaller and less vigorous scale of size and disturbance. This idea was much strengthened when it was found that the features of Jupiter's surface had a rhythmical period of change coincident with that of the solar spots.

Yet we are confronted with observations of a different kind which seem to raise insuperable difficulties, and show at least that the enigma of the planet is not yet solved.

The spectrum of Jupiter shows the rays due to reflected sunlight, and actually some bands of *absorption* besides, so that its testimony is against the theory of great heat in the planet's atmosphere. There is strong absorption of light in the dusky belts, indicating the greater depth to which sunlight penetrates at those portions of the planet's surface. The permanence of *position* maintained by the belts, in spite of their change in depth and shape, is also an unfavourable fact. This seems to point to some steadily maintained character of the surface inconsistent with mere fluidity. The great red spot, too, of which we have already spoken maintained its place so long (for many years) as to suggest some stable condition of the part of the planet beneath it. It would almost seem that the real state of the planet is a semi-solid one, and that a hot crust has formed at its surface over a liquid and gaseous interior; this crust, however, not being strong enough to prevent constant outbursts of gas and vapour in a highly heated state, which produce tremendous and sudden changes in the planet's vast atmosphere. Time and patience may confirm this theory; at least they cannot fail to let us farther and deeper into the secrets of a planet which is evidently one of Nature's most interesting workshops.

A LEGAL SECRET.

CHAP. V.—CONCLUSION.

WHY does Mr Pilkington sit so late in his library, after his guests are gone, with his armchair drawn up to the fireless grate? It is nearly daybreak, and there he is still seated, his head leaning against his hand, pondering deeply. His face expresses a startling change. It has become more wrinkled and withered than one would have supposed possible, in a few hours' time, even in so old a man. Does anything unusual vex his mind? That would seem improbable. For has he not confided all the legal secrets to Sidney—all that he need confide? On the morrow, another Trench will take the senior partner's chair in the oblong room; for another Pilkington has played out his legal part, and has taken leave once and for all of his clients. Lincoln's Inn has seen him for the last time.

Is it this fact that troubles him? No; Mr Pilkington puts every trust in Sidney Trench. He would not otherwise have taken this decisive step. The load has been lifted off his mind. The load of other people's troubles? Yes; and yet something is vexing him. His face grows

more anxious every moment; he looks frequently towards the door; but at last he leans back wearily in his chair.

And now a shadow begins to gather over his face. What shadow? The lamp burns steadily upon the table close beside him. What lamp could be the cause of a shadow like that? Mr Pilkington is distinctly conscious of its presence, and smiles grimly. Is it the shadow that, sooner or later, hovers over all?

Presently the door is opened, and Mrs Pilkington steps swiftly towards the chair and kneels down beside the old lawyer and presses his hand lovingly in both her own. 'You shall never see me sad now,' she tells him—though there are bright tears glistening in her eyes—'for I shall now have you with me always—all day long; and,' she adds in a more subdued voice, 'dear Rosa too.'

Mr Pilkington's troubled look increases. 'Sidney has told you.—You have seen her, then?'

The wife, still bending at her husband's feet, touches his hand with her lips. 'How good you have been! The news has been broken to her so tenderly and to me too.—And is it not marvellous? She has forgotten nothing.'

The lawyer's expression becomes startled. 'Nothing?'

Mrs Pilkington looks inquiringly into his face.

'She has not told you,' he says doubtfully, 'how she disappeared?'

'No.'

'Then I must. The man who is alone to blame,' says he in a broken voice—'who has kept her from you for twelve long years—is your husband!'

Rising slowly from her kneeling posture and standing before the old man, Mrs Pilkington's face expresses blank amazement: 'You!'

It is obvious from her tone, her whole attitude, that she is utterly dumfounded at the lawyer's words. How can she, who has never doubted his integrity, credit this avowal? She has heard on more than one occasion the tradition concerning the house of Trench, Pilkington, and Trench. It flashes across her now. She has heard it affirmed that as soon as the senior has imparted the legal secrets to his successor, his brain begins to show signs of decay. Can such a fatality have already overtaken Mr Pilkington? It would scarcely seem possible. And yet she would prefer to believe his intellect impaired than accept such an admission from him as truth.

The lawyer waves his hand impatiently towards a chair. 'Sit down beside me,' says he in a tone of quiet authority, 'and listen to what I have to tell. It is a painful affair; it is the secret that I have hidden—the secret you would have had me keep from you; but I cannot. No partner in our house, I feel very confident, ever carried a secret to his grave. It would have destroyed our reputation. Even our secrets are not our own.'

She sits down without uttering a word. Her husband's firm manner, his distinct though somewhat feeble utterance, is that of a man who obviously retained his mental vigour. She is overwhelmed with grief; and although she tries to keep back her tears, she looks at him through a mist, and the shadow which is gathering over his face escapes her.

'It was your wish,' says Mr Pilkington, 'to spare me the pain of this humiliating task—the pain of confession. Do you think I do not fully appreciate your trustfulness? Indeed, I do. But it has not altered my purpose; it has given me strength to speak.' For a moment he pauses with a still deeper look of thought on his face. 'It was jealousy—a mad jealousy that began it. That was the root of all this trouble. How can I have been so irrational, so unjust? But so it was. What I ought to have admired, I detested. Your passionate love for your child drove me to desperation. It roused the demon in me. I was determined that nothing, not even your affection for little Rosa, should come between us.—Not that in reality,' he hastened to add, 'it ever lessened your love for me. But I imagined it did: it was more than I could endure.' The lawyer's voice grows weaker and more troubled as he proceeds. 'That she was your child, though not mine, should have awakened my deepest sympathy. But it had the opposite effect: I could scarcely hide my aversion. I hated to see you caress her; I even hated at last to hear you speak of the child. No other subject—so it seemed in my madness—interested you: I was even mad enough to believe that you had no love for any one except this child—none even for me.'

'Did I deserve this?'

'You deserved a better husband; for an evil thought seized me at last,' says the lawyer, 'and I could not resist the temptation.—You have not forgotten that journey? I took your child—I took Rosa with me.'

'Forgotten?' murmurs Mrs Pilkington, clasping her hands.

'I took her with me for one object—to remove her out of your sight and mine.—And you, dear wife, never questioned my story. You believed all that I told you; you believed that Rosa was lost.' Mr Pilkington's voice grows very weak now; but his words are still articulate and full of meaning, though slowly uttered. 'It was only then, when too late, that I realised what a fatal error I had made. Your love for me never changed: it became no greater, no less. It was the same true devotion that it always had been: it was expressed in your actions more than in your words—the truest love of all.—Ah, my sweet wife! how could I now feel that I merited the love you gave me? I saw you silently mourning the loss: never a word of complaint escaped you. How I longed to restore to you your child! And not many months went by before I again took a journey to St Albans in search of her, with the express intention of bringing her home. But she was gone, no one knew where. A packet of letters from Abel Norris, written from St Albans, was all I had. I kept them locked in your deed-box at Lincoln's Inn. I never had the courage, until Sidney discovered the old clerk, to give this packet to you. You burnt the letters without suspecting my treachery, and I could not speak—I could not break the news to you then that Rosa was found. But now you know all.'

The shadow lies darkly upon Mr Pilkington's face; but he seems to heed it no longer. The grim smile never recurs; the expression has become stern and stony, like the faces of the

sphinxes which are staring at each other over the gateway out in the summer dawn. There sits the old lawyer, motionless, as though overcome by sleep. Mrs Pilkington raises her eyes slowly; the look is full of unchanging love and free forgiveness. Does he see that true woman's glance? No word escapes his lips; his countenance is as stern and stony as ever, and yet a tear rests upon his cheek!

And now a look of terror comes into Mrs Pilkington's face, and she utters a piercing cry. Still the old lawyer sits motionless in his chair; still no word escapes him. His secrets are all told at last.

Sidney's first year as senior partner, a year that went quickly by, placed a visible line of care upon his young brow. There never had been known, in the recollection of the oldest clerk, such legal receptions as Mr Trench held in the oblong room. Other waiting-rooms besides the octagonal chamber had to be set apart for those who had made appointments. It was as though clients had purposely reserved their secrets for Sidney's ear, from a dread of the able old lawyer—a dread he could well comprehend from personal experience in early days.

One afternoon, when the trees in New Square and Lincoln's Inn were again in leaf, Sidney walked over to Took's Court. There sat Abel Norris, at his desk in the dingy parlour, copying documents with the same diligence which he had shown when first employed by the great legal firm. Nothing was changed. The black cat, his only companion now, lay curled up on the hearth-rug like a great blotch of ink—the only one in the room for which the old clerk was not responsible.

'Well, Norris, when are you coming to pay us a visit at the villa? Rosa asks me the question every day.'

Norris shook his head. 'Rosa—Miss Gage, I should say—is very good to think of me, sir. She has a kind heart; she'll never forget me, I know. Will you tell her, sir, that she is always in my thoughts? I miss her dreadfully sometimes. It ain't to be wondered at. Is it, Mr Trench? Twelve years was a long time. It was like losing one's own daughter, when Mr Pilkington took her from me.' There were tears in the old clerk's eyes.

'Then why not give up Took's Court?' said Sidney. 'You would find gardening a more healthy occupation. Why not give up the law? I wish I could,' the young lawyer added, laughingly. 'If some one would offer me a pension, I would retire without loss of time. What *can* you find in these old parchments?—and he pointed to the clerk's desk—'to keep you in town?'

'It's habit, Mr Trench,' said Norris, taking up his pen. 'It's too late now to change this for a rake or spade. Nor would an idle country-life suit me, sir, after more than fifty years of desk-work. This home is all I need, sir, for the short time I've still to live.'

Such was always the answer which Sidney received whenever he spoke to Norris about himself. No argument would induce him to forsake the precincts of Chancery Lane. The inky parlour had a fascination for him; neither the green fields nor the prospect of being near

Rosa would tempt him to leave his old desk even for a single day.

Returning home that summer evening towards sunset, Sidney went through the grounds in search of Rosa. He walked along deep in thought. He had seen so little of her during the last twelve months; he had been overwhelmed with work, which had frequently kept him very late into the night at Lincoln's Inn. And Rosa was occupied too: her education had been all but entirely neglected; and no one had been more quick to realise the need of making up for lost time—for twelve years of comparative idleness. Her mother superintended her studies; and Rosa had made such rapid progress that Mrs Pilkington had good reason to be proud of her daughter's talent as well as her beauty. Sidney had indeed found for her a loving companion. Was it surprising that she and Rosa were seldom out of each other's sight?

Thinking of these things—while still searching in the grounds for Rosa—all that Mr Pilkington had told him crossed Sidney's mind. He had told him about the black deed-box marked 'Rosamond Gage,' which had stood in the octagonal room many years. For it belonged to a beautiful client, little more than twenty years of age, who had one day paid a professional visit to Mr Pilkington. It was a prolonged interview, that first one; for Rosamond Gage had a lengthy secret to confide. She had married when eighteen years of age; and after two years—years of domestic trouble and ill-treatment—her husband, Captain Gage, had left her. She possessed, however, a great deal of property; and through Mr Pilkington's legal assistance, most of it had been saved. Her gratitude towards the lawyer was unbounded; and when, some four or five years afterwards, news reached her of Captain Gage's death, she became Mr Pilkington's wife. She had brought to her new home her little daughter, Rosa, then barely six years of age.

Sidney now entered the grove where he and Rosa had met upon the evening of her return to her old home. They had not met here since. But to-day an irresistible impulse to speak with her had seized him. Glancing around, as he entered the pathway, he caught sight of Mrs Pilkington. She left the bench where she was seated and came towards him.

'Where is Rosa?' were almost his first words.

Mrs Pilkington gave him a bright glance. 'She went to meet you, Sidney, a moment ago. Are you not all in all to her?'

Sidney's face grew serious. 'I may speak to her now; may I not?'

'Dear Sidney, there is no need to ask me that,' said Mrs Pilkington tenderly; 'my one thought is for her happiness and yours.'

Rosa now coming in sight among the trees, Sidney went towards her with a quick step. 'Wouldn't dad come and see me?' said the girl with something of her old peevish way. 'You promised to bring him, Sidney, this afternoon. How unkind!'

'It is useless, Rosa,' was Sidney's reply. 'He prefers ink and parchment to sunshine and green leaves.' And he told Rosa all that Abel Norris had said. 'You must go and talk to him yourself,' he added. 'But I fear nothing—not even *your* voice—will move him.'

The year that had passed—a year in which so much care and cultivation had been bestowed upon her—had wrought a change in Rosa. She seemed taller, more dignified, more sedate. The wild dark eyes had lost none of their brightness, but they were kept under more control; the black lashes drooped more frequently now when Sidney was by.

'Rosa,' said he as they walked along side by side among the trees, 'do you remember asking me, a whole year ago, if well-bred people came here to suppress their sentiments?'

'Ah, what a long year,' said Rosa evasively, 'it has seemed to me!'

Sidney persisted: 'Do you remember?'

The whisper came from Rosa's lips: 'Yes.'

'And my answer to your question was,' Sidney continued, 'that I came here to indulge the wildest dreams. Shall I tell you what they were?'

A flash of the dark eyes was Rosa's only answer.

'My dreams were mostly,' said Sidney, 'about my boyhood: my dreams were mostly about a little girl who played with me in a shady wood on summer evenings such as this. I called her—I still call her so in thought—my little sweetheart. Her real name was Rosamond Gage.'

Still no word came from Rosa; but she drew her breath more quickly, and a number of little sighs escaped her. The lashes were quivering too, but they were stubbornly cast down.

'It was a child's romance,' Sidney resumed—'a romance that is seldom finished as children would have it end in after-years. I wonder how this one will end? Rosa, are you still my sweetheart? Will you be my wife?'

There was still no answer; but Sidney felt a little hand sliding softly into his own. He pressed it gently; and so these two old lovers—still very young in years—walked on in silence through the wood as they had done in bygone days.

DISGUISED AUTHORS.

No precise reason can be given for authors writing under fictitious names. It is probable that many who adopt a *nom de plume* have some object for so doing peculiar to their state of mind at the moment of sending their first book into the world. Not many authors are very sanguine as to the success of their first work; they are apt to believe that even though the publisher has accepted it, public critics or friends may not be quite enthusiastic as to its merits. It is, therefore, often thought better by the author to publish the book anonymously under a feigned name, for it is easy and delightful afterwards to confess to being the author of the book when everybody is talking its praises, should it prove a hit. It is by no means unfrequent for an author to use a fictitious name to prevent his or her whereabouts being discovered, when it is desirable to keep the same unknown. Most people, in spite of that oft-quoted adage of Shakespeare's, have a great depth of belief in a name, and always consider themselves sufficiently ingenious to fabricate a more striking and easily remembered name than that given them by their godfathers and godmothers. In some cases this is correct enough; but as often as not totally unnecessary.

It is worth noting how very usual it is for writers to hide themselves under some pen-name when attempting for the first time a style or subject out of their ordinary line, such as Scott did when he quitted poetry and took to his prose romances. If a poet writes prose, he frequently disguises the authorship; and it is a very common occurrence for a prose writer who bursts out in a volume of verse, to sign some feigned name. But in spite of all that may be conjectured on the subject of the reasons why fictitious names are used, there are cases where no suggestion can be made as to motive. Why are some excellent writings merely signed by a single letter of the alphabet? How is it that there are books, essays, poems, all sorts of writings, of very great merit, without any name or initial, the author being as unknown and dead to the public as are those who sleep in quiet but beautiful corners of our churchyards, with nothing but an evergreen mound to mark that some one rests beneath. Happily, the names of the authors of many unsigned great books have crept out. *Friends in Council* and *Vestiges of Creation* originally appeared without an author's name, but the writers of both are now well known.

Fictitious names in fiction are by no means confined to the pages of the stories, for authors of this kind of literature seem very fond of giving a made-up name in place of their own. Most people know that 'Edna Lyall' stands for Miss Ada Ellen Bayley; 'John Strange Winter' for Mrs H. E. V. Stannard; 'Artemus Ward' for Charles Browne; 'George Eliot' for Marian Evans; and 'Cuthbert Bede' for the Rev. Ed. Bradley. Does every one know that 'Rita' is the *nom de plume* of Mrs Otton Von Booth; 'Ouida' of Madame Louise de la Ramé; 'Max Adeler' of Chas. H. Clark; 'Josh Billings' of H. W. Shaw; 'Sam Slick' of the Hon. T. C. Haliburton; 'Marie Gaston' of Alphonse Daudet; 'Holme Lee' of Miss Harriet Parr; and 'Sarah Tytler' of Miss Henrietta Keddie? Everybody knows that 'A. L. O. E.' stands for 'A Lady of England'; but some may not be aware that this lady is a Miss Charlotte M. Tucker.

Here are a few more of the names which occur most frequently in one's reading: 'Hans Breitmann' stands for Charles Godfrey Leland; 'Country Parson' and 'A. K. H. B.' Rev. Dr Boyd, St Andrews; 'Christopher Crayon,' J. Ewing Ritchie; 'Bab,' W. S. Gilbert; 'Edward Garrett,' Isabella Fyvie Mayo; 'Girl of the Period,' Mrs Lynn Linton; 'Marian Harland,' Mrs Terhune; 'H. H.' the late Helen Hunt Jackson, whose romance *Ramona* has done for the American Indians what Mrs Stowe has done for the slaves; 'Professor Hoffmann,' Angelo J. Lewis; 'Ascott R. Hope,' Robert Hope Moncrieff; 'Henry Irving,' J. H. Brodribb; 'Johnny Ludlow,' the late Mrs Henry Wood; 'Helen Mathers,' Mrs Reeve; 'L. T. Meade,' Mrs Toulmin Smith; 'Owen Meredith,' Lord E. R. Bulwer-Lytton; 'Joaquin Miller,' C. H. Miller; 'New Writer,' Lewis Morris; 'Cornelius O'Dowd,' Charles Lever; 'O. K.,' Olga Kireet, now Madame Novikoff; 'Pen Oliver,' Sir Henry Thomson; 'Oliver Optic,' W. T. Adams; 'Max O'Rell,' Paul Blouet; 'H. A. Page,' Alexander H. Japp; 'Pansy,' Mrs S. M. Alden; 'Phiz,' Hablot K. Browne; 'Rob Roy,' John

Macgregor; 'S. G. O.,' the late Rev. Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne; 'Hesba Stretton,' Sarah Smith; 'Annie Thomas,' Mrs Cudlip; 'Toby, M.P.,' Henry Lucy; 'Mark Twain,' Samuel L. Clemens; 'Uncle Remus,' Joel Chandler Harris; 'Verax,' Henry Dunckley; 'Elizabeth Wetherell,' Susan Warner.

When that excellent story *Vice Versa* appeared, it was suspected in literary corners that the name F. Anstey was a fictitious one. A similar conjecture was made respecting the names Hugh Conway and H. Rider Haggard. However, the latter is quite correct, whilst F. Anstey is part of the name of F. Anstey Guthrie; but 'Hugh Conway' proved to be a name assumed by the late F. J. Fergus.

Most of our poets, both great and small, have at some time appeared under the disguise of a *nom de plume*; but the list of those who make a regular practice of doing this is a short one; Lady Wilde, a Society poetess, is known to be the authoress of poems signed 'Speranza.' 'Mary Berwick' stands for Adelaide Anne Procter, and 'Barry Cornwall' for Bryan Waller Procter. One would hardly have credited Longfellow with having signed himself 'Joshua Coffin.'

There are many cases on record of women adopting a man's name, for the sake, no doubt, of giving their works extra weight. George Eliot, Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell (the Brontë sisters), and Georges Sand are fitting illustrations.

To works of a practical and instructive nature authors usually sign their real names, but there are exceptions. 'Cavendish' (on Whist) is the *nom de plume* of Henry Jones; *The Battle of Dorking* is by Colonel Chesney; and *Religion and her Name*, by Archbishop Whately, and not by a 'John Search.' 'J. Arbuthnot Wilson' stands for Mr Grant Allen; and 'Stonehenge' (on Dogs) for the late J. Walsh. Thomas Carlyle wrote of himself in *Sartor Resartus* as 'Herr Teufelsdröckh'; and Charles H. Ross sketched himself in the character of 'Ally Sloper.' Mrs Valentine delights our babies as 'Aunt Louisa'; William Combe related the tours of 'Dr Syntax'; and Joachim Heinrich Kampe has interested everybody with the remarkable adventures of the *Swiss Family Robinson*.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A DOCTOR of medicine dating from Texas writes to an American journal concerning remedies for snake-bite. He says that he has tried as antidotes a number of different agents, including whisky, bicarbonate of soda, ammonia, &c., with negative results; but that he has found two antidotes, which if used in time seem invariably to prove effective. These remedies are permanganate of potash and chloroform. The former of these, we may remind our readers, is familiar enough in solution under the name of Cond's Fluid. For snake-bite it is administered in one or two grain doses by the hypodermic syringe; and the chloroform is used both locally and by inhalation. We trust that the efficacy of these remedies has not been exaggerated, for when we remember the

frightful mortality in India alone from snake-bite—the reported cases numbering some thousands annually, and the unreported cases probably numbering as many more—we must acknowledge that the subject is one of supreme importance.

So many apparently well-authenticated cases concerning the water-finding wonders of the divining rod have been recorded, that many persons are induced to believe that there must be something of a miraculous nature connected with it, or at least that those who use it are possessed of a special and mysterious power. One of these water-finders has just been subjected to experiment by a shrewd observer in the person of Professor Ray-Lankester, who has told the story in a letter which has lately been published. This magician of the divining rod—a mere youth—had been exhibiting his powers at a certain place in the north of England where the Professor and a medical friend happened to be staying. The water-finder went through his performance in the usual way—that is to say he held a hazel twig in his hands, and at certain points, as he walked over the land, this twig by some means was urged downward, and when this occurred, he declared that there was running-water beneath his feet. The places so indicated were at once marked by this doubting Professor and his friend. The water-finder was then blindfolded, turned round three or four times, so that he might be confused as to his locality, and he was then marched over the same ground again; but in no case did the hazel rod make any movement when the marked places were reached. In the second excursion he did find several new spots where he declared water to be, perhaps in the hope of hitting once more upon the original marked places. Confidence in his powers was further shaken by noting that when he was taken along a courtyard under which there ran a conduit through which water was known to be flowing at the time, the hazel rod gave no sign whatever. We may therefore feel convinced that whatever may be the pretensions of other holders of the divining rod, in this case at least it was proved to be an imposture.

The *Electrical Review* points out that although the modern man-of-war is not the thing of beauty which was presented by its prototype, it has one advantage at least not possessed by 'the wooden walls of old England.' This advantage is found in the very few occasions which are recorded upon which the ironclad ships have been struck by lightning. It cannot be said that the modern vessels are actually exempt from injury by lightning, but they are so far protected by their construction, and the materials used in that construction, that, when struck, the results are trivial, and have often in fact been ascribed to the mischievous action of some one on board the vessel. In the old days it was very different; during a period of fifty years, two hundred ships of our navy were struck by lightning, and in one case five vessels were struck during a single night, the number of fatalities resulting therefrom being considerable.

The late Exhibition of the Photographic Society

of Great Britain in London was successful in every way; a larger number of visitors passed through the galleries than have before been recorded, and the works exhibited were in excellence decidedly above the average. The various new processes and modifications of existing processes which have come forward during recent years—some only within the last twelve months—were well represented here; and a noticeable feature was the large number of pictures shown not printed by the aid of silver salts. The more permanent platinum has to a great extent usurped the place of silver, and the results achieved are not only permanent but far more artistic. We may also notice in this connection the series of one-man exhibitions which have been held during the past year at the Camera Club in London. The last of these, which has just closed, consisted of the works of one of the best known photographers, Mr H. P. Robinson of Tunbridge Wells.

A simple plan of dealing with sewer gas was proposed by Mr John Penn of Greenwich some years back, and he has lately, in a letter to the *Times*, called renewed attention to the subject. His method consists in causing ordinary street lamps to be made air-tight, except an opening below leading into the sewer or drain, and a chimney above to carry off the products of combustion. Experiments with a lamp so arranged showed by the discoloration of test papers below the burner that sewer gas was actually passing through the lamp, and by freedom from discoloration of similar paper placed in the chimney that the gas had been burnt, and had been rendered innocuous. Mr Penn believes that if standard lamps were arranged along the course of drains and sewers in our towns, the pressure would be so greatly reduced in these subterranean water-ways that sewer gas would no longer be forced into our houses. The system has the merit of being cheap, and is certainly worthy of careful trial.

The liquidator of the unfortunate Panama Canal Company has endeavoured to raise the hopes of the bondholders by a statement relating to their future prospects. He tells them that he has appointed an inquiry Commission of unimpeachable honesty, consisting of French, English, Dutch, and Belgian experts, five of whom will proceed to Panama in December—the dry season—in order to make a thorough examination of the works and to report upon the same. He then hopes to find a company to take over the plant and complete the Canal, and if sufficient capital is not forthcoming in France itself, it will be sought elsewhere.

Mr George Wicks, of Ayton, has invented a new form of domestic window-sash, which is so fixed in its frame, that while capable of the usual vertical sliding movement, it can be turned round bodily, so that the outer glass can be readily cleaned. This can be done while the cleaner stands in safety within the apartment to which the sash is fitted. This 'Safety Window' seems to meet a real want, and as it does not involve any considerable additional cost, it is likely to meet with extensive adoption.

It would seem almost a necessity of our civilisation that every innovation, whatever its merits may be, cannot come to the front without much bitter discussion between its promoters, and what we may call, in parliamentary language, 'the

opposition.' To take two subjects only which have been for some time agitating the public mind, we find the usual differences of opinion. We allude to the questions of Hydrophobia, and the treatment of that disease and others by the system which has grown out of the chemical researches of M. Pasteur. Those who can only afford time to take a passing glance at the numerous letters which have appeared on these two subjects in the public press are naturally disposed to ask which party can be right, while at the same time they feel a regret that there is no brief authoritative statement upon which they can rely for guidance. To persons situated thus we cannot do better than recommend a perusal of Sir Henry Roscoe's recent presidential address to the Birmingham and Midland Institute. We trust that in the public interest this address—a most admirable and instructive discourse on the Germ theory of disease—will be distributed in such form that it may be read by the million.

Mr J. L. Hamilton points in the *Lancet* to a fact that is not generally known—namely, that the custom of packing fish in ice for any length of time has the effect of spoiling it as an article of food. The reason of this is that the peculiar character of the skin of fish and the thickness of its flesh prevent the cold from ordinary ice being sufficient to freeze the internal parts, so that decomposition is not arrested except on the outer surface, or perhaps a little below it. The writer points out that, in the United Kingdom, fish is seldom caught on Saturday afternoons, and the nets also remain idle all Sunday, so that Friday's fish does not reach the metropolis until Monday morning. He says that 'much of the best prime trawl-caught fish sold at Billingsgate is from three to ten days old.' Every one knows that London fish is very different from fish freshly caught, and what Mr Hamilton has pointed out may enable us to understand the reason for it. Unfortunately, it is difficult to point out an efficient remedy.

The *Scientific American* publishes a new method of filling up the pores of wood with waterproofing material so that boxes made of it will hold liquids. The method is chiefly applicable for the construction of the outer cells of electric batteries, but of course can be turned to many other useful purposes. The wood or complete box is first of all thoroughly dried. It is next placed in a closed vessel, which is then exhausted of air by means of an air-pump. The protecting liquid is now introduced in sufficient quantity to cover the wood; and lastly, air is admitted, the pressure of the atmosphere driving the liquid into every pore, and so completing the process.

The immense business carried on by the Post-office department of this country is shown in a curious way by an alteration that has lately been made in the kind of string used for fastening up letter-bags, parcels, &c., while at the same time we learn the wisdom of economy in small things. The string hitherto used in the post-offices was made of hemp, and cost about tenpence a pound. It is now replaced by jute, which costs about one-third of that sum. The alteration represents the saving of ten thousand pounds a year.

A particularly ingenious and useful piece of apparatus has been patented by Mr L. L. Wands, of New York. This is a pair of scales which is

fitted with two cone-shaped indicators, which can be set to show the value of any fraction of a given unit of weight, so that a purchaser in a shop can see before him not only the weight of the article which he is purchasing, but also its value in hard cash at the stipulated price. This machine should be of great service to the poor and ignorant, who pay far more dearly for their necessities than those who are well to do. It is well known that in the purchase of their ounces of tea, sugar, &c., they are often shamefully robbed in quality, quantity, and price. The small shopkeeper who would be enterprising enough to introduce this check-scale system would soon add to his connection.

A new kind of type-writer has lately been exhibited in London under the name of Wier's Cryptograph. As implied by the title, this apparatus has been designed for the purpose of secret writing, the key to which is known only to the writer and his correspondent for whose perusal the letter is intended. By using this machine the ordinary keys for the fingers can be made to answer to the letters or figures inscribed upon them, and thus produce a letter in normal language, or by a certain adjustment can be made to print a jumble of letters without apparent meaning. But there is meaning in them all the same, for when the recipient of the letter sets a corresponding machine to the same adjustment as that used by the original writer and proceeds to type-write it once more, order comes out of confusion, and the receiver gets the information intended for him. The number of ingenious cipher alphabets which have been devised is legion, but this is the first time that secret writing has been made possible by a machine in such common use as the type-writer.

The United States consul at Cognac has issued an interesting and instructive Report upon the brandy production in the large district of which Cognac is the commercial centre. The brandy produced is divided into two principal classes—namely, 'Champagne' brandy—from grapes grown on the plains—and 'Bois' brandy, the product of districts abounding in trees. This latter variety is subdivided into qualities having different names, according to the kind of soil upon which the grapes are grown. The entire crop of grapes is converted into wine, which is subsequently distilled into brandy, eight and a half gallons of wine being required to furnish one gallon of the spirit. The ravages of the phylloxera have been so formidable that the amount of brandy produced in the district of late years has become reduced to little more than a ninth of what it was before the year 1878, when the dreaded pest first made its appearance here. But sad to say, the shipments of brandy have decreased only one half, a fact which points too significantly at wholesale adulteration. The least objectionable method of sophistication is the addition of rectified spirit before the wine passes through the distillation process; but a more common way is to add coarse spirit from beets or potatoes to the freshly distilled brandy. It would seem on the whole that unless the phylloxera be stamped out, pure brandy will be a thing of the past.

During a recent meeting in Paris of the International Congress on Climatology, several interest-

ing papers were read and discussed. The Professor of the University of Mexico spoke in glowing terms of the highlands of that little-known country, and of their mineral waters and climate, which in the future would make them, with increased facilities for travelling, as popular as the health-resorts of Europe. Mr Adolph Smith gave it as his opinion that a far larger number of British patients and tourists would avail themselves of the glorious sunshine to be found in the south of France, were it not for the defective sanitation in many of the continental so-called health-resorts. He alluded to bad drainage of the houses, contaminated wells, and absence of efficient methods of disinfection of rooms occupied by fever patients. He quoted the English watering-places as being far better in all these respects, and called attention to the circumstance that in spite of the inferior English climate, the mortality only averaged fifteen per thousand; whereas in the southern French health-resorts it rose to twenty and even thirty in the thousand. Several delegates protested against these statements, and declared that all good precautions were taken in their respective towns. It would seem, therefore, that the places which most required attention were not represented at the Congress.

A new form of ship's lamp has been introduced by Messrs Ridsdale & Co., of 54 Minories, London, by which a far more penetrating light can be obtained than from the regulation lamps now in use. The lamps are intended to replace the ordinary red and green (port and starboard) lights used on all vessels, and their principal feature is the substitution of a hollow lens filled with coloured glycerine for the solid glass 'bull's-eye' formerly employed. Photometric tests show that the increase of light is very great, and we are glad to learn that the new lamp is to have searching tests by the Trinity House authorities.

A German paper describes a soft alloy which adheres with such tenacity to glass, china, metal, and other smooth surfaces that it can be used as a solder. It consists of finely divided copper, obtained by agitating a solution of copper with granulated zinc, when the latter metal is precipitated in the form of fine powder. This is mixed in an iron mortar with sulphuric acid of definite strength, and to the paste thus made is added mercury. The mixture is washed to remove the acid, put aside to cool, and subsequently it becomes very hard. To use it, it is softened by heat and well kneaded, when it becomes as pliable as wax.

Many of our readers are familiar with the sand-box used on locomotives to increase the friction on slippery rails and in ascending heavy inclines. By the latest advices from America we learn that it is now proposed to use electricity to effect this. A small engine and dynamo are mounted upon the locomotive, and furnish an electric current, which is passed forward to the rear driving-wheels through the portion of the track-rails lying between them, the passage of the current, which is that known as a low tension current, causing an increased friction between the rails and the wheels. The invention, which is due to Mr E. E. Ries, of Baltimore, has been tried on a gradient of one hundred and eighty-five feet to the mile on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. With a train of forty-five cars the ascent was made in twenty-

eight minutes, whereas another trip without the current occupied fifty-five minutes, thus giving a gain of nearly fifty per cent. in the time required for the ascent.

THE CHANNEL BRIDGE.

No novelty attaches to the proposal to form a permanent means of communication between England and France. Amongst the various projects mooted, that of a tunnel has been constantly proposed for the last century. It was not, however, till 1881 that this scheme took shape and was prominently placed before the public, and a commencement made by the South-Eastern Railway Company, with Sir Edward Watkin at its head. An experimental heading seven feet in diameter was driven for some two thousand yards from the English side by means of the Beaumont boring-machine actuated by compressed air. Progress was maintained at the rate of fifteen yards per day; but legislative powers being refused by parliament, the work was brought to a standstill.

The project known as the Channel Ferry Scheme, brought forward by Sir John Fowler, K.C.M.G., was designed to transport the trains themselves across the Channel in large vessels specially constructed for such purpose. By such means all trans-shipment of goods, or change on the part of passengers, was entirely avoided. The scheme necessitated large and commodious harbours on both sides of the Channel; and though influentially supported, never obtained the necessary legislative sanction, and consequently fell into abeyance.

Turning now to the project of bridging the Channel, we may point out that no novelty attaches to this mode of uniting the two countries which it separates. From the commencement of the present century the idea has been vaguely mooted from time to time, by more or less irresponsible persons, the scheme perhaps most popularly known being that brought forward by M. Thomé de Gamond, who proposed to form thirteen artificial islands in the Channel by throwing in stone until the surface was reached, and then bridging from island to island.

The proposal now placed before the public differs very materially from its predecessors. Rapid strides have of late been made in bridge construction; mild steel eminently adapted for structural purposes has sprung into existence in ever-increasing demand; the methods of founding piers and dealing with caissons and compressed air have received new developments, whilst the successful completion of the Forth Bridge marks an era in the science of engineering. Small wonder, therefore, that the difficult problem of bridging the British Channel, formerly the sport of adventurers, should at length receive serious consideration at the hands of the foremost masters of their craft, who, with a completeness and detail never before attempted, now lay their project before the world. With such names as Messrs Schneider & Co., of Creusot, and H. Hersent; Sir John Fowler, K.C.M.G., and Mr B. Baker—the latter two the engineers of the famed Forth Bridge—the scheme now submitted cannot fail to command popular attention and carry considerable weight.

The route selected for the proposed structure combines directness with shallow water, being from near Cape Grisnez to Folkestone; passing over the banks of Colbart and Varne—a distance altogether of about twenty-four and a half miles; the greatest depth being about one hundred and eighty feet, or about double that founded in at the Firth Bridge.

The bed of the English Channel along this route consists principally of white and blue chalk, strata by no means unsuitable for the foundations of bridge piers. The main spans are 1640 feet and 984 feet; the lesser ones being 830 feet and 328 feet; a clear headway of 180 feet at high-water being allowed for the passage of vessels.

The founding of the piers of this gigantic undertaking, numbering one hundred and twenty, with a maximum depth of water of some thirty fathoms, presents many features of difficulty. The *modus operandi* has, however, been well considered by the designers, who are confident that the problem presents no insurmountable obstacles. Repeated experiments have abundantly demonstrated that the bed of the Channel over the route selected is sufficiently firm to carry heavier concentrated loads than those imposed on it by the piers of the superincumbent girders. Sand and mud lying on the surface of the bed of the Channel will of course be removed, and the foundations laid on the solid substratum. The piers will be floated out and sunk in position, the whole details of such arrangements having been elaborated with considerable care. Compressed air will be employed to temporarily raise the piers, should it be necessary to rectify their position after sinking; whilst, viewing the frequently stormy character of the British Channel, it is proposed to utilise the well-known properties of oil in smoothing troubled waters, when operations threaten to be impeded by bad weather.

The piers, it may be pointed out, will occupy a space slightly exceeding one-twelfth of the section of the Channel; consequently, deleterious scouring action to the bottom with accompanying injury to the foundations will be minimised; whilst the augmented speed of the tide through the bridge, due to diminished water-way, will be scarcely appreciable; though sufficient, it is pointed out, to carry under the spans and clear of the piers any disabled or drifting vessel which might be borne in the neighbourhood of the bridge. The bridge will be lighted at night, each pier forming a lighthouse. The total height of the structure, measured over all from the bottom of the foundation to the highest points on the towers is six hundred feet.

It is estimated that the work can be completed in twelve years, the first two of which would be devoted to preliminary arrangements and preparations, which of necessity would be on a vast scale, in magnitude corresponding with that of the proposed undertaking.

Operations would commence simultaneously on the French and English sides, a part being proposed in the Bay of Ambleteuse on the one side, and at Folkestone on the other. Every facility that telegraphic and telephonic communication could afford would be provided in the carrying out of an undertaking that may be fairly classed as stupendous.

It is difficult to grasp the magnitude of the figures involved. The fifty thousand tons of steel

employed in the Bridge across the Firth of Forth sink into insignificance beside the one million tons estimated for that to span the Channel, a sum equal to something like four times the total yearly output of the whole of the Scottish steel works.

Large figures are likewise involved in the estimate of cost, the piers being placed at over fifteen million pounds; whilst the metallic superstructure is estimated to exceed nineteen millions; or a total cost for the entire undertaking exceeding thirty-four millions.

The line, it may here be added, will be double throughout, no carriage-way being provided; the usual refuges for railway servants will be placed at the customary distance along the bridge.

With the military or political phase of the question we do not propose to deal; suffice it to point out that with a view to silence any opposition on this score, and destroy at any moment the means of communication formed by the bridge, the designers provide a swing-span at each end of the structure, under the control of each country.

CHARTREUSE.—In a recent article on this subject it was inadvertently stated that the labels bore the letters 'D. O. M.' These letters form part of the Benedictine labels, not the Chartreuse.—Ed.

DEAD LOVE.

Can the winds of Winter bring
From the frowning Northern skies
The sweet love-songs of the Spring?
All my heart within me dies
When you bid me sing.

Can the whirling mist of spray
Driving from the angry sea
Bring the blossom to the may?
Leafless, blossomless, the tree
Standeth bare to-day.

Can the heart of Winter hold
Roses of the Summer's prime,
Glory of red Autumn gold?
All the ways are white with rime,
And my heart is cold.

Can I sing of Love to-night
By the grave where Love is lying?
Give me back dead Summer's light
And the south wind's tender sighing—
Then perhaps I might.

D. J. ROBERTSON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.
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SOWING AND REAPING.

WE sow as we choose our seed, and we reap as we sow. We cannot change the substance of our husbandry, and as the seedtime so the harvest. Good grain and careful tillage ensure us wealth, abundance, and stability in the years to come; but our tares yield us no stretches of wheat ripening into gold by the sun, our thistles give us no figs. From our lavish plantation of poisonous thorns we gather no grapes for the wine which makes glad the heart of man; of our wild-oats flung broadcast we grind no meal for our children's bread. We reap as we sow; and no power on earth can touch the appointed issue. If we reap as we sow, we garner as we reap. It all depends on ourselves whether we fill our barns with enduring riches or pile them up with perishing and corrupting matter—whether we choose for our possession truth or falsehood. Some of us prefer the falsehoods of life. They are prettier and more seductive than the truths; but the pity of it is these falsehoods are like the leaves which Rübezah! made to look like solid gold—like the pleasant bowers and platters of dainty food by which the Algonquin rabbit beguiled the weasel. Those heaps of golden coin were but glittering cheats to the weak-kneed peasant who had sold his honest manhood for their gain; those bowers of rest and pleasantness were but mounds of dust set round with briars and burs to the beguiled weasel; and both man and beast woke to hurt and shame and sorrow when the morning broke and the trick of the false metal and the disguised disgrace was discovered.

So with our own lives. We choose such and such a path—such and such a manner of being, and as time passes and the seed ripens into the fruit, we find by unalterable experience what is to be our enduring possession. The riot and dissipation of youth, for example, has a harvesting for old age not of the most sufficing character. Time lost, and with time, health and money and more or less of repute, leave gaps in the soul's palace through which the keen winds whistle and

rave. The 'broken record' has always its power to hurt; and 'Oh, I believe he is all right now; but he has been a *mauvais sujet* of the most pronounced type,' is not a very reassuring character where good qualities are wanted. And for the personal experience, what flavour remains in the mouth after a youth passed in idleness and debauchery? Experience? Perhaps so; but experience all on one side only—on the side of thoughtlessness, of want of duty and want of a high ideal. The wild-oats sown and no more left in the sack, then rest and peace and steady walking? Scarcely. Satiety is not true peace. The headache after a drinking bout is not true sobriety. The soul of the profligate who has got tired of his pleasant sins may be sad and sore and sorrowful for all that has been; but cessation is not necessarily purification, and sorrow is not always winnowing. The husks remain. The tares are of the nature of tartarean *immortelles*. Both have been garnered into the spacious barn of life, and both together fill the floor which a wiser husbandry would have heaped up with grain. It is the law of consequences and results, and is as unalterable as that of gravitation.

From pride and a haughty temper, assuming to itself the kingship of men, comes isolation but not supremacy. This is the garnering got from that self-sown plant of personal glorification. He to whom sympathy with others is an unworthy condescension, who demands homage rather than love, and whose pride brooks neither contradiction nor remonstrance, is one who must be content to live without true affection and to die without real regret; but he is not necessarily compensated by the reality of the superiority he has so strenuously believed in. Perhaps at the end of all he learns his mistake. Those piles of golden coin become again the withered leaves they were before they were transmuted by the thaumaturgic power of self-delusion, and he acknowledges the rubbish he has garnered for treasure. His pride and haughtiness have alienated from him all those early friends on whose love he might have counted to walk with him like fair-haired angels

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to the last. He looks back over the procession of the slain and the disdained. The women who loved him and the friends who served him pass like ghosts before his memory. To neither, from whom he demanded all, did he give back aught. With his wife he got wealth and devotion; but the stake for which he played once won, he threw off even the merest semblance of regard, the merest gauze of courtesy, and let her learn her lesson of submission and absolute self-abnegation. Her honour was to minister; her reward was his acceptance of her services. Of gratitude, of sense of obligation, of dutiful return, of manly protection in return for her devotedness, he gave not so much as a hair's-breadth. He walked through the garden her love had planted for his pleasure, and he trod under foot all the sweet fragrant flowers with which she had thought to adorn his ways. His pride revolted at the thought that he owed her thanks for her dear work. Not too independent to accept, he was too haughty to acknowledge; and when he had gone through her garden and killed her flowers and her love together, and had gained the barren waste beyond, then he woke when too late to the consciousness of what he had lost, and knew what a sorry harvesting he had made. Deluded by his own pride, like the Algonquin weasel by the rabbit, he woke to the perception of his true place. The temple of his glory, self-created, was but a mound of dust and straw set round about with burs and briars. The fair garden he had disdained lay in a mass of broken beauty and destroyed delight behind him. The woman who had loved and dowered him, and who had asked only leave to love him to the end, walked on her own way now with averted face and restricted heart. He had sown the forty-acre field of his holding with scarlet poppies and gorgeous sunflowers, but when the winter came, where were they? Massed into ruin; and the place which they had held and which should have been filled with ruddy fruit and golden corn—empty.

What we sow in perversion of the truth we reap in contempt when the bubble is burst and the fraud discovered. We take some one *en grippe*, make ourselves his enemy, proclaim that enmity to the world, then invent a reason which never had substantial existence, and excuse ourselves by a lie, which repeated often enough, at last sticks and leaves its mark—at the least for a time. With some that mark will always remain. With others of a more candid kind, want of corroborative proof, and honest denial boldly made, have their force on the other side; and the lie falls off clean and entire, and leaves neither smirch nor scratch behind. But a falsehood told by one in authority and with natural influence to a child, receptive and uncritical, is sure to be retained as an article of faith for all the life after; and the cruelty practised by A, the dishonesty by B, the unnatural coldness to, say, a dying brother by C, and so on, remain as fixed in the man's belief as the needle turns to the north and the pointers show the Pole-star. Less than this, however, offers a chance for rehabilitation; still, the lies told in the world, as it is called, though not so permanent, have their own dank aftermath, their own unfruitful harvesting. And how general they are! One of the wisest of all the little saws and sayings by which we do well to

regulate our actions is that of believing only half we hear. The half is a liberal allowance—the grain of salt a scanty one. Divide that half once again; make the grain an ounce, and even then we accept sticks and straws for bricks and boulders—withered leaves for solid gold. Nothing spreads so rapidly as the burning of brushwood. The crackling of thorns under a pot makes more noise than the steady fire of coal. In like manner a lie, artistically devised and scientifically set agoing, travels far and wide in an incredibly short space of time—the farther and the wider in proportion to its intrinsic levity and unsubstantiality. The wife who ran away from her husband according to the maker of the fiction, simply went suddenly to her mother, who had been taken as suddenly ill. That Deuce-Ace travelled in the same train was a coincidence, no more. It served, however, as the sack into which that ingrained gossip dipped his fingers to sow the fast-spreading weed of falsehood. He reaped the harvest of shame when the thing became known for what it was, and the truth beat the lie out of the field.

Cognate with this kind of husbandry is that of generalised ill-nature—of insinuations which are essentially slanderous, of ridicule which is false presentation, of sneers which are ingratitude, of comments which are treachery. This, too, is the kind of thing that obtains in the world, and whereof the proficient are accounted good company and amusing dinner guests. Reputations which hitherto had been unsullied, now smeared and soiled by the sooty fingers of this husbandman of ill-nature, lie on his track, as defaced statues and broken columns mark the track of a hostile force. Innocent actions turned the other way round, and the light distorted so that the angles shall show and the hills and hollows be reversed; personal characteristics dealt with in the same way, and a fund of evil shown to exist where is nothing but a harmless idiosyncrasy; a character pulled to pieces, and not a merit left belonging to it; friends laughed at when they are not traduced, and the whole living drama tossed up like so much foam from bitter waters; confidences half revealed, and the rest left to the exaggeration of the imagination—this is a little corner of that cruel field which the congenitally ill-natured plough, sow, and harrow. And the harvest? Well, the harvest is one of universal suspicion, of unconcealed distrust, of quiet shrinking from dangerous association. The timid fear him; the loyal condemn him; the frank dislike his doubleness of face; the kindly feel his satire as it were the sting of a scorpion—the fang of a serpent. Even those who laugh with him when he laughs at others, fight shy of him for their own intimacy, and his 'cleverness' simply fills his barns with arid dust where is neither food nor beauty. He reaps as he sows. He sows ill-nature and he reaps repulsion. He sows sarcasm and insinuated slander, and he reaps fear and condemnation. He sows ingratitude, duplicity, treachery, and he reaps the honest scorn of those who do not wear two faces under one hood, and whose lives are single as their words are true. The Indian expression of the 'split tongue' is the rightful description of those behind-back slanderers, ridiculers, satirists. Yes; we reap as we sow. If we sow faith and truth,

loyalty and uprightness, sincerity and sympathy, we shall reap of the like, and our barns will overflow with the love and esteem of our fellows, bound to us by the golden chain of trust and esteem. If we sow the reverse we shall reap accordingly, and old age will find us dishonoured and disesteemed, the noted enemy of many and the cherished friend of none.

A DEAD RECKONING.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER XVI.

NEVER had the little town of Cumberhays been stirred to its depths as it was on a certain April morning, when it awoke to find that it had rendered itself famous after a fashion which would cause its existence to become known wherever an English newspaper penetrated. Its name would be in everybody's mouth for weeks to come. It felt that it could never again sink into utter obscurity.

For the prisoners—about whose alleged attempt to rob the train all sorts of wild rumours were afloat—had after their capture been put into the train and brought on to Cumberhays, and were for the present lodged in the town jail. The magistrates would assemble at ten o'clock, when the preliminary inquiry would take place. But even a deeper interest, if that were possible, centred itself in the arrest of the alleged murderer of the Baron von Rosenberg, who was said to have actually been working as a signalman on the line for the past three or four months. It was dreadful to think that the lives of several hundreds of respectable people should have been at the mercy of such a miscreant!

The town-hall was besieged by an excited crowd long before the opening of the doors, and had the justice-room been three times larger than it was, it might easily have been filled three times over. Among the foremost ranks of the surging crowd, and maintaining his position with passive tenacity, was a man on whom many curious eyes were bent. He was a foreigner—so much was evident at a glance—and that of itself was enough to excite the curiosity of the good folk of Cumberhays, many of whom had never been a score miles from home. He was very lean and very fallow, with drawn-in cheeks and sharply defined cheek-bones. He had deep-set eyes, black and burning, with something in them of the expression of a half-famished wild animal. He wore small gold circlets in his ears, and was dressed in a coat of frayed velveteen, with a soft felt hat; and a coloured silk handkerchief knotted loosely round his throat. He spoke to no one, and no one spoke to him; but now and then his lips worked strangely, as though he were holding a silent colloquy with some invisible companion. He was the one man in the crowd who was the least incommoded by the crowd. Those nearest to him shrank a little from him, involuntarily as it were. He was a being of a different world from theirs, and they knew not what to make of him.

Jules Picot—for he it was—had arrived in Cumberhays at a late hour the preceding night, having walked there from another town about

a dozen miles away. By what strange chance his wandering footsteps had brought him by many devious paths to this place of all others, and at this particular time, will be told a little later on. He had hired a bed for the night at the *Wheatsheaf Inn*, a cheap and unpretentious hostelry. He was up and had ordered his breakfast by eight o'clock next morning, and it was while waiting for that meal to be brought him that his attention was attracted by some conversation in the taproom which he could not help overhearing. The pallor of his face grew deeper as he listened; but whatever other emotion the change might arise from, it certainly had not its origin in fear.

'Soh! It is for this that I have been brought here,' he muttered, half to himself and half aloud, in French. 'Now I understand.'

Going into the taproom, he put a few questions to the men to whose talk he had been listening. Having ascertained what he wanted to know, he left the house without waiting for his breakfast, and bent his steps in the direction of the town-hall. At a quarter to ten o'clock, when the doors were thrown open, Jules Picot was one of the first to push his way forward, or to be pushed forward by those behind him, into the small penned-up space allotted in the justice-room of Cumberhays to the general public. In three minutes the place was crammed to its utmost limits.

A few minutes after ten, the magistrates entered one by one and took their seats, their clerk having preceded them by a few seconds. They were three in number, all venerable gentlemen. One was partially blind; one partially deaf; while the third, who had a very red face and took the lead in everything, was quick-tempered and aggressive in his manner. There were two cases of drunkenness and one of theft to be disposed of before the great sensation of the day would begin.

Everybody seemed relieved when they were over; and presently a flutter of intense excitement ran through the court as three men, in charge of as many constables, filed in and were placed in the dock. Then, after a brief pause, a fourth man was ushered in whose left arm was supported by a sling, and a murmur ran round that this was the alleged murderer of the German Baron. A moment later another door opened, and there glided in a female in black, closely veiled, who sat down on a chair in the background which one of the officials handed her with a bow. The prisoner with his arm in a sling was also allowed to be seated a little way from the dock in which the other men had been placed.

When the mountebank beheld Gerald Brooke, whom he still knew only by the name of 'Mr Stewart,' marched in as a prisoner, and when he saw, and his quick eyes recognised, the veiled figure in black who entered immediately afterwards, he was seized with a vertigo, which caused the room, the magistrates, and the prisoners to surge up and down before his eyes as though they were being tempest-tossed at sea. 'Mon Dieu! est-il possible?' he exclaimed half aloud. Then he buried his face in his hands for a time, while a cloud seemed to lift itself slowly from his brain, and much became clear to him that had been dark before.

The charge against the first three prisoners was one of assault and attempted robbery; but against

one of them there was a supplementary charge of attempted murder. That against the fourth prisoner was the much more serious charge of murder. But from what the magistrates could understand of the case at present, this fourth prisoner was so mixed up with the charge against the other three—he being the man who had been assaulted and bound and afterwards shot by one of them—that the poor gentlemen, who had never before had to investigate a case of such gravity, or one which presented so many peculiar features, were fairly at their wits' ends to know how to deal with it from a strictly legal point of view. Thus it fell out that the whole of the prisoners found themselves in court at the same time. It was now, however, suggested by the clerk that the prisoner on the capital charge should be put back while the examination of the others was being proceeded with. This suggestion was at once acted upon.

After the remaining prisoners had answered to the names entered on the charge-sheet, the first witness was called, but not till the red-faced magistrate had intimated that he and his colleagues only intended to take sufficient evidence that day to justify a remand. The first witness proved to be Mr Sturgess, a London jeweller. His evidence went to show that, accompanied by a trustworthy assistant, he had left home the previous day on his way to Lord Leamington's seat, a few miles beyond Cumberhays, having in his charge a box containing jewelry to the value of several thousands of pounds. All had gone well till he reached Greenholme, at which place he had to wait an hour and change to the branch line; but on his arrival there, he had found a telegram awaiting him from his partner in London, in which he was told on no account to pursue his journey without first obtaining an escort of four or five constables. No reason was furnished by the telegram for taking such extraordinary precautions, and he could only surmise that an attempt was about to be made to rob him of the box, and that by some means his partner at the last moment had obtained wind of the affair. Fortunately, through the courtesy of the police authorities at Greenholme he experienced no difficulty in obtaining the required escort, and under its protection he resumed his journey by the next train.

The next witness to answer to his name was the driver of the train, who deposed to everything having gone right till he was just inside the distance signal of Cinder Pit Junction, which showed 'line clear,' when he and his mate were startled by the explosion of a fog-signal. He at once whistled and put on all the brake-power at his command, and could not have gone more than forty or fifty yards farther before a second signal exploded; and then he could just make out the figure of a woman standing on the embankment and beating the air with both her arms as a sign for him to stop, which, as the brakes were on already, he was not long in doing. After that, the police took charge of the affair, and he did just as they told him.

The next witness called was Margery Shook. She had been sitting out of sight behind a large screen which sheltered their worships from any possible draughts at the lower end of the room. As she entered the witness-box she shot a glance

of venomous hatred towards Crofton, which would have killed him then and there if looks had power to slay. The nature of the evidence she had to give we know already. More than once her peculiar phraseology caused a titter to run through the court, which was, however, promptly suppressed.

Clara Brooke was the next person called upon. As she raised her veil her eyes met those of Crofton for a moment, while a faint colour suffused her cheeks, only to die out as quickly as it had come. A low murmur of commiseration passed like a sigh through the court; and the eyes of many there filled with tears when they beheld her pale beautiful face, for it had been whispered about that this was the wife of the man who was accused of murder. The evidence she had to offer was given clearly and unhesitatingly; with the purport of it we are sufficiently acquainted already. When she had told all she had to tell, she let her veil drop and went back to the seat she had occupied before.

The next and last witness whose evidence it was proposed to take at present was the Greenholme sergeant of police. He told how he had been instructed by his superintendent to take four men and accompany the gentleman from London as far as Cumberhays. Then he narrated how the train had come to a stand in consequence of the explosions of the fog-signals; and how, when he and his men alighted from it, they had found the witness Margery Shook, who gave them to understand that the train was about to be attacked a little way farther on. How the girl had scarcely finished telling them this when up ran the signalman, who had been released by his wife; and how, under his guidance, he, witness, and his men had succeeded in surprising the would-be thieves and in capturing three of their number; and finally, how the signalman had been severely wounded by Crofton, one of the prisoners, firing his revolver point-blank at him.

'You have omitted one little episode,' said Crofton in cold measured tones as the sergeant was about to step down from the witness-box; 'you have forgotten to tell these worthy gentlemen that it was I who recognised the so-called signalman as Gerald Brooke, the man charged with the wilful murder of the Baron von Rosenberg, and that I denounced him as such then and there.'

'That is so, your worships,' said the sergeant.

'We quite understand that already,' remarked the red-faced magistrate; 'but it is a point on which we need not enter at present, more especially seeing that the prisoner in question has already admitted that his name is Gerald Brooke, and that he is in point of fact the man for whose apprehension a reward of three hundred pounds is still unclaimed.' With that the magistrates laid their heads together and consulted for a little while among themselves.

By Picot, sitting quietly among the general public and watching everything with restless burning eyes, all these proceedings were only imperfectly understood. Why Gerald Brooke had been brought in a prisoner and almost immediately taken out again without any charge being brought against him, was a mystery to the mounte-

bank. Neither could he understand how 'la belle madame' and 'Margot,' as he termed them, came to be mixed up in such a strange fashion with the prisoners at the bar, in one of whom he had at once recognised the man he had gagged and bound to his chair in the house in Pymm's Buildings. He lacked the key to the situation, and wanting that, he could only look on and listen, and feel himself becoming more bewildered after each witness that appeared on the scene. Not that he troubled himself greatly about these things; something of much deeper import lay at the back of all his wandering thoughts about this matter or the other. He had been led to that place, his footsteps had been mysteriously guided thither—he could see it all now—for a certain purpose, and that purpose, as he sat there, was never for one moment out of his mind.

The magistrates having brought their brief consultation to an end, intimated that the prisoners at the bar would be remanded till the following Monday. They were at once removed; and after a brief pause, Gerald Brooke took his stand in their place. Having answered to his name in the usual way, the red-faced magistrate leaned forward a little to address him. 'Gerald Brooke,' he began, 'you stand charged on the verdict of a coroner's jury with the wilful murder of Otto von Rosenberg, commonly called the Baron von Rosenberg, at Beaulieu, in the county of —, on Thursday, the 28th day of June last. The crime having been committed outside the jurisdiction of this court, all we have now to do is'—

Suddenly a man with gold circlets in his ears and holding a soft felt hat in his hands stood up in the body of the court, and addressing himself directly to the magistrate, said in a voice which all there could hear: 'Pardonnez moi, s'il vous plaît, monsieur, but I—Jules Picot—and not the prisoner at the bar, am the man who killed Otto von Rosenberg.'

THE SECRETS OF A CATALOGUE.

IN the middle of the British Museum Library the great Catalogue is ranged on circular shelves for the surrounding readers to consult. There are thousands of volumes of it, each bound in blue or red leather, shod with brass, and containing in their creamy pages the names of authors in alphabetical order and the titles of their works. This formidable series of plain ledgers does not look very entertaining, and most of the readers who prowl through the jungle of its contents are seriously hunting down their prey. But to the lover of books it is at least as interesting as the catalogue of a museum to the genuine antiquary; and even the unlearned in rambling through its pages may find some curious secrets hidden in its recesses. For the sphere of thought has its relics and nicknacks as well as the material world, its vestiges of old myths and creeds, its fossil theories and dry bones of philosophy, its mummied worthies and stuffed characters, its ancient utensils of wisdom and ornaments of diction, its tomahawks of satire and war-clubs of debate, its freaks and marvels of the mind.

In some cases the same subject or name will extend through several volumes: 'Bible,' for instance, through twenty-one with a special

index volume of its own. 'England,' again, has sixteen volumes devoted to it; while 'Scotland' has five, and 'Ireland' three. Certain surnames also run through several volumes and have their own sub-index. The members of the great Smith family, for example, monopolise no fewer than nine volumes, and have attained the dignity of a special index. The Smiths, in fact, by number and importance, are apparently the most illustrious of all the British clans. The Smiths have been everywhere and done everything. There are Smiths who have distinguished themselves in the senate and on the battlefield, in the study and the laboratory, in the pulpit and at the bar. The Smiths have been poets and orators, philosophers and statesmen, novelists and men of science, travellers and warriors. The Browns, the Joneses, and the Robinsons are far behind the Smiths. While the Joneses have two volumes, and the Robinsons have one, the Browns have only the major part of a volume; and we are driven to the conclusion that either the Browns are less numerous than their colleagues, or that their undoubted talents do not flow in literary channels. No name, however, is absolutely undistinguished; and the possessor of even the unpretending patronymic Blank will happily find in this voracious chronicle a roll of famous Blanks enough to swell his heart with gratitude and pride. Sometimes a single great writer, like a tribe or nation, appropriates a section of the Catalogue to himself, and forms as it were a cult, under the head of which a whole library of books are entered. Such are the great poets, Homer and Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, and Goethe.

There is, practically speaking, only one Shakespeare, for though there have been a few other authors of the name, notably a writer on India, these are of no great consequence. William, the giant of his race, extends through over five volumes of the Catalogue, far more than any other author, not excepting Homer. These include the numerous editions of his works, from the precious first folios of the early part of the seventeenth century down to the penny Shakespeares of to-day; the innumerable selections and 'beauties' extracted from them, and published under fancy titles—'Garlands' and 'Gems,' and 'Calendars' and 'Birthday Books.' Along with these are the various translations in almost every European language, hundreds of essays and criticisms, lives, parodies, operas, and travesties. While the British editions (chiefly London) are sprinkled over the intervening period since his death, most of the foreign translations date from the present century, though some appeared in the last, notably a French edition of the plays, published at Paris in 1746; a Bohemian edition of several plays and poems at Prague in 1778; an Italian one of 'Othello' at Venice in 1797; and probably some German editions. For of all translations the German appear to be the most numerous, and they come from most of the large towns of the empire. Next in point of number, and running the German pretty close, are those of France, chiefly from Paris. After these follow the Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Scandinavian, and various other translations.

If we may judge by the evidence of the Catalogue, and perhaps we may in a general sense, 'Hamlet' and 'Macbeth' are the two most popular

plays of Shakespeare, or 'Szekspira' as the Poles call him. Hamlet is the most polyglot of princes, and soliloquises in his native tongue, not only in Copenhagen and Elsinore, but at Rejkjavik, in Iceland, where Jochumsson's translation was published in 1878. He discourses in most excellent German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, Swedish, Polish, Hungarian, Greek (Constantinople, 1874), Romaic (Athens, 1858), and even Bulgarian (Bucharest, 1882). There are a number of editions in the leading tongues, and two in Portuguese, one by His Majesty King Louis of Portugal, and privately printed at Lisbon in 1877; that in the Library being a presentation copy. Of English editions, the most important is the original quarto of 1603, containing the 'Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke,' by William Shakespeare, as it hath been divers times acted by His Highnesse Servants in the Cittie of London, and also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. For N. G. and John Trundell.' This copy lacks the title-page, and has no pagination. The only other known to exist belongs to the Duke of Devonshire, and wants the last leaf. There are, of course, fac-similes of this volume, as of other rare editions of the plays, in the Library. Then there are operas, travesties, and burlesques of 'Hamlet,' though it might seem at first sight a kind of sacrilege to parody this splendid tragedy. There is a German travesty published in 1800, a comic opera by Cumberland dating 1829, and a 'danky drama' by Griffin, entitled 'Hamlet the Dainty, an Ethiopian Burlesque,' produced in 1860, all in advance of the present so-called frivolous days. In addition to these are many pamphlets and treatises on the play, some dealing with its historical source in Saxo Grammaticus, and contemporary allusions in Montaigne; others with the meaning, the 'mission,' the 'character,' the 'madness,' and the 'mystery' of Hamlet. With its supernatural element and real or affected madness, 'Hamlet,' like 'Macbeth,' is an admirable study for the critics, and like the parasites of parasites, they occasionally attack each other. Then there are works on the obsolete words in 'Hamlet,' and such curios as 'The Bubble Ghost and his Son,' a 'Throw for a Throne,' maintaining that Shakespeare's words show Claudius to have been innocent of murder.

'Macbeth,' too, has its numerous foreign translations, its operas and travesties, its studies of the original source in Holinshed's Chronicles, and its ingenious commentators. There was a Russian edition as early as 1837, one published at 'Derventer' in 1845, another at Posen in 1857, and one at 'Jassi' in 1864. Madrid had an edition in 1818, and Stockholm in 1838. 'Romeo and Juliet,' is popular, but not nearly so much so as might have been expected. 'Othello,' 'King Lear,' the 'Merchant of Venice,' the 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' the 'Tempest,' are all fairly well represented in translation; so is 'Julius Cæsar,' but none so well as 'Hamlet' and 'Macbeth,' or even as 'Romeo and Juliet.' There was a translation of the 'Merry Wives' at Wilno in 1842, a Bulgarian one of 'Cæsar' in 1879, and a Greek one of 'Lear' in 1870. The English historical plays, as might be supposed, are not well represented by translations, if we except 'King Richard III.' A translation of 'King

Henry VI.' appeared at 'Bánfálván' in 1862. There are very few of 'Measure for Measure,' and still fewer of 'Love's Labour Lost.' Of 'Pericles' there is, of course, a German translation (1838), for the Germans appear to excel all other nations in translating, especially in the case of Shakespeare. Under the head of 'Pericles,' too, there is an Anglo-Saxon version of the story of Apollonius of Tyre, on which the play is founded.

The doubtful plays of Shakespeare also claim a considerable space in the Catalogue, and have been translated, at least by the Germans, and republished by the Americans. Such are 'The Two Noble Kinsmen,' 'The London Prodigal,' 'Thomas Lord Cromwell,' 'Sir John Oldcastle,' 'The Puritan,' 'Loocrine,' 'The Yorkshire Tragedy,' 'The Fifth of November,' and so on. Of the Sonnets, there are a variety of translations and a large number of 'Selections.'

The miscellaneous literature of Shakespeare is very voluminous. With regard to the sources of his plays there are, in addition to some mentioned above, treatises on the Lives of Plutarch and the passages of Aristotle and others which illustrate his writings, together with Rich's tract 'News from Virginia' (1610), describing adventures supposed to be referred to in the 'Tempest;' an early jest-book possibly used by Shakespeare; a collection of the plays and romances from which he may have drawn, entitled 'Shakespeare's Library;' and a rare book known as 'Beware the Cat,' published in 1570. Then there is quite a list of books and articles on his art and work, his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. We have his 'mental photographs,' his 'garden of girls,' his 'England,' his 'Altenengland,' his 'morality,' his 'religion,' his self-knowledge, his genius, his humour, his folklore, and so on. We have 'Shakespeare's Heroines,' the very 'Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines;' we have the 'Learning of Shakespeare,' the 'Law in Shakespeare,' 'Shakespeare and the Bible,' 'Shakespeare and Shorthand,' essays on the varieties of mania exhibited in some of his characters, the 'Animal Lore of Shakespeare's Time,' the 'ornithology' of Shakespeare, the 'Natural History of the Insects mentioned in his Plays' (a gruesome subject), 'Under the Stars,' or his work in the light of astronomy, the 'Flowers of Shakespeare.' Many have puzzled over the question of his calling as demonstrated by his writings, and hence we have such books as 'Was Shakespeare ever a Soldier?' 'Was Shakespeare a Lawyer?' 'Shakespeare as a Physician,' 'Shakespeare as an Angler,' as though a man following one craft, especially literature or acting, could not learn something of another. Then we have such works as 'Shakespeare and his Times,' the 'Rural Life of Shakespeare,' 'Shakespeare in Germany, in America, in Griechenland,' and 'West Indian Illustrations.' Of course, there are 'Tales' and 'Stories' from Shakespeare, and equally, of course, the irrepressible apologist with his 'Shakespeare not an Impostor.'

Comparisons are another ordeal which the great writer has to bear, and hence we have Shakespeare and Dante, Marlowe, Bacon, Molière, Goethe, Voltaire, Scott, Chateaubriand, and so on. We have his errors pointed out, his obscure passages expounded, his obsolete words, the pronunciation of English in his day, and one gentleman has investigated the position of the English adjective

in his language. Some person discovers that he wrote ballads on the Spanish Armada; another exposes the forgeries at Bridgewater House; a third pens an imaginary conversation between him and the Earl of Southampton; a fourth treats of his 'curse'; a fifth supposes his ghost to address the British army in the '45 to the tune of 'Britons, Strike Home'; and a sixth ingeniously fabricates a series of double acrostics from his plays.

The doubters are also in their place, some asking 'Who wrote Shakespeare?' or 'Was Shakespeare Snapleigh?' and others, more bold, discoursing on the 'Shakespearean Myth,' or the 'Great Cryptogram.'

His birth, life, and death is another fruitful source of literature. We have books on his pedigree, his coat-of-arms, his birthplace, school, and home, the 'rogues and vagabonds' of his youth. 'Shaxpere or Shakespeare? Was A ap Roberts that butcher's son of Stratford-upon-Avon who is recorded by Aubrey as having been an acquaintance of Shakespeare in the early days of the great poet? And was Shakespeare an apprentice to G ap Roberts?' We have fac-similes of his indentures, his coat-of-arms, his will, the traditional history of his crab-tree, the 'actors of his time,' and descriptions of his house; his last days, his grave, his death-mask, busts and portraits, his monuments and centennial celebrations, with odes and lines commemorative of his genius. Lastly, we have an account of how his skull was stolen and found, and of an interview between his ghost and David Garrick.

We may liken Shakespeare to one of those prodigious trees, the giants of the tropical forest, rearing its lofty crown high over its fellows, and spreading wide its enormous branches, encumbered with an airy wilderness of creepers, parasites, and winged tenants, some of which tend to support and beautify their foster-parent, and others only harbouring in its shade to blight and strangle, or to ravage and destroy.

Homer has two volumes of the Catalogue to himself, and has apparently been translated into a greater diversity of languages than Shakespeare. There is, for instance, an edition of the 'Iliad' in Gaelic, of 1813, and Books 1 to 8 in the Irish Ogamic character, dating from 1844. A Romaic edition dates as early as 1640; and there is one published at Liptzk in 1504. Of the 'Odyssey' there is a French edition dated 'Lutetia, 1566,' and another 'Parisus, 1582.' An Erse translation was brought out in 1866; but the 'Iliad' appears to be the more widely appreciated of the two. The comments upon Homer run in much the same grooves as those upon Shakespeare and, indeed, the other great poets. Thus we have the 'Influence of his Poems on the Greek Nation,' 'Tales from Homer,' the origin and growth of the poems, the 'True Nature and Design of the "Iliad,"' 'Ulysses as delineated by Homer,' 'Homeric Flora and Mineralogy,' 'The Sense of Colour in Homer,' the Topography of Troy, the Age of Homer, the original genius of Homer, his post-epic or imitative words, an 'Apology for Homer,' Homer and Virgil, Homer and Dante, Homer and Goethe, 'Homeric Doubts,' the 'Pretended Tomb of Homer,' and so forth.

Dante has a fraction of one volume to his share, but the entries being all in close type, it does not

compare well with the written and printed lists of Shakespeare and Homer. There are many translations of the 'Divina Commedia,' including one in the Catalan tongue, printed at Barcelona, one in modern Greek, and another in Hebrew; but apparently not so many as in the case of 'Hamlet' and the 'Iliad.'

Molière has about half a volume, written and printed. His plays have been translated into most of the European languages; but there are comparatively few comments upon them in the Catalogue. Some of the English adaptations have rather curious titles; for example, 'The Irish Doctor, or the Dumb Lady Cured,' from 'Le Médecin malgré lui.' Charles Reade, we know, translated the 'Malade Imaginaire' into 'The Robust Invalid.'

Corneille has a good many pages and a variety of translations. Goethe has about half a volume, printed, including translations and a miscellaneous literature which reminds us of Shakespeare. 'Faust' is the leading work, and has been translated into most European tongues, including Servian, Greek, Ruthenian, Hungarian, and Hebrew, with selections in Romaic. Tales, operas, legends, and parodies in English, French, and Italian have sprung from 'Faust,' and a flourishing literature of comment.

Schiller, a voluminous writer, has two volumes, but not yet printed, as in the case of Goethe. There are not so many translations of any of his plays as there are of 'Faust'; but the 'Song of the Bell' appears to be popular; and 'Don Carlos' has appeared in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Hungarian.

Milton, like Schiller, has two volumes of the Catalogue, chiefly written. The 'Paradise Lost' has appeared in the principal European languages; and there is a Welsh translation of 1865, and a Manx one, dated Douglas, 1796. Milton does not seem to invite many commentators; but the comparison between him and the Dutch Vondel is worthy of note. Chaucer has twelve printed columns of the Catalogue, and Spenser some forty written pages. Byron has twenty-seven closely printed columns and more; their well-thumbed condition attesting the poet's popularity. Indeed, the dirtiness of the pages is the best indication of an author's fame; and in looking at the edges of the Catalogue one can generally tell whether a volume contains a popular writer. Selections from Byron have appeared in most of the European tongues, including Polish, Bohemian, Dutch, Icelandic, and Roumanian.

Burns, in spite of his rustic dialect, has thirteen closely printed columns, well thumbed, like Byron's; with several German and French translations, and a Swedish, published at Helsingfors.

Shelley has some forty written pages, well thumbed, but few or no translators. Tom Moore, on the contrary, is well translated, especially 'Lalla Rookh,' one published at Jönköping. Wordsworth, though occupying five well-thumbed pages, is apparently innocent of foreign translation, if we may judge from the Catalogue. Tennyson has fifty written pages, and some of his poems, notably the 'Idylls,' have appeared in the leading European languages, including Hungarian, Spanish, Dutch, and Danish. Longfellow has nearly as much space, and a greater variety of translations. 'Evangeline' is a favourite work,

which, besides its many European editions, has been published in Portuguese at Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, in German at Milwaukee, and French at Quebec; while 'Hiawatha' has found its way into Russian and Dutch, amongst other tongues. Victor Hugo, however, is more polyglot still, and occupies fifty pages of the Catalogue. Scott, as poet and novelist, has two volumes to himself, and has appeared in most of the European languages.

Dickens has twenty printed columns, well thumbled, and a great variety of translators, including Hungarian, Dutch, Ruthenian, and others. Thackeray has thirty-two written pages and some scattered German, French, Italian, and Danish translations; but 'Vanity Fair' in Spanish has appeared in Mexico ('Las Fieria de las Vanidades'), and there is a Schiedam edition of the 'Virginians'. Bulwer-Lytton has fourteen printed columns and many European translations of novels or plays, including certain in Greek and Hungarian; in France he appears to be particularly popular, perhaps because of his official connection with the country. George Eliot has three printed columns, and a translation or two in German, French, and Italian. 'Silas Marner,' too, appears as 'A Raveloei Takacs' at Buda-Pesth. Charles Kingsley has only some twenty-four written pages, and but one translation, namely, the 'Heroes,' in Greek.

CHARLIE RANSOM.

A STORY OF THE OIL COUNTRY.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

UPON the broad Western Continent, it is not the mountain fastnesses of Nevada or the rocky canoñs of Colorado, nor yet the sweeping plains of Nebraska and Dakota, which alone furnish rough-and-ready phases of human nature. Far removed from the Pacific coast, and within the bounds of a State whose easterly limits form a portion of the Atlantic shore-line, there is yet to be found a peculiarly wild and out-of-the-way district known as the Pennsylvania Oil Regions, or, locally, by its more familiar name of 'The Oil Country.'

True it is that there are few spots along the Alleghanies from which a man with a fairly serviceable pair of legs might not, upon a day of average length, start out at sunrise and, before sundown, reach some point of civilisation marked by a railroad station or a post-office or at least a public highway. And yet in those same Alleghanies, Mr Bruin is still met far too frequently to be considered a rarity or to secure for him a welcome from the oilmen; while rattlesnakes, wild-cats, and other necessary evils of thinly populated territories abound in rich profusion.

In the Oil Country the perpetual and imminent danger from fire and explosions of a most fearful and far-reaching character deters all those not dependent upon the oil-wells for subsistence from settling within its limits; while those who find it necessary to reside there and delve from day to day, erect houses and other dwellings of a cheap and temporary character. This latter

course is pursued for two reasons. The first, because of the inability to effect insurance against fire, backed by the unpleasant knowledge that at any moment a huge conflagration may sweep away all their belongings. The second is the ever-present possibility of the failure of the wells, which frequently run dry with appalling suddenness. Consequently, Pan Handle City enjoyed no reputation, either at home or abroad, for elegant residences or massive business blocks. And the oil which rushed upwards from the score of scattered wells that formed the Pan Handle 'field' caught its first glimpse of the face of Mother Earth from no unfavourable point of view.

The Tomhicken Valley was formed by two bold spurs of the Alleghanies, the ridges of which were for a long distance about ten miles apart. Down this Valley, in a south-westerly direction, flowed a tributary of the Alleghany River—the Tomhicken Creek, navigable, except during the dry season and in winter, for very small vessels. During the autumn months, after the full rains had replenished the stream, the Tomhicken became very much alive with light craft of every conceivable kind—barges, boats, punts, rafts, and one or two pigmy steam-tugs—conveying the summer output to the great refineries at Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and New York, for the winter market. There was no railroad yet in the Tomhicken Valley, and the oil-producers of Pan Handle City were compelled to take every possible advantage of the fickle little river, along four miles of whose banks their wells were scattered.

For six or seven years the Pan Handle 'field' had 'held out,' and, while there is nothing reliable about an oil-well, there was every apparent prospect that the flow would continue for half-a-dozen more years—or longer. There were no 'gushers' at 'the City,' so no one became, with astonishing rapidity, immensely rich. On the other hand, so long as there was a living to be made from the slow but sure yield of the dirty, greasy fluid, none of the original settlers left the Valley, and the population remained steady.

Gradually, a new idea dawned upon the more thoughtful among the toilers for oil at Pan Handle City. Some there were among those men who had brought with them, when oil was first 'struck' in the Tomhicken Valley, not only young wives, but babies and little toddlers. These during the intervening years had grown to girlhood and boyhood, and their ranks had been frequently replenished by new arrivals, so that, while the adult population had remained practically at a stand-still, a considerable number of juveniles now looked to the Pan Handle wells for supplies of bread and butter. Having recognised the fact that the children were increasing in years and in numbers, the same thoughtful citizens read in that fact an important problem, which, to their credit be it said, they at once proceeded to solve.

Hitherto, schoolhouses and churches had been deemed quite as superfluous as gas-lamps or hansom cabs. But on the day following an important after-dinner conversation, held near the

derrick of Well No. 4, between Tommy van Horn, Captain Peter Lamson, and their 'pardners,' Pan Handle City was stirred from centre to circumference by notices nailed to the derricks of all the larger wells. These notices, each of which was a counterpart of the others, were alleged to have emanated from the scholarly pen of 'Cockney Ted,' a diminutive Englishman of doubtful age, who gloried in the fact that he had graduated, at the tender age of twelve, from a worthy institution in London known as the Hoxton Ragged School. To hear some of his friends in the Valley—especially the women, who were staunch admirers of 'Cockney Ted'—one might have been excused for supposing Ted to be a combination of Senior Wrangler, First Prizeman and Gold Medallist, with D.C.L. thrown in.

The important notice read on this wise :

Ralley round the Flagg, boys!—To the Citersuns of Pan Handell City.—A importint meatin to discuss the Skule Quesching will be held in the barril howse of Wel No. 4 on Satterdy nite at Sevin o'clock.—Come Erly! Ivverybuddy Come!

Well No. 4 was one of the largest in the Pan Handle 'field,' and its owners, 'Captain Peter Lamson and Company,' did such a thriving business that they employed coopers to make and repair barrels exclusively for their own trade. For this work they had erected a spacious shed, known in 'the City' as No. 4 Barrel House.

Upon the occasion of the meeting, one delightful midsummer evening, the Barrel House presented an animated appearance. Some thirty or forty men were there gathered together—a number which represented fully seventy-five per cent. of the voters of the settlement, and exactly one hundred per cent. of those who appreciated the advantages of even the most slender knowledge of the 'three Rs.' There were no seats provided beyond the heavy barrels, which were freely utilised by those present, and none of the men removed their hats. But the best order prevailed. Captain Peter was voted to the chair by acclamation, his first official act being the appointment of Cockney Ted to the post of Secretary. Then Tommy van Horn, a shrewd Pennsylvania Dutchman, briefly and concisely explained the object of the meeting; and the very interesting discussion of the subject which followed culminated, near midnight, in a series of resolutions which occupied the little Londoner all the daylight hours of the following Sabbath in committing to a sheet of very oily wrapping-paper. The resolutions were in effect to subscribe money for a school and a teacher and to appoint a managing Committee.

The Committee lost no time in getting to work. The first assessment of two hundred dollars was speedily secured; and three weeks after the meeting, a neat frame-building stood four-square to the winds which sometimes swept across the Tomhicken Valley. When it was completed, Chairman-of-Committee Lamson said to a small knot of his confreres and constituents: 'There ain't no frills nor flounces nor owt o' sech truck about it, but it'll wear all the better fer thet there, and don't you forget it! Blame me if I don't think it's pretty near a dandy: there's a winder and a door on the outside; and inside there's a desk and a cheer fer the schoolmarm,

and benches fer the kids; and, God bless my soul, boys, what could you wish for more?'

There really was nothing more to wish for, except—a teacher, the securing of which rather necessary adjunct to a schoolhouse was indeed an important, and not unpleasant, part of the duties of the Committee, or such of its members as might be detailed to make the selection.

Although there was no official custodian of Uncle Sam's mails at Pan Handle City, there was an individual commonly accorded the title of Postmaster. This was old Steve Smiley, the possessor of a team of sorry-looking mules, which he 'hitched up' every Monday morning to his buckboard wagon, and so wended his way over the North Mountain to the post-office at Mesopotamia Cross Roads, a village of some importance, about eight miles from 'the City.' Steve was a combination of carrier, parcels-deliverer, and postman, and his business was of such a steady and regular character that he had actually caused some cards to be printed at the office of the *Mesopotamia Mirror* which announced a scale of charges, ranging from twenty-five cents for the transportation of a 'trunk, average size,' to five cents for a letter or any number of letters for the same addressee. The same cards afforded additional information to the effect that passengers by the buckboard—and Steve could only by close crowding accommodate two besides himself—would be charged the sum of 'fifty cents for the round trip.'

For their letters the Pan Handle people were entirely dependent all the year round upon Steve Smiley and his mules, because their settlement was, for postal purposes, officially tributary to the office at Mesopotamia Cross Roads. For the transaction of other business, including purchases of sundry supplies, the citizens invariably journeyed down the Tomhicken Creek so long as that unreliable stream would furnish waterway for the *Petroleum Gem*, a pigmy steamboat which plied at irregular intervals between Oil City, on the Alleghany River, and Pan Handle City.

But early in August, when Messrs Robinson and Van Horn were detailed by the Committee of which they were members to visit one or two centres of civilisation in search of a school teacher, the Tomhicken Creek was as dry as some of the old oil-wells, and Smiley's wagon afforded the only means of leaving the Valley. So the two men secured the privilege of jolting their frames for a couple of hours by the side of old Steve, and at five o'clock in the morning started upon the first stage of their journey.

Captain Peter, who had developed into an educational enthusiast, was at Smiley's stable to see his colleagues start. Taking a hand of each of them he gave them a piece of confidential and farewell advice: 'Now see here, boys. We've got a slick bang-up little schoolhouse, what's a credit to our people. What we want is a teacher to match the building. We don't want no old fogey, dried up and a-wearing glasses, and a-ketching of us all up when we make ongrammatical breaks. Nor yet we don't want no chit of a gal as is only jest out of school herself. We don't want no stuck-up piece, nor yet we don't want no dowdy female what ain't got no style about her. We want a young woman what's tolerably good-looking and smart and a lady, but one as won't mind

being one of us and making herself to home. What we want is a happy mejum—that's the word, happy mejum: a schoolmarm as'll be a credit to herself, to the young uns, to the community at large, and above all, to the School Committee.'

With which very fitting farewell ringing in their ears the travellers started out.

At Mesopotamia Cross Roads they embarked upon the regular daily coach for the ten-mile ride to Clipper Gap, whence they were able to take the railroad train to Bradford or any other of the larger towns in North-western Pennsylvania.

Messrs Van Horn and Robinson had been gone from Pan Handle City nearly two weeks, and Captain Peter Lamson, whose enthusiasm had by no means abated, was beginning to grow impatient. Not that he was disposed to criticise his absent colleagues, or willing to believe them at all dilatory, but he was very anxious to see the school started by the first day of September.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Captain Peter, arrayed in a very much soiled suit of rough blue flannel, stood with his hands in his pockets eyeing his 'pardners.' Said 'pardners' were repairing the little engine, and the Captain was 'bossing the job;' in other words, as the 'pardners' were well able to mend the engine without any 'bossing,' the Captain was simply loafing, a method of passing time which by no means suited Peter Lamson.

While the Captain watched his companions and wished for the speedy resumption of pumping operations, a man rode up on horseback. The horseman was a stranger at Pan Handle City, though not entirely strange to Lamson, who had seen him about the hotel at Mesopotamia. He seemed to remember the Captain, too, for he shouted: 'A letter for you, Cap.!'

Lamson took the proffered letter, and, with much deliberation, turned it over several times before opening the envelope. At the end of perhaps ten minutes he had deciphered the following communication: 'FRIEND CAP—We have met with suksess. She is very smart and very plesint. We will all be home this eavening. I send you this word in case you wish to make preperashuns. T. van Horn sends his riggarads, and I am rispekfully youre friend

EDWARD ROBINSON.'

'Guess you fellers can get along 'thout me?' said the Captain to his partners as he prepared to leave Well No. 4. Receiving no reply, he moved away, followed by the messenger, leading the shade of a horse.

'Hitch that there varmint,' said Lamson to the dweller in Mesopotamia, 'and come with me to my place. It's purty nigh dinner-time, and my missis 'll feed us both.'

The man was nothing loth to accept the invitation, and, after fastening the animal to a tree-stump, quickly caught up with Lamson.

'Two of the Pan Handle boys at your house?' asked Captain Peter with some curtness.

'Yes.'

'Lady with 'em?'

'Yes.'

'Young?'

'You bet!'

'Good-looking?'

'Well, I should re-mark!'

'Look like a schoolmarm?'

'Naw!'

'Wear glasses?'

'Not much!'

'Well,' said the Captain, who began to feel both satisfied and curious at one and the same time—'Well, what *is* she, and what *isn't* she? Here, I guess you can spend a dollar when you get back home, can't you?'

'Cap,' said the man, who was a native of the Alleghanies, 'I don't niver hev nowt to do with wimmin nor females of no kind, wheerfor I ain't no jedge. But I kin tell you this yere: she ain't no slouch, thet's what she *ain't*: and she's a hummer, thet's what she *is*!'

Captain Peter Lamson was a man over forty years of age. He was also a married man, blessed with a most worthy wife, whom he very much admired and esteemed. For his wife, however—at least during the years he had spent in the Valley—the Captain had never been known to shave himself on any day but Sunday, and he had not worn his 'store-clothes' since his last trip to Oil City. Yet, when the messenger from Mesopotamia had left, after partaking of a sumptuous dinner of corned beef and cabbage in Mrs Lamson's kitchen, Captain Peter carefully manipulated his favourite razor, donned a white shirt and his best suit, and then walked out to notify the other stay-at-home members of the Committee of the approaching event.

Of course the Captain was Chairman of the School Committee, and naturally deemed it eminently right and proper that he should welcome the 'schoolmarm' with some show of dignity—such, even, as a suit of black and a smooth face could lend him. Yet the question still arises, *would* Captain Peter have sought to create so favourable an impression if the messenger had not reported the new teacher to him as 'a hummer' and 'no slouch?'

It would have required a powerful stretch of the imagination to speak of a street in connection with Pan Handle City, for the shanties and small houses were dotted about with an utter disregard to anything like design. Still there was an excuse for a thoroughfare through the settlement—a sort of wagon-track, which managed to include in its course the principal wells and the steamboat landing, and which finally left 'the City' in a northerly direction to form the Mesopotamia road. It was upon this substitute for a boulevard that Captain Peter promenaded, the while he cast frequent and anxious glances in the direction of the North Mountain.

WEI-CH'I: THE CHINESE GAME OF WAR.

WEI-CH'I is a game which holds an absolutely unique position. It is the only pastime in the world which stamps its devotees as men of mark and learning, the only one which requires such exercise of perseverance and application of its results as to guarantee the possession of high intellectual powers on the part of those who indulge in it. Considerable brain-power is no doubt demanded by whist or chess; but either of these games can be played after a fashion by

people who are anything but clever. Wei-ch'i differs from them and from all other games of skill or chance in the fact that it is so difficult of acquirement as to debar any but persons of a high order of intelligence from gaining more than the most elementary knowledge of it. The toiler cannot hope to be able to devote sufficient time to this difficult game to enable him to excel in it; its acquirement is reserved for the man of leisure, who can apply himself seriously to the solving of its mysteries. And so Wei-ch'i is the game of the higher classes of Chinese society; the masses cannot expect to attain to a knowledge of its intricacies. There is no likelihood of the careless or impatient man becoming a Wei-ch'i player. The game presents complications which could never be mastered by the careless, and requires an expenditure of time that would infallibly prove too much for the impatient. Speaking in a general way, it may be said that only the cream of the vast population of the Celestial Empire are Wei-ch'i players; and even among the highest in the land many are to be found who have never succeeded in mastering this intricate amusement, if, indeed, any such intellectual exercise can be called by so frivolous a name.

To play Wei-ch'i, and if possible play it well, is the very summit of the ambition of hundreds of Chinamen. They struggle over the board day after day and week after week, fighting against the feeling of despair that must creep over every one who attempts to conquer the rules of the game, until at last the crooked paths look straight to them, the mysteries resolve themselves into a shape that can be understood, and they are victorious. It is a proud moment in the life of a Chinaman when he can with truth call himself a Wei-ch'i player. The knowledge of his acquaintance with the famous game makes him feel that he is a personage of some importance, and he looks down in a pitying way upon those of his friends who either cannot or will not place themselves in a position to meet him over the many-squared board.

Wei-ch'i is played on a magnified chessboard containing eighteen squares along each side, or three hundred and twenty-four in all. The men are usually made of marble, and are shaped like those with which we play draughts. As in the latter game, they are coloured black and white; but, unlike draughtsmen, they do not move from one square of the board to another. The players alternately place one of their men upon the board. Once a Wei-ch'i man has been put down, it must remain where it is placed; that is to say, on one of the points formed by the intersection of any two lines of the board. The squares are not taken into consideration at all. The game is played upon the points to which we have just alluded, and which in a board containing three hundred and twenty-four squares number three hundred and sixty-one. The points on the outside lines of the board where other lines end, are brought into play

in just the same manner as those inside. The size of the board is not arbitrary. As we have said, the game is properly played upon one formed by nineteen lines intersecting nineteen others, and thus forming a square which contains three hundred and twenty-four little squares like those of a chessboard. A smaller board than this may, however, be used, and to simplify our illustration of this brief description of Wei-ch'i, we have chosen one containing but ten squares on each side. A smaller board than this could hardly be employed; one of any size between this and the full dimensions may be chosen, always provided that the number of squares on each of its sides is an even one. In a game played on a full-sized board about three hundred men are used. From ninety to ninety-five will therefore be required for a game on our smaller board.

The aim of the Wei-ch'i player is to surround with his men as many of the intersecting points which the board comprises as he can. The following diagram shows a few examples which will illustrate our meaning, and assist the reader to obtain some grasp of this intricate subject:

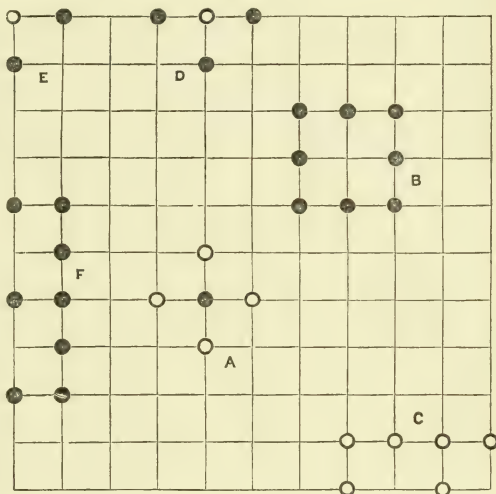


Fig. A illustrates the case of a black man which is surrounded by four white ones. The point occupied by black becomes white's property on his managing to surround it in this manner, and he therefore takes the black man off the board. But though white has thus secured a point, there is no reason why he should remain in undisturbed possession of it. Black may surround his four men with eight others, placing one on each of the immediately neighbouring points. It then only remains for him to put down another man on the central point, and white is in turn hemmed in, with the result that his four men may be taken up, the points occupied by them becoming black's property.

Fig. B shows a better position than that occupied in fig. A. When black has his men disposed in such a manner, there is no great likelihood of white's being able to do much against him in this particular case.

In fig. C, white has managed to secure an impregnable position. He has surrounded two points entirely, and black is unable to surround him in

turn, as to do this both of the spaces now belonging to white must be filled. This can never be done in such an instance as we have under consideration, for a man must not be placed among the enemy's men unless the latter can be taken up then and there. One of the two spaces which white has enclosed in fig. C must always remain open; and so white may look upon himself as the gainer of two points if he manages to secure such a position as we have indicated. Of course this and other examples which we give here are not very likely to ever occur in a real game, at all events in such a simple form; for the sake of illustration it is imagined that the men surrounding any particular point have been allowed to take up the positions marked without any hindrance on the part of their opponents.

Fig. D shows a white man occupying a point along one of the boundary lines. Three black men only are required to enclose him, and if they are placed in the positions shown, the white man may be taken up, with the result that black becomes the owner of the point it occupied.

Two men only are required to capture a corner point, as is demonstrated in fig. E.

In fig. F we have a similarly impregnable position to that shown in fig. C, only in the case of fig. F two more men are required than in that of fig. C, as the points surrounded are in the middle of one of the sides of the board. When a player threatens to take up one of his opponent's men he calls 'I'll eat you,' in the same way as chess-players cry 'Check' when they menace the opposing king.

The Chinese attribute the invention of their game to Yao, one of their most famous emperors, who ruled over them more than four thousand years ago. Whatever may be the truth of this assertion, there is no question that Wei-ch'i has flourished among the Celestials for an immense time. Some of their writers who lived before the Christian era alluded to it in a manner which shows that it was then of great antiquity.

A game goes on until neither player can put down a man without either placing it on a point belonging to his opponent, where it will be at once taken up, or filling with it uselessly a space which belongs to him already. When this stage is reached, it only remains to count the points enclosed by the men of either player; whichever has succeeded in surrounding the greater number is the winner. There is no possibility of a drawn game, for as the board contains an uneven number of points, there must always be one left to fight over.

Probably, there is no game in the world more difficult of explanation than Wei-ch'i. But because it seems hard to grasp the theory of the pastime from this necessarily brief *résumé* of it, the reader must not imagine that it is a game leading to more weariness than amusement. Not one Briton in a hundred, nay, in a thousand, would have the patience to make himself fully master of its intricacies; but it is only necessary to see the rapt attention paid to it by the cleverest men of the Flowery Land in order to realise the fact that it must be a game possessing great merit. If any proof of this assertion is required, we have it in the far greater attention paid to Wei-ch'i than to any other game by the more intellectual Chinese. It is not that they are without other

games, and so take to this one for want of a better. Chess, dominoes, a variety of card-games, and many others, are known to Chinamen, but none can dispute the supremacy of Wei-ch'i.

THE WOOING OF ALPHONSE.

MONSIEUR ALPHONSE THÉVINET was sitting with his arms upon one of the small iron tables under the awning outside the *Café Victor* on the Cours Boileau. A glass of cold coffee stood before him, which he stirred now and again with an abstracted air. The buzz of conversation, the excited exclamations of piquet players, and the rattle of dominoes, rose all round him; waiters in long white aprons flitted to and fro, laden with cups and glasses, serving the numerous customers who made the *Victor* their nightly rendezvous. It was eight o'clock on a warm July evening, and the company at the café was large; but M. Alphonse Thévinet, sitting alone, buried in his thoughts, saw and heard nothing. For M. Alphonse was in love! Yes, in love. He had become deeply *épris* with Mademoiselle Adrienne Mesnildot, daughter of the rich advocate, M. Jules Mesnildot, and the belle of Rouen.

How he had succeeded in falling in love with her is a question too subtle for us to deal with. He had never waltzed with Mademoiselle Adrienne; had never sat out dances with her in twilight bowers; had never even taken her down to dinner or played tennis with her. The last was indeed an impossibility, for lawn-tennis was a closed book to M. Alphonse. He had that afternoon met Madame Mesnildot and her only daughter at the band in the gardens at the Place Solferino, and had, as on previous occasions, sat with them, criticising the music and the passers-by, talking of the weather, the approaching festivities of La Fête Nationale, and the news from Paris. It was the ninth time he had thus met Mademoiselle Adrienne; but never in the whole course of his acquaintance had he enjoyed so much as a two minutes' tête-à-tête with her. Madame her mother was her constant duenna, and little walks and little talks with Mademoiselle by herself were luxuries unknown to him. And yet at the moment we find him lounging over his *café froid* at the *Victor* he is actually engaged in the process called 'making up his mind' to propose in due form for Mademoiselle Adrienne's hand. 'She is beautiful,' said M. Alphonse to himself; 'she is amiable; she is nineteen years old; and Monsieur Mesnildot cannot give her less than eighty thousand francs for *dot*. Less! *Parbleu*, it is impossible that she shall not receive one hundred thousand. My friend Monsieur Jules Bernier shall call upon Madame Mesnildot without delay. It is done!'

Now, it was a somewhat bold thing for M. Alphonse to say thus that 'it was done,' inasmuch as M. Georges Thévinet, his father, had never even told him to look upon himself as affianced to Mademoiselle Adrienne or anybody else. But allowance must be made for M. Alphonse in view of the singularly happy attitude his only living parent adopted towards him. M. Georges Thévinet was a shipowner of large property; and of his three children, M. Alphonse was the eldest and his favourite; to Alphonse he gave an annual allowance of six thousand francs, and

denied him nothing he chose to ask. When, in accordance with the laws of the Republic, M. Georges' wealth was divided amongst his three sons, the share he had allotted to Alphonse, though apparently of value equal to those of his brothers, would in reality yield the largest income.—But we anticipate.

M. Alphonse Thévinet, sitting over his cold coffee at the *Victor* was one of the best-looking young men in all Normandy, and everybody, himself included, knew well that he was the best *parti* in the province. He was twenty-eight years of age, and stood five feet two inches in his socks; his black hair, cut scrupulously to a uniform length of three-eighths of an inch, stood erect upon a well-shaped head; his moustache, though small, was a model of symmetry; and his dress, from the high-crowned straw hat with ribbon 'à la Tour Eiffel,' to his varnished boots, defied criticism. Mademoiselle Adrienne was fortunate indeed; Monsieur and Madame Mesnildot could not but welcome such a suitor for their daughter; and since M. Alphonse had decided to present himself in that capacity, her happiness was secured whether her views concurred with theirs or not. A young French lady has no voice in these matters; she is not consulted, and infinite possibilities of trouble are thus agreeably avoided.

M. Alphonse sat smoking his cigarette and tasting his coffee, now and then exchanging a bow with an acquaintance; but he made no attempt to enter into conversation, until a short stout man of five or six and thirty, with a smooth pleasant face, came through the flower-tubs which partially concealed the café doors from the public eye. Then M. Alphonse sprang up to meet him.

'Aha! it is you, my friend,' he cried. 'Come! sit here with me. I have business of importance to discuss.'

M. Jules Bernier—for he, and no other, was the newcomer thus welcomed by Alphonse—suffered himself to be led to a seat at the table whence the latter had just risen.

'You will take something?' inquired M. Alphonse affectionately.

'A glass of *eau sucrée*,' responded M. Jules Bernier with promptitude.

The refreshment was speedily placed before him; and as he proceeded to break the sugar in his glass with the metal crusher, he reverted to the words with which his friend had greeted him. 'You have business of which to speak,' he said. 'May I inquire its nature?'

M. Alphonse threw aside the end of his cigarette and leaned across the table, that he might not be overheard. 'You know, doubtless, Monsieur and Madame Mesnildot, Jules, my friend?' he began.

M. Bernier sipped his glass with relish and bowed assent. 'Yes,' he said; 'I have known them well from my childhood.'

'You are then an intimate friend?'

'Certainly; I have the honour.'

'Then I have to ask of you a favour, Jules,' said M. Alphonse impressively. 'I wish to ask if you will accept from me an errand of delicate nature to Madame Mesnildot?'

'Aha, Alphonse!' and M. Bernier looked encyclopædian at that gentleman. 'You refer without doubt to Mademoiselle Adrienne? Is it not so?' M. Bernier might have been guilty of winking, as he put this question, had he known how to

do it; but he did not, so he accompanied it by raising his eyebrows until they vanished into his hair, which answered the same purpose.

'You are right, my friend,' responded M. Alphonse. 'I am *épris* with Mademoiselle Adrienne.' He did not blush as he made the tender confession; he had fallen in love on his own responsibility, and his independent spirit scorned a blush.

'And you wish me to acquaint Madame Mesnildot with your feelings?'

'If I may so far task your friendship.'

'You may, Alphonse. Monsieur your father has signified his consent, no doubt?'

'Why, no! He is'—

'He has *not* done so!' exclaimed M. Bernier in tones of horror. 'You cannot possibly ask me to do this, when Monsieur Thévinet has not given his permission?'

'Listen to me, Jules, my friend, I pray. My father has ever been to me the most indulgent of parents, and as he is presently travelling in the country, I feel assured that I may take his permission as given.'

M. Bernier shook his head. 'Do I understand that Monsieur your father is as yet unaware of your intentions? Nay! I cannot say intentions; your wishes?' The revelation of Alphonse had stunned M. Bernier.

'I repeat, Jules, that I am so sure of receiving his consent, that I ask you to approach Madame Mesnildot without delay. Will you perform this kind office for me?'

'As you will,' answered M. Bernier, drawing in his wrists and elbows and expanding his palms, with a shrug of the shoulders—'as you will. For my part, I am happy to serve you.'

'Then, if you will take breakfast with me at twelve o'clock on Saturday, I will give you all particulars to satisfy Madame Mesnildot.'

'So soon, Alphonse?'

'Ah, Jules, do not suggest a later day! Will your convenience permit that you call upon Madame Mesnildot on Saturday?'

M. Bernier had by no means recovered from the shock of hearing that M. Georges Thévinet was unacquainted with his son's intentions; but on reflection, he decided that Alphonse was the best judge of his own affairs, and that no responsibility would fall upon himself by accepting the post of ambassador. He therefore replied that it would give him pleasure to breakfast with his friend at mid-day on Saturday, and that he would call upon Madame Mesnildot afterwards.

M. Alphonse embraced him with fervour, paid for their refreshment, and left the café to walk homewards.

M. Jules Bernier was a man of his word, and punctually at noon on the appointed day he arrived at M. Thévinet's house carefully arrayed in evening dress in readiness to pay his formal call on Madame Mesnildot immediately after breakfast.

Little passed between the friends during the meal, though they were alone together. M. Bernier was busy with his knife and fork, and though Alphonse ate sparingly, his thoughts kept him silent. No qualms of doubt as to the precipitancy of the step he was about to take—by deputy—oppressed him. His faith in his father's affection and generosity was too deeply rooted

to be disturbed by his ungiven consent. But at times he was conscious of a mad yearning to follow the bold unseemly custom he had been told was prevalent among the people of Great Britain, to go in person to Mademoiselle Adrienne's mother, and flinging himself on his knees at her feet, implore her to give him her daughter's hand. But of course such an extraordinary proceeding was quite out of the question. Conventional usage, born of modesty, dictated that the principal should sit quietly at home, while a trusted family friend conveyed the weighty petition to the beloved object's mother. Alphonse had never heard that there are cases on record in which a young Englishman has taken upon him to address the girl of his choice herself without ever consulting the parents on either side at all; and if he had, he would not have believed it, even of Britons. The idea of doing such a thing never crossed his mind.

'You have, I hope, made a good breakfast?' he said to M. Jules as his friend drew the napkin from his collar with a sigh of content.

'Excellent; I thank you,' replied M. Bernier. 'With your permission, I will light a cigarette, and you can inform me regarding your pecuniary position, that I may explain it to Madame Mesnildot.'

Keeping carefully in mind that he had taken his father's consent for granted, Alphonse instructed his friend to say that his allowance when he married would be twelve thousand francs per annum, and that he expected to inherit not less than half a million of francs at his parent's death. He had nothing else to say, except that a life's devotion would be Mademoiselle Adrienne's, and he should be glad to learn whether her *dot* was not to be one hundred and fifty thousand francs, and the furnished house on the Boulevard Cauchoise.

M. Jules Bernier elevated his expressive eyebrows as he heard this. 'One hundred and fifty thousand francs, and that beautiful house—furnished, *parbleu!*—on the Boulevard, is much to expect Alphonse, my friend,' he said.

'Nevertheless, you will say that, if you please,' replied Alphonse. 'It was a matter of business; and Alphonse was no child.'

'As you wish,' answered M. Bernier with a shrug, as he rose from his chair and adjusted his cravat at the mirror. 'It is now half-past one o'clock. I will go to Madame Mesnildot's, and return direct to you here, at perhaps three o'clock.'

'I will await you in the *salon*,' said Alphonse with dignity, and he followed his friend to the door.

We need not dwell upon the suspense of M. Alphonse Thévinet, or upon the eagerness with which he received his ambassador when he reappeared two hours later.

'You were long gone,' he said breathlessly. 'But do not delay; tell me Madame Mesnildot's reply.'

'Her reply,' answered M. Bernier, with the smile of one who loves to bring good news, 'is, Yes. She assured me that Mademoiselle would be overwhelmed with gratitude for her good fortune, and that her *dot* would not be less than one hundred thousand francs.'

'And the furnished house?' queried Alphonse.

'Madame said nothing of the house,' answered M. Bernier. M. Bernier had done this kind of office before, and knew better than to drive bargains at the first interview.

A cloud gathered upon the brow of Alphonse. He had persuaded himself that M. and Madame Mesnildot would have promised all he chose to ask, and he had demanded thus much, that he might make assurance doubly sure when he came to request his father's permission to marry Mademoiselle Adrienne. He was disappointed.

'A hundred thousand is a small *dot* for Monsieur Mesnildot to give his only daughter,' he said.

'I would counsel you to let that side of the matter remain for settlement between Monsieur your father and the parents of Mademoiselle,' replied M. Bernier.—'When does Monsieur Thévinet return to Rouen?'

Alphonse could not tell for certain. He was travelling in the country near Bordeaux, and had no fixed address at present; but he expected him to return at the end of the month.

'Well, I will offer you my congratulations, and take my leave for to-day,' said M. Bernier. 'It has given me great pleasure to have had the honour of conveying your message to Madame Mesnildot.'

Alphonse hastened to express his gratitude for the service his friend had done him; the indebtedness, he said with sincerity, was all on his side. Without Jules, he had been quite at a loss to address Madame Mesnildot; thanks could not repay M. Bernier for what he had that day performed. He kissed Jules upon both cheeks as he bade him adieu, and having seen him depart, threw himself into a chair to dream of Mademoiselle Adrienne.

Two weeks later, M. Georges Thévinet returned home from his travels, and was received with effusion by his son.

'I have news for thee, Alphonse,' said the old gentleman as they entered the *salon* arm-in-arm.

'And I for thee, also,' replied his son. 'But first of all, give me yours.'

M. Georges Thévinet beamed upon Alphonse with paternal pride as he answered in impressive tones: 'I have found for my son a wife. I promised my friend Monsieur Laguerre that you shall espouse his daughter Mademoiselle Clarisse.'

'Mademoiselle Clarisse!' exclaimed Alphonse. 'Sir, she is forty.'

'She is but thirty-eight,' replied his father in correction.

'She has a squint,' said the son.

'She has Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand Francs,' said the father, fixing upon Alphonse a look in which affection and cupidity were happily blended.

'It matters nothing,' cried Alphonse; 'for I love another.'

'Eh! What's that?' inquired old M. Thévinet, who was a little hard of hearing.

'But two weeks since, I received Madame Mesnildot's sanction to marry Mademoiselle Adrienne.'

'Then you must write and apologise for your mistake. I have already told you that you are

affianced to Mademoiselle Clarisse Laguerre,' replied M. Thévinet firmly.

'Never!' cried Alphonse with a gesture of despair.

'But you are. I absolutely refuse to sanction your marriage to any one else. Mademoiselle Mesnildot will not receive one-third—mark me, boy!—not one-third of the *dot* with which Monsieur Laguerre will endow his daughter.'

'I care nothing for the *dot*,' cried Alphonse senior. ('The boy is mad!' muttered M. Thévinet, senior.) 'I will marry no one but Adrienne, A-dri-enne.' And at this point the feelings of Alphonse overcame him and he sobbed.

Coercion, diplomacy, and persuasion were tried by M. Thévinet in turn with barren results; and finally there ensued a quarrel so violent that Alphonse packed up his portmanteau and left the house.

'To think of the boy's contracting a matrimonial engagement without a word to me!' said M. Thévinet to himself as he retired that night. 'What on earth can have got into his head? What is the world coming to?'

'To think of my father giving away my hand like that!' said Alphonse as he strode down the Boulevard. 'I might as well be a Turkish slave at once!'

Fortunately, Alphonse had plenty of money in his pocket, and he had soon installed himself in pleasant lodgings in the Boulevard Jeanne d'Arc. 'It is indeed lucky,' he said to himself as he unpacked his clothes, 'that I am over twenty-five years of age. Were I but a few years younger, the course I must pursue, repugnant as it is to my filial feelings, would be closed to me.'

Alphonse had already decided to take such steps as would render his marriage without his father's consent a legal union, though he shrank from the process, and chafed at the delay it would entail. Had he been under the age of twenty-five, his father's refusal would have bound him hopelessly, according to law. The *procès-verbal* is a legal weapon denied young men below that age. But Alphonse, as we have already remarked, was twenty-eight, and he knew the power the law conferred upon him.

'I wish I had been an Englishman,' he said to M. Jules Bernier one evening a week later at the café.

'Why so?' asked M. Bernier.

'Could I not then marry Adrienne at once without my father's consent?' asked Alphonse.

'Certainly you might,' replied M. Bernier. 'But were you an Englishman, you would have other things to consider, my friend. The lady might decline to marry you; and Monsieur your father might exercise the brutal privilege of an Englishman, and "cut you off with a shilling."—No, no, Alphonse; be thankful that you are a citizen of the Republic.'

But Alphonse did not feel thankful or pretend to be so; he said in meaning tones: 'I yesterday took the first step.'

'You do not mean to say'—The rest of M. Bernier's speech was spoken in an awe-struck whisper.

Alphonse pressed his lips together and answered: 'I did.'

It was true. On the morning of the previous day, a gentleman who pursued an honourable

calling analogous to that of sheriff-officer, had waited upon M. Georges Thévinet with a document of portentous size in his hand, and demanded audience of that gentleman in the name of the Law.

'What have you there?' M. Thévinet inquired of this official as he produced his paper.

'It is the *procès-verbal*, Monsieur. On behalf of your son, Monsieur Alphonse Thévinet, do you consent to his marriage with Mademoiselle Adrienne Mesnildot?'

'No, I don't!' replied M. Thévinet with much asperity.

The legal gentleman requested that he might be furnished with a pen; and having received it, wrote down M. Thévinet's answer with great care upon the document. 'I have the honour to bid you respectfully adieu, Monsieur,' he said as he rolled up the paper and put it under his arm. 'It will be my duty to call upon you once more in a month's time.'

'I fear you will have the trouble of calling also a third time,' said M. Thévinet, forcing himself to be calm. 'Is it not so?'

The polite official shrugged his shoulders in deprecation. 'If Monsieur did not give his valued consent the second time the *procès-verbal* was presented,' he said, 'doubtless it would be the wish of M. Alphonse to have it presented two months hence for the third time.'

'And then?' inquired M. Thévinet, who knew all about it, but was anxious for fuel to feed his wrath.

'Why, then, if Monsieur withheld his permission on being asked a third time, M. Alphonse would be legally able to marry without.' The polite official made a profound bow and hastily withdrew. M. Thévinet's anger had mastered him, and he appeared about to vent it upon his visitor.

Had M. Thévinet been an Englishman with an Englishman's power over his own property, he would most inevitably have sent for his solicitor and altered his will that day. But he could not; a French parent's estate is, irrespective of his wishes, divided by the law amongst his children or heirs at his demise; so M. Thévinet could not enjoy that remote satisfaction. However, he did the next best thing. He wrote to Alphonse, and told him that until he returned to his roof, penitent and prepared to marry Mademoiselle Laguerre, he should give him only the barest pittance upon which to exist. 'If you think,' wrote the indignant father, 'that Monsieur and Madame Mesnildot will accept a penniless suitor for their daughter, the legal steps you have taken to set the necessity for obtaining my consent aside, will have served their end. But I doubt whether in your new position you will receive the welcome which they accorded your representative, M. Bernier. I should advise you to think this over at your leisure.'

When Alphonse received this letter, he recognised the weakness of his case, and proposed a compromise. If his father would not call upon him to marry Mademoiselle Laguerre for three years, he on his part would renounce his intention of marrying Mademoiselle Mesnildot. Would M. Thévinet receive his sorrowing son upon these terms?

The language in which the old gentleman indulged when his son's answer reached him was

dreadful to hear. He would agree to no conditions whatever, and Alphonse might take his choice—Mademoiselle Clarisse, or poverty in solitude until the end of his father's lifetime. He wrote at once directing his son to choose, reminding him that this was the sole favour he had ever asked in return for all he had done for him. It was a powerful and pathetic letter; the heart of Alphonse was touched by it, and he gave way. After a bitter struggle with self, he made up his mind to obey his father; he sent the sheriff-officer his fee, and directed him not to serve the *procès-verbal* again; repacked his portmanteau, and went home in a cab.

How old M. Thévinet called upon Madame Mesnildot and explained that M. Jules Bernier's visit had been paid under a misapprehension; and how Madame Mesnildot said she was sorry, but that it didn't matter, because she had not mentioned the subject to Adrienne yet, it boots not to tell. We have only to conclude the history of the wooing of Alphonse by the bare statement that his father took him down to Bordeaux a month afterwards, stood over him while he agreed to the *promesse de mariage* which Monsieur le Notaire had prepared, and saw him espouse Mademoiselle Clarisse Laguerre at the *bureau* of Monsieur le Maire. Mademoiselle Clarisse promises to be a model wife in all respects, and everybody is contented and happy.

IS OUR CLIMATE CHANGING?

THE question whether the present climate is constant is one much discussed by scientists. While with meteorologists the constancy of our climate is to a certain extent an axiom, geologists, geographers, and hydrographers beg to differ. The controversy was brought before the meeting of German geographers recently held at Berlin, in a paper prepared by Professor Brückner, of Bern. Dr Brückner, on the whole, leans to the side of the geographers, who hold that a change of climate has been observed within historic times; and he substantiates their views by a powerful array of facts. All scientists are agreed as to a change of climate from the Tertiary to the Glacial period, and from the latter to the present day; but, as observed, the difference of opinion begins with historic times.

The dispute between the two parties entered upon a new phase when the meteorological material regarding the changes of temperature within longer periods was begun to be examined. The fluctuations in the glaciers of the Alps seem to point towards a variation of the climate. The changes in the mass of Alpine glaciers are governed by rainy and cold, as well as by dry and warm, periods. A similar variation in those periods is shown by hydrographic observations on the Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Baltic, which agree with periods of high or low water levels. Meteorological observations which have been taken at six hundred meteorological and hydrographic stations by many thousands of observers, present us with a picture of the fluctuations of climate on the whole earth. Those observations have determined the changes of rainfall from Scotland over Central Europe to the eastern shores of the Old World and in America. We learn from the curves taken

that, in the present century, much rain fell during the twenty years 1840–60, that the succeeding decade (1860–70) was dry, and that the next (1870–80) was wet. Although the maxima and minima of those periods were not absolutely equal, the curves show that no maximum fell in a minimum territory, or that the contrary took place. Exempt from this general rule were only a few territories, such as Lower Italy, Sicily, Southern Spain, and the east coast of America, which are influenced by the Atlantic Ocean. The fluctuations became more accentuated the farther they penetrated into the interior of the Continent. Besides the length of time during which rivers are frozen over, the direct curves of temperature of the several years supply further material for the changes of climate; and in this direction it is found that the fluctuations in the curves of the temperature coincide with those of the rainfall. Those fluctuations may be followed as far back as the last century; for Russia, back to 1700; and for the Caspian Sea, even as far back as 1685. Most interesting and confirming results are supplied by the registers kept of the time of the wine-harvests in France and Switzerland, which are more numerous after the year 1500; the records of one nation thus acting as a check upon those of the other. In cool and damp years the grape ripens later, in warm and dry seasons earlier. Those changes coincide with great fluctuations of temperature.

If we now inquire into the final cause of those changes and fluctuations, an explanation is supplied in the case of the rainfall by the conditions of the air-currents and their variations, which are again dependent upon air-pressure. In dry periods the pressure is greater on land, and rises to high pressure; while its diminution in wet years permits the sea to exert a greater influence by its cooling and fructifying action. Independently of the interest with which those problems of nature are followed by scientists, fluctuations of climate are of profound practical importance; for times of famine and plenty, of depression and prosperity in trade and industry, are dependent on and regulated by the rising and falling of rivers and lakes, and the dearth and abundance of rain or sunshine.

R O N D E L.

SHE came to me when Spring was in the land;
I could not separate her from its flowers;
She was inwoven with the budding hours
When Summer's dainty leafery is planned.

We stood a day or two on Friendship's strand,
As rightly met as April sun and showers:
She came to me when Spring was in the land;
I could not separate her from its flowers.

And though we go not hence linked hand in hand,
Nor as a gentle friend my life she dowers,
Lent-lilies will recall those rides of ours;
I'll say, when primroses their buds expand:
'She came to me when Spring was in the land.'

MENIE MURIEL DOWIE.

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WORKING-HOURS ABROAD.

THERE has been of late so much agitation and discussion as to what does, and what does not, constitute a fair day's work, that the Reports of Her Majesty's representatives abroad, with respect to the hours of labour in Europe and the United States, come to hand very opportunely, and afford convenient means of comparison with the hours of labour that prevail among ourselves.

So far as regards laws regulating the number of hours a man shall work, the great majority of our representatives in foreign lands have the same story to tell—that such laws are non-existent. Of the different states forming the Empire of Germany, none have any special enactments on the subject, the Imperial legislature alone being competent to deal with it, and that body has left adult labour entirely unfettered, except in forbidding the employment of women in certain kinds of work, and enacting that employers may not compel their workmen to ply their vocations upon Sundays or feast-days, only where the special nature of an industry precludes the work being postponed or interrupted. In 1886 the Belgian Labour Commission pronounced against any legislative interference with the freedom of working-men. Neither in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Italy, Greece, nor Turkey has the idea of fixing the limits of a working-day by law been entertained; while the Roumanians, Bulgarians, Servians, and Montenegrins, if they agree in nothing else, are of one mind as to leaving masters and men to make such arrangements as they deem best for their interests.

Very little information is vouchsafed as to the actual working-hours in the countries where freedom of contract remains unchallenged; but we are not left quite in the dark. We learn that a Turkish working-day lasts from sunrise to sunset, with certain intervals for refreshment and repose. In Montenegro the day-labourer begins work between five and six in the morning, knocks off at eight for half an hour, works on

till noon, rests until two, and then labours on until sunset. This is in summer. In winter, he commences working at half-past seven or eight, rests from twelve to one, and works uninterruptedly from that time to sunset. The rules respecting skilled labour are theoretically the same, but considerable laxity prevails in practice. In Servia the principle of individual convenience rules in every case. In Portugal from sunrise to sunset is the usual length of the working-day. With field-labourers and workmen in the building trade the summer working-day begins at half-past four or five in the morning and ends at seven in the evening, two to three hours' rest being taken in the middle of the day. In winter the hours are from half-past seven to five, with a shorter interval of repose. In manufactories the rule is twelve hours in summer and ten in winter, with an hour and a half allowed for meals.

Eleven hours is the average day's labour in Belgium; but brewers' men work from ten to seventeen hours; brickmakers, sixteen; the cabinetmakers of Brussels and Ghent are often at work seventeen hours a day; tramway drivers are on duty from fifteen to seventeen hours, with an hour and a half off at noon; railway guards sometimes know what it is to work nineteen and a half hours at a stretch; and in the mining districts women are often kept at truck-loading and similar heavy labour for thirteen or fourteen hours.

The normal work-day throughout Saxony is thirteen hours, with two hours' allowance for meal-taking. In Baden the medium duration of labour is from ten to twelve hours; but in some cases it far exceeds this, often rising to fifteen hours in stoneware and china works and cotton mills; in sawmills to seventeen hours; while the workers in the sugar-refineries, where the shift-system is in vogue, work for twenty-four hours, and then have twenty-four hours free; and in too many of the Baden factories Sunday-work is the rule. In Russian industrial establishments, the difference in the working-hours is something extraordinary, varying from six to twenty. 'It

is remarkable that these great divergences occur in the same branches of industry within the same inspector's district, and among establishments whose produce realises the same market price.'

The only European states in which the law controls, or pretends to control, the disposal of a grown man or woman's time are Austria, Switzerland, and France. In the first-named, the factory hand must not work more than eleven hours a day, exclusive of an hour and a half for refreshment and recuperation; and in mines the actual working shift is limited to ten hours; but these rules are liable to modification with the joint consent of the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Commerce; while in special cases the Industrial Officer of the district is empowered to permit a temporary increase in the working-hours for a period of three weeks or less. A permanent extension of time has for some reason been given by ministerial ordinance to spinning-mills and silk factories, by which the hours of labour have been lengthened to twelve and thirteen hours respectively.

In Switzerland, a normal working-day must not exceed eleven hours, with one hour's interval, comprised between the hours of five A.M. and eight P.M. during the months of June, July, and August; and between six A.M. and eight P.M. during the remainder of the year, the time to be regulated by the town-clock. On Saturdays and holidays the workshops must be closed two hours earlier. Exceptional and temporary prolongation of the working-time is obtainable in cases of necessity, 'but not simply to suit the convenience of the employer.' Sunday labour, except where it is absolutely necessary, is prohibited altogether; and under no circumstances is feminine labour permissible on that day. On ordinary days any woman having a household to look after is free to leave the shop one half-hour before the mid-day rest.

The hours of adult labour in France are regulated by a series of decrees, the earliest of which, promulgated in 1848, enacted that the working-man's day in manufactories and mills shall not exceed twelve hours of 'effective labour.' In 1851 another decree exempted certain occupations from the limitation; and in 1885 it was officially laid down that the twelve hours' limit was confined to such manufactories and mills as were moved by machinery by day, or machinery in motion by day and night without extinction of fires; and that no workshops employing less than twenty-one hands in any one shed came under the law of 1848. Of the six or seven million people earning daily wages in France, not more than a million are computed to be subject to the provisions of that law; indeed, the Inspectors of Factories only record three hundred and fifty-nine thousand adults, of whom forty-one per cent. are women; and it may be accepted that Frenchmen in factories pass at least fourteen out of every twenty-four hours in the factory; while the

workers outside, such as carpenters, masons, and labourers, work for any number of hours inclination may prompt or necessity compel.

The United States are by no means united on the subject of labour legislation. Most of them are content to leave it alone. New York pronounces eight hours a legal day's work for all classes of mechanics, working-men, and labourers—excepting those engaged in farm and domestic labour, or in the operation of street surface or elevated railroads within the limit of cities of more than a hundred thousand inhabitants; ten hours' labour within twelve consecutive hours, with a reasonable time for meals, constituting a day's work with the last mentioned. Connecticut, Pennsylvania, California, and Indiana reckon the legal working-day at eight hours; in Michigan, Rhode Island, Maine, Florida, and Maryland it is two hours longer; but the clauses in all enactments of the kind contain the distinctive proviso, 'unless otherwise agreed;' an addendum which doubtless owes its being to the fact that by the American Constitution the several States are prohibited from passing any laws impairing the obligation of contracts. Law or no law, it comes to the same thing with those concerned. As everywhere else, so in America, the length of a working-day varies in different trades and callings, ranging from eight to sixteen hours; but as a general rule, ten hours is the working-day of the United States.

As will be seen from the above statistics, the position of our workmen at home may compare favourably with that of workmen abroad. Of course this remark does not apply to special classes of our workmen, such as those who serve the needs of the travelling public, and whose hours are in many cases unquestionably too long. The skilled artisan at home, as well as the agricultural labourer, appear, however, when compared with their contemporaries on the Continent and in the States, to be in a much better position as regards hours of labour.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XVII.

FOR the first few moments after Picot's startling confession had fallen like a thunderbolt among those assembled in the justice-room of Cumberhays, the silence was so intense that, to use a common phrase, a pin might have been heard to drop. Every eye was focussed on the mountebank, who stood on the spot where he had risen, erect and very pale, his eyes glowing in their deep orbits like live coals, and pressing his soft felt hat with both hands to his breast. Suddenly there was a slight commotion close to where the magistrates were sitting; the strained silence was broken, and all eyes turned as with one accord. The lady in black, she who was said to be the wife of the accused man, had fainted. But Margery's strong arms had caught her ere she fell. Another woman in the body of the court at once hurried to her help, and between them the unconscious young wife was carried out.

'Place that man in the dock,' said the red-faced magistrate, 'and allow the other prisoner to be seated.'

Picot stepped quietly forward of his own accord, the people near making way for him with wonderful alacrity, and placed himself on the spot the magistrate had indicated, a couple of constables stationing themselves behind him as he did so. Then the clerk put certain questions to him, which Picot answered without a moment's hesitation. When these came to an end the entry on the charge-sheet stood as follows: 'Jules Picot. Age, forty-three. Native of France. Profession, acrobat. No fixed place of residence.'

Then the magistrate, clasping the fingers of one hand in those of the other, and resting them on the table in front of him as he leaned forward a little, said: 'Jules Picot, you have confessed openly and in public to the commission of a most heinous and terrible crime. Such being the case, we have no option but to detain you in custody while inquiries are being made as to the truth or falsehood of the extraordinary statement just volunteered by you. Any further statement you may choose to make we will of course listen to; but at the same time we must caution you that anything you may say will be taken down and used as evidence against you elsewhere. Is it your wish to make any further statement, or is it not?'

'Ma foi, monsieur,' answered Picot, with a slight shrug, 'that is what I am here for—to make what you call statements, to tell the truth, to prove that this gentleman is innocent, and that I, Jules Picot, and I alone, killed Otto von Rosenberg.' He paused, and in the hush that followed, the rapid scratching of the clerk's pen as it raced over the paper was clearly audible. The pencils of the two reporters who sat in a little box below the clerk moved at a more deliberate pace. One of them even found time to make a furtive sketch of Picot on a blank page of his note-book.

It was so evident the prisoner had something more to say that no one broke the silence.

'Eight years ago, monsieur,' he began in a low clear voice, 'I had a wife, a daughter, and a son. Now I am alone. I was living in Paris. No man could have been more happy than I was. Stephanie, my daughter, had an engagement at the Cirque de l'Hiver. She was beautiful, she was good. In an evil hour she attracted the attention of the Baron von Rosenberg. He followed her everywhere; he gave her rich presents; he even went so far as to promise to make her his wife—*scélérat* that he was! Of all this I knew nothing till afterwards. One day Stephanie does not come home. I make inquiry for her. She has fled. Von Rosenberg, too, has disappeared. They have fled together. From that day I never saw Stephanie more.' Again he paused, and although there was no trace of emotion in his voice, it may be that the hidden depths of his being were profoundly moved.

'A little while later, *ma pauvre Marie* died. She had been ill a long time; but what killed her was the loss of Stephanie. Ah yes! After that, Henri and I set out, wandering from place to place, not caring much where we went, but always looking and asking for Von Rosenberg, because I want to demand of him what has he done with my child. All at once I discover him. It was at the house of this gentleman, Monsieur Brooke. Next day they tell me that he has gone away back to his own country, and they know not when he will

return. But I wait and wait while one week goes away after another, and at length he comes back. I hide myself in the wood. I climb into the thick branches of a tree, and stay there hour after hour till he shall be alone. At length I see him coming down the path that leads from the house to the chalet near the wood. He whistles as he comes, and he is alone. I wait a little while, then I come down from the tree and walk up to the chalet. The Baron is standing up, examining a pistol—a pistol with inlay of ivory and gold, and with strange figures marked on it. On the table close by is a heavy riding-whip. He has not heard my footsteps. I enter, and he starts and stares. I make him a profound bow, and say: 'Bonjour, Monsieur le Baron. My name is Jules Picot, and I come to demand from you what you have done with my daughter Stephanie.' He still stares, and seems to be thinking to himself how he shall answer me. At last he says: 'I know nothing whatever of your daughter; and if I did I should decline to tell you.' 'She left Paris in your company,' I reply. 'Possibly so,' he answers with an evil sneer. 'Monsieur, I repeat that I am her father. I seek for her everywhere, but cannot find her. You, monsieur, if you choose, can give me some clue by which I may be able to trace her. Her mother is dead, and I have no other daughter. Think, monsieur—think.' He laughs a laugh that makes me long to spring at his throat and strangle him. 'I altogether refuse to give you any information whatever about your daughter,' he says. 'How, monsieur, you refuse!' I say as I draw a step or two nearer. He has laid the pistol on the table by this time, and his fingers now shut on the handle of the riding-whip. 'Then you are a coward and a villain,' I continue; 'and I spit in your face, as I will do again and again whenever I meet you. I have found you now, and I will follow you wherever you go.' He replies only by seizing the whip, hissing it quickly through the air, and bringing it down with all his strength round my head and shoulders. Strange lights dance before my eyes; there is a noise in my ears as of falling waters. The pistol is close to my hand; I grasp it; I fire. Von Rosenberg falls without a cry or a word. I fling the pistol away and walk quietly back through the woods. As I reach the village, where my boy is awaiting me, the church clock strikes seven. The evening is that of the 28th of June.'

He ceased speaking as quietly and impassively as he had begun: he might have been reading something from a newspaper referring to some other man, so little apparent emotion did he display; yet his hearers felt instinctively that he was speaking the truth.

'What you have just told us,' said the magistrate, 'will be taken down in writing; it will afterwards be read over to you, in order that you may make any additions or corrections that you may deem necessary; and you will then be asked to affix your name to the document. You will have no objection to do so, I presume?'

'To write my name on the paper, is that what monsieur means?'

'That is what I mean.'

'Certainement, monsieur, I will write my name. Why not?'

'Then for the present you are remanded.'

Picot looked round with a puzzled air; but one

of the constables touched him on the shoulder and whispered, 'Come this way.'

He turned to obey, and as he passed Gerald the eyes of the two men met. Gerald's hand went out and gripped that of the mountebank. 'O Picot!' was all his lips could utter. The mountebank stroked the back of Gerald's hand caressingly for a moment while a strangely soft smile flitted across his haggard features. 'Ah, monsieur, you and la belle madame will be happy again,' was all he said. Next moment he had passed out of sight.

Gerald was now replaced in the dock; and one of the magistrates, addressing him, said that although, on the face of it there seemed little reason to doubt the truth of the singular narrative to which they had just listened, it would have to be confirmed by ample inquiry before it could be accepted and acted upon. Meanwhile, he regretted to say Mr Brooke would have to remain in custody. But on the morrow, or next day at the latest, both prisoners would be transferred to King's Harold, when the amplest investigation would doubtless at once take place. With that the prisoner was removed.

Before going back to his cell, Gerald was allowed to see his wife for a few minutes. The meeting was almost a silent one; words would come after a time; just now their hearts overflowed with a solemn thankfulness, the roots of which struck deeper than speech could fathom.

As soon as Picot reached the cell allotted to him, he asked to be supplied with a cup of coffee, after which he lay down on his pallet with the air of a man thoroughly wearied out, and in a few minutes was fast asleep. He slept soundly till aroused some three hours later, when he was conducted to a room where he found one of the magistrates, the clerk, the governor of the jail, and two other officials. Here a paper, which had been drawn up from notes taken in the justice-room, was read over to him. After having caused it to be corrected in one or two minor particulars, he affixed his name to it; and his signature having been duly witnessed, he was reconducted to his cell.

About eight o'clock, after the gas had been lighted, he asked for pen, ink, and paper, and a small table to write on. These having been supplied him, he sat and wrote, slowly and laboriously, for nearly a couple of hours, finally putting what he had written inside an envelope and sealing and directing it. Then, after having taken off his shoes and coat, he wrapped himself in the blanket which had been supplied him and lay down to sleep. The gas was lowered, and silence reigned throughout the prison. Once every hour during the night a warder went the round of the cells and peered into each of them that was occupied through a grating in the door. All through the night Picot apparently slept an unbroken sleep. When the warder visited him at one o'clock he found that he had turned over and was now lying with his face to the wall, after which he seemed never to have stirred between one visit and another. At seven o'clock another warder, who had just come on duty, went into his cell to rouse him. To his dismay, he could not succeed in doing so. He turned the unconscious man over on his back, and then the drawn, ghastly face told its own tale.

'Ah,' remarked the doctor, who was quickly on

the spot, as he held up to the light a tiny phial only about half the size of a man's little finger and smelt at its contents, 'five drops of this would kill the strongest man in three seconds.'

LAST YEAR'S RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

THE year 1888 was distinguished by a happy immunity from any serious railway tragedies. Of minor accidents there were, of course, enough and to spare; but no wholesale disaster marked the railway annals of the year. Most people, we imagine, will be surprised at the figures returned to the Board of Trade up to December 31. Thirty-five collisions between passenger trains, resulting in one death and two hundred and seventeen injuries; and fifty-four collisions between passenger and goods trains, resulting in nine deaths and two hundred and ninety-two injuries, seem to represent about as much security for railway travellers, so far as this head of accidents is concerned, as we are ever likely to attain in this most imperfect dispensation. The most that we can hope is, indeed, that the returns shall show a continued decrease in the number of killed and wounded, so as to encourage the customers and servants of the Railway Companies in the belief that they are exposed to a degree of peril which grows less year by year. And, taking into account the millions of lives whose safety has been entrusted to the Companies of the United Kingdom during the time, the figures are certainly remarkable.

The totals of the period covered by the returns are nine hundred and five killed and three thousand eight hundred and twenty-six injured, from all causes whatsoever inclusive. Analysing these figures, we get one hundred and seven passengers killed and fourteen hundred and eight injured; three hundred and ninety-six servants killed and two thousand one hundred and ninety-three injured; the remainder consists of trespassers, suicides, and other persons not coming under the above classification. Now, these totals not only show a decrease on those for the same period of the preceding year, but are relatively very low. Accidents occurring on the premises of the Railway Companies, but in which the movement of trains was not concerned, are not included in them, and since in all of these the sufferers are themselves more or less to blame (as, for instance, in ascending or descending steps at stations, falling off platforms, loading or unloading wagons, and so on), they are not properly included in 'railway accidents.' We may therefore take the figures as they stand.

And if the causes of these deaths and disasters be classified, we get further evidence of the watchfulness and care with which the railway business of the country is now unceasingly conducted; for a very large proportion of these accidents are due wholly or in part to the carelessness and negligence of the public or of railway employees. Thus, nineteen passengers were killed and fifty-six injured by falling between carriages and platforms when getting into or alighting from trains, for which foolhardiness they have obviously no one but themselves to blame. Besides these, seventeen were killed and five hundred

and twenty-six injured by falling on to platforms, ballast, &c., when getting into or alighting from trains, presumably in motion, although it is not so specifically stated. Again, the twenty-eight killed and sixteen injured when passing over the line at stations; the fifty-three killed and twenty-four injured whilst passing over railways at level crossings; the two hundred and seventy-three trespassers killed, the ninety-five trespassers injured; and the sixty-five suicides, are one and all wholly or partially responsible for their own deaths or injuries. Nor are railway servants more careful, for a still larger proportion of the accidents to this class are due, at least in part, to 'contributory negligence.' We do not know how far it is necessary for the employees of the Companies to get on and off trains, wagons, or engines in motion, nor what are the bylaws of the Companies in their behalf. Shunting operations, doubtless, often require men to undergo considerable risk in this way; at least eighty-two men were killed and no fewer than nine hundred and forty injured while doing this kind of work. Coupling or uncoupling vehicles, too, although often performed in a most casual manner, not only always appears to be horribly dangerous to the ordinary observer, but is so as a matter of fact, fifteen deaths and two hundred and fifty-eight injuries being put down under this heading. Allowance being made for the perils of their calling, it is clear from these facts and figures that railway servants are often tempted by familiarity to despise danger. But it is very gratifying to know that the total number of servants killed is little more than half the average of a few years ago. In 1881, for instance, this exceeded five hundred; and it is still lamentably high. The public are entitled, and not alone on selfish motives, to demand that as much help and protection as possible shall be afforded to the whole army of pointsmen, plate-layers, drivers, firemen, guards, and porters, to whom they are immediately indebted for the comfort and safety in which they are enabled to travel.

There are probably few people who have not been struck with the amazing coolness with which nearly all the work of railway-men is performed. Who has not stared aghast at the sight of an engine-driver or stoker walking along the plates of the engine while it is going at full speed? This, again, may be a type of peril incidental to their calling; but it is worthy of note that twenty-two deaths and one hundred and seventy-five injuries actually occurred last year from falling off engines, &c. during the travelling of trains. Six deaths and thirty injuries, put down as having happened from 'coming in contact with over-bridges or erections on the sides of the line during the travelling of trains,' is an item which it is hard to explain as it stands. We hear, of course, of foolish or drunken passengers putting their heads out of carriages, or even climbing out on the roof, and so meeting a terrible death; but it is difficult to believe that railway-men would be guilty of any such foolhardy conduct. And it seems equally incredible that any erections can be permitted to remain so close to the permanent way as to be dangerous to life with ordinary precautions. Gates on level crossings are not nearly so dangerous to servants as to passengers, only two railway-men being killed and four

injured under this head. The low rate of ten deaths and forty-nine injuries whilst 'attending to ground-points and marshalling trains' is due, probably, to the very large diminution in the number of points which are now worked by levers on the level. Plate-layers and others working on the permanent way always carry their lives in their hand, and, sad as it is, no one will be surprised to hear that sixty-six were killed and sixty-seven injured in the United Kingdom in twelve months.

Walking, crossing, or standing on the line on duty are also lamentably fatal, ninety-eight deaths and one hundred and thirty-one injuries being put down to these causes. It is, however, incomprehensible that no fewer than fifty-six railway-men should be killed and twenty-nine injured whilst walking to or from their homes, and the fact seems to show that this use of the road should be as far as possible forbidden. The lessons pointed by the figures is indeed conclusive to show the need which exists for the Companies to adopt all possible regulations to diminish the risk of the calling. The death-rate must always be very heavy amongst these men. It is impossible to take away all risk from their arduous and dangerous daily duties; but something more might yet be done to reduce it, if possible, to a still lower average. That it should have been lessened so much as it has is enough to show that much can be accomplished by increased care. Nor should it be difficult to obviate many of the perils now incurred every day. There cannot be any real necessity for porters to cross the rails immediately in front of a train in motion, although, as many people have doubtless observed, that is almost invariably the time and method they choose. In short, unless and until railway-men are compelled to exercise ordinary care in their work, the rate of fatalities and casualties among them must remain needlessly high.

Turning from the loss of life and limb to the Reports of the Board of Trade Inspectors on the collisions of the year and the table of accidents to trains, the satisfactory character of the record is maintained. The great reduction in the number of accidents from collisions between passenger and goods or mineral trains is no doubt mainly due to the improvements which have so largely been carried out of recent years in the permanent way. Many of the great Railway Companies, for instance, have doubled the road throughout a great part of their system with an enormously increased degree of safety to the travelling public. Certain elements of risk can, of course, never be wholly eliminated. In the twelve months under notice, for instance, there were one hundred and thirty-one cases of trains running over cattle or other obstructions on the line, although, happily, only two passengers and one servant were thereby injured. 'Twenty-four horses, forty-seven beasts and cows, seventy-three sheep, two donkeys, four hounds, one goat, and one dog' were during the period in question run over and killed, and with no greater loss of human life. It is clearly, as Stephenson predicted, 'so much the worse for the coo' when these little mishaps occur.

The bursting of boilers, failure of machinery, springs, axles—of which there were two hundred and ninety-nine cases, involving death to five passengers and injury to fifteen passengers and four

servants—brake apparatus, couplings, ropes on inclines, and rails are, so far as they are indispensable to the service, practically outside human forethought. It is remarkable, too, if unavoidable, that no fewer than six hundred and sixty-eight tires should have failed, and still more wonderful that they should have involved no personal injury. Of the accidents inquired into by the Board of Trade the causes were multitudinous. The mistakes of porters, number-takers, signal-men, engine-drivers, which were found by the Board of Trade Inspectors to be the cause of some few of these disasters, are of course inevitable accompaniments of a system which depends so largely upon human agency. 'It is human to err,' and in all mundane affairs allowance must be made for what astronomers call the 'personal equation.' It is, however, gratifying to know that there was in 1888 no single instance in which human fallibility was increased by undue fatigue on any of the railways in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. None of the cases cited in the Return point to excessive hours of work as even a subsidiary cause of errors of judgment. A signal-man who has to attend to dozens of levers cannot, when jaded with fatigue, be regarded as responsible for his actions, and in past years many grave cases of hardship have been made public. We are therefore glad to see that the Companies appear to have recognised their responsibility in this particular. The working-day of railway-men is no doubt still long enough, if not too long; but we do not hear of such grave scandals as the safety of the lives and limbs of perhaps hundreds of passengers being entrusted to a man worn out with sixteen hours' continuous strain on head and hand. The Hampton-Wick accident is a good illustration of pure mistake as a cause of danger. In that case a signal-man, by neglecting to hold down a lever a little longer, let an engine run to Twickenham on the down instead of the up line. Neither the driver nor the fireman noticing the mistake in time, the engine ran into a down passenger train, with the result that four persons were killed and sixteen injured. At the time of the collision, Major Marindin reported, the signal-man had been on duty for about six and three-quarter hours, and the driver and fireman of the light engine for about nine and three-quarter hours.

This accident was also important as explaining the electric bell signals on the London and South-western Railway. These are not uninteresting or without considerable significance. Thus: 'One beat - acknowledgment; two beats - , four beats - , and five beats - (ballast train) departure signals; two beats given twice - warning signal; three beats - all clear; six beats - obstruction danger signal; seven beats - error signal; eight beats - attention signal; nine beats - testing signal; ten beats - special attention signal; twelve beats - assistance signal; four beats given twice - closing signal; and ten beats given twice - special danger signal.' It will be noticed that these are considerably and, we think, unnecessarily complicated. In the case in question, if the next signal-man had been warned in time, he might, it is suggested, have thrown his signals against the engine and so have prevented the

collision. But the signals which would have had to be given according to the block regulations appear to be the 'obstruction danger signal,' six beats; and then, when this had been answered, the 'special danger signal,' ten beats repeated twice. This operation cannot be completed in less than twenty seconds, and so would have been, it is thought, too late to avert the disaster. Major Marindin proposes very appropriately that there should be 'some very short code or other telegraphic or telephonic signal on receipt of which a signal-man should throw all his signals to danger.' To this may be added the suggestion that it would be conducive to the public safety if the Board of Trade were to settle some code which should be adopted throughout the United Kingdom. It would possess obvious advantages over the present system.

But the main conclusion to be derived from the Report—and indeed from the whole Return—is the marvellously high degree of safety and security which has been reached and promises to be maintained on 'our iron roads.' In spite of all the multitudinous elements of danger, whether preventable by human prudence and forethought or not, and notwithstanding the large amount of unavoidable risk necessarily attending any locomotive system, and enhanced by its high development, the total number of accidents of all kinds is now probably as low as it will ever be. And for this the public are indebted in no small degree to the zeal and energy of that inestimable body of men our railway servants.

CHARLIE RANSOM.

A STORY OF THE OIL COUNTRY.

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN PETER presented a most imposing appearance, for, in addition to his full-dress suit, he had resurrected from the bottom of his trunk a plum-coloured necktie with yellow spots, which he now wore to great advantage. His black velvet waistcoat was only fastened by the top button—there was some difficulty in persuading the lower buttons to pair with the button-holes—and his hands were thrust deep into the pockets of his trousers, from which imprisonment he only released them when he found it necessary to 'pull down' his waistcoat or flick an obstinate particle of dust from his coat lapel. If the captain could but have secured a silk 'stove-pipe' hat, in place of the very large and very dirty 'ten-cent straw' which shielded his brow from the afternoon sun, his outfit would have been beyond criticism.

About four o'clock the Captain was joined by his coadjutors, John Reed and Joe Klip, and together they sallied forth along the road by which the schoolmistress and her escort must necessarily approach Pan Handle City. They had not proceeded very far when a cloud of dust, visible about half-way up the hillside, apprised the three men of the approach of a vehicle drawn by at least two horses, and evidently moving at a rapid rate.

'Here she comes!' shouted Captain Lamson,

withdrawing his hands from his pockets to rub them with child-like glee.

'In Gus Hartranf's sociable,' said Reed.

'Yes,' added Joe Klip; 'and I'll bet Gus is a-driving 'em hisself with his sorrel team. Lord, but they're a-humping along over that there road! They'll be here in—let me see—well, I give 'em fifteen minutes at the outside!'

The travellers were still nearly three miles distant, but Mr Klip's prognostications proved correct; and, sure enough, in less than the time allowed, Gus Hartranf, the landlord of the hotel at Mesopotamia, reined in his spanking team in response to a signal to halt given by Captain Peter. As the sociable—a long ungainly sort of a light wagon, capable of carrying six persons, distributed over three seats—slackened up, Cockney Ted clambered down.

'Ere we are, Captin', said he. 'Couldn't get here sooner, 'cos Gus wasn't home, and his woman wouldn't let no one else drive us over.'

But Captain Lamson was neither looking at his friend Mr Robinson nor paying any heed to that gentleman's greeting and explanation. His eyes were riveted upon a remarkably fair and prepossessing specimen of young womanhood, who, without any assistance, had quickly and gracefully alighted from the high wagon to the roadside.

What Captain Lamson had really expected in the schoolmistress, not he himself could have explained, although he had known full well that 'a hummer' was something far beyond the average in feminine comeliness, and had dressed himself accordingly. But, as he many times afterwards confessed, he had certainly never dreamed of beholding in all his life—to say nothing of employing as teacher for the Pan Handle City youngsters—so much grace of form and quiet yet exquisite loveliness of feature as he beheld in the enchanting young woman who now stood before him with extended hand.

'I am quite certain that you are Captain Lamson, because I have already heard so much about you,' said the lady with a smile, which instantly secured each man in the little group as her steadfast friend. 'Mr Robinson evidently does not intend to introduce us,' continued she with a mock frown, directed at Cockney Ted, 'so we will just introduce ourselves.' Then she made a pretty courtesy, and, as if she had been at a society-lady's reception, said: 'How do you do, Captain Lamson? I am delighted to meet you.'

Now, for several days Captain Peter had been turning over in his mind—and had actually rehearsed to Mrs Lamson—a well-rounded speech of official welcome for the teacher. But the moment for the delivery of the speech having arrived, the Captain found himself unable to recall a single word. Indeed, when his eyes first rested upon the teacher, he was actually dazed to a slight extent, and could only see before him a sweet face and a shapely form enveloped in a perfect-fitting travelling dress of gray. All he did was to doff his hat, rather confusedly; but when he heard the cheery, friendly voice and felt his hand grasped by that of the pretty woman, Captain Peter forgot all about the speech and his official dignity as Chairman of the School Committee, and in his own 'every-day' good-natured

style, responded: 'Thank ye, my dear; thank ye kindly. I'm sure we shall all like you more'n a little. I hope you'll soon feel to home, Miss—er—Miss'—

'Well, well,' she interposed, 'I did make poor work of that introduction, after all, didn't I? My name is Marie Reese—R-e-e-s-e, Reese.'

'Good,' said Lamson. 'I'll remember.—Now, my dear, you'll be tired after your long ride; so we'll all climb into the sociable and ride up to my house, where my missis has fixed up a room for you, and where we both of us hopes you'll stay and make it your home so long as you find it comfortable and convenient.'

But Miss Reese protested against riding any farther. She persuaded Ted and the rest of the men to go on in the wagon with her baggage, while she walked the half-mile with her future host.

The teacher had evidently taken a liking to Captain Peter, for she conversed with him quite freely; and by the time they reached the house and sat down to a choice supper prepared by Peter's wife, the Captain felt quite well acquainted with this pleasant addition to his household. During the walk he learned that Maria Reese was not a destitute girl, forced to work for a living; but that she preferred to be independent of unhappy surroundings in a home that had never been home to her, and was very glad to break away from the humdrum life of the towns for the free and informal atmosphere of the Oil regions and the mountains. She had met Mr Van Horn and his companion at Elmira, and had quickly closed with their offer of 'two hundred and fifty dollars and board' for the school term of eight months at Pan Handle City.

The favourable impression created by Marie Reese upon Captain Peter Lamson and his colleagues was reproduced several times during the next few days upon others of the Pan Handle citizens; and before the day for opening school, the new 'schoolmarm' had become, without any exception, the most popular person in the Upper Tomhicken Valley. Maria Reese was quite young—not yet twenty-three—but she was possessed of more than mere 'book-learning.' She displayed much excellent judgment and good common-sense in many ways, and proved herself to be in a measure a careful student of human nature. Adding to all these qualifications her personal charms and a cheery disposition that was magnetic, the School Committee might have scoured the world over and would never have discovered a more suitable teacher for the very ignorant and decidedly erratic youngsters who formed the school population of Pan Handle City.

On the first day of September, Captain Lamson experienced the keen satisfaction of escorting Miss Reese to her desk in the little school-house, and in a very neat speech introduced the teacher to the two score of children who filled the narrow benches. The pupils were of both sexes, and of all ages from three to thirteen or fourteen; but all alike were ignorant of the first rudiments of schooling. There the resemblance ended. Some were smart and some witty; while others were slow, stupid, and dull: a few were polite—eager to please and willing to learn; but many were rude and stubborn. Yet Marie Reese, fully intent upon doing thoroughly and to a finish the

work which she had undertaken, discovered a 'soft spot' in all their young hearts, and in time found for all of them a common plane upon which teacher and scholars could meet and understand each other. Thus, from the very outset the school at Pan Handle City was a complete success; and not a man who had attended the meeting at the Barrel House of Well No. 4 regretted having pledged his name for the school-house assessment.

But when winter arrived, a new phase of the school question presented itself in the large number of applications for admission received by the Committee from some of the elder boys and young men of the settlement.

The Oil regions of North-western Pennsylvania are usually visited by long and severe winters, which render it impossible to carry on active operations, either in connection with the oil industry or upon the scrubby farms, to as large an extent as during the summer months. This state of affairs throws a large number of 'helpers' out of employment; and at Pan Handle City these unfortunates, imbued with a laudable ambition to improve the days of enforced idleness, ardently desired to become pupils at the little school-house. It is more than probable that the novelty of a school and the popularity of the 'schoolmarm' greatly enhanced the ardour of this longing to study blackboard lessons; but be that as it may, Captain Peter was subjected to a dozen or more personal interviews from candidates for seats on the narrow benches.

Captain Peter was not greatly in favour of admitting these 'big louts,' as he termed them. 'The school-house was intended for the children,' he argued; 'and while there's no denying of it that some of these long-legged, shock-headed fellers is no more'n overgrown kids, I don't believe in turning a lot of awkward boys, as big as I am, loose among the little uns. Besides, that teacher of ours is a sight too good and too kind to be bothered with a lot of thick-skulled chumps. No, I don't like the notion.'

But when the Committee talked it all over with Miss Reese, they found her very willing to make the experiment. 'By all means let them come, Captain Lamson,' said she. 'Give them a permit to attend school in the afternoon. I can dismiss the little ones about half-past three, and then I can devote an hour or so exclusively to the young men. I think I can manage them; and if they become obstreperous, I will call upon you for assistance. But I have great faith in my own capabilities with big boys as well as with little ones, and I should rather like to give them a trial.'

So that phase of the problem was solved.

Among the 'institutions' of Pan Handle City was 'The Doll.' In America it is absolutely impossible for any one with any individuality or peculiarity of dress, manners, or appearance to evade the honour (or otherwise) of a nickname. When, therefore, Charlie Ransom—chief officer, steward, wheelsman, and supercargo of the *Petroleum Gem*—made his first appearance at 'the City' he had evoked the exclamation 'Ain't he a doll!' from a score of admiring onlookers. The term, frequently used sarcastically, was in that particular instance a tribute of genuine admiration for the strapping young fellow with his finely-

moulded limbs, his open ruddy face, his curly flaxen hair, and, above all, for the unimpeachable 'rig-out' in which he walked from his cubby-hole aboard the *Gem* to the landing at 'the City.'

The reader need not imagine that Mr Ransom would have been considered a 'howling swell' in the Row or on the Chain Pier; indeed, it is doubtful if he would have attracted any particular attention on a Saturday evening in Shoreditch or the Bowery; but he 'walked away' with anything ever before seen in Pan Handle City—not even excepting Captain Peter Lamson in his velvet vest and spotted necktie. For the Captain had never been known to indulge in a collar, while his only styles of headgear were a 'ten-cent straw' in summer, and a cub-skin hat in winter; whereas Charlie Ransom sported a billy-cock hat, a collar and necktie, a suit of black diagonal cloth, which had probably cost as much as nine dollars in a Hebrew hand-me-down store in Oil City; and, above all, displayed the unheard-of luxury of blackened and polished shoes. And this was not merely Charlie's high-day and holiday outfit: always when the *Gem* was 'laid up' at Pan Handle City, Ransom in his off-duty hours was uniformly neat and tidy in his appearance. For this reason the boys had applied to him the sobriquet of 'the Doll'—a title by no means resented by Ransom, who was good-nature itself, and a great favourite with most of the people along the Tomhicken.

The creek being frozen over, and the *Gem* being boarded up for the winter, Charlie was among those who about the end of November became privileged afternoon pupils of Miss Reese.

Charlie was in his twenty-first year; but it is safe to say that his school experience had not extended over more than two years, and during the decade which had elapsed since he left school 'for keeps,' he had well-nigh managed to forget all that he had ever been taught. But he was evidently very much in earnest in his desire to make the most of the present opportunity. He applied himself with such diligence as, added to his natural ability and his pride, enabled him before Christmas to forge far ahead of every other pupil in the school. Of course his progress was peculiarly gratifying to Marie Reese, who was marvellously well pleased with the general behaviour and fair success of her older scholars. There were few of them, however, who could appreciate the schoolmarm's painstaking kindness to the same extent as Charlie, because, as yet, there were none of them beside him who could make headway fast enough to require any personal attention. For the same reason, none of her scholars awakened in Marie the same degree of interest; and the girl made up her mind to surprise both Ransom and the School Committee by the advance in his studies which she proposed that her favourite pupil should achieve before the next opening of navigation on the Tomhicken.

The week before Christmas, Miss Reese announced that the school would be closed during Christmas week, and on Saturday afternoon the schoolmistress and Charlie were the last to leave the school-house. As they walked together towards Captain Peter's house, the moon was just rising over the hilltops, gradually flooding the broad Valley with its silvery light. Far away, winding like a white ribbon for miles down the

Valley, they could see the ice-covered river, and the sight instantly aroused in the girl a desire to indulge in her favourite sport. 'Now, if I only had my skates here, Ransom, you could take me to skate next week. We shall have no school, and a few spins down the creek would be splendid recreation.'

'I'm a regular no-account skater, Miss Reese, so I couldn't help you very much on the ice.'

'Ah, but, you see, I'm a splendid skater, so I could help you. You would soon be clever yourself if you skated with me much, and I am sure we could have great fun. But, alas, no skates!'

'Don't you fret about skates, Miss Reese; I think I know where I can lay my hands on a pair. I know I can get some for myself. I've got a little errand to do on Monday; but if you will wait until Tuesday, I'll see about the skates.'

That night the Doll intercepted Mrs Lamson on her way to visit a neighbour, and secured from her one of the teacher's shoes. This the lad secreted in his coat pocket, and straightway started on a long night-tramp to Mesopotamia Cross Roads, where, next day, he hired a horse and buggy and drove to Clipper Gap. Being Sunday, he was forced to put up at the hotel and wait until Monday morning before making his purchases; but he was the first customer of the week at the little hardware store where, much to his surprise and satisfaction, he succeeded in fitting a pair of skates to Miss Reese's shoe. Then, having suited himself with a pair, he started on his homeward trip, returning as he came. He reached 'the City' late on Monday, and on Tuesday—which was Christmas Eve—he presented himself at Captain Peter's house and inquired for the teacher.

'Miss Reese, marm, being as it's Christmas-time, I hope you'll excuse the liberty and accept a little token of the season from me. You've been very good to me, marm, and I can't pretend ever to pay you for it. But I thank you hearty; and hope you'll enjoy many a spin on them little bits o' skates, marm.'

That was not the only instance of Charlie's kindness to the schoolmistress, for his thoughtfulness represented itself in many ways. Nor, when he escorted her upon her skating trips, was it the only time that Marie Reese accepted personal attentions from Charlie Ransom. So marked, too, were these attentions, that the women of Pan Handle City nodded their heads wisely to each other as they muttered: 'The Doll's sweet as new cider on the schoolmarm.' Even the men noticed the apparent state of affairs, and easy-going Captain Peter shook his head disapprovingly.

'She shouldn't do it,' he said to himself; 'she'll turn the Doll's head, sure—indeed, it's turned already or I'm no judge of oil and fools!'

But Marie Reese, with her mind absorbed in her work and her heart safely in the keeping of a man four hundred miles away, believed herself to be an excellent judge of human nature. She knew perfectly well just how much she was interested in this bright and good-hearted lad, and furthermore, she believed that she thoroughly understood Ransom. The Doll, too, was fully aware of the depth and quality of his admiration for and devotion to the schoolmarm: on the other hand, in the study of human nature Charlie Ransom was an ignoramus, and did not pretend to

fathom or understand the extent of Miss Reese's friendship for himself. Indeed, he rather wished that he could, and gradually the desire to solve that very question became the all-absorbing subject which agitated the heart and mind of the Doll.

THE ONLY ROMAN THEATRE IN ENGLAND.

TOWARDS the southern portion of the county of Hertfordshire, and within twenty miles of the Metropolis, lies the ancient city of St Albans. It is a quietly-quiet, old-fashioned place, abounding in many visible memorials of the most remote antiquity; and the traveller fresh from the busy turmoil of the City, steps from the express, which in thirty minutes has carried him from St Pancras, with that indefinable feeling which we experience when brought into contact with the venerable relics of past ages. For here, indeed, he treads on classic ground. Associations with many historic names are brought to memory; here Cassivelaunus defended his marsh-begirt city from the legions of the conquering Cæsar, and his walled huts gave place to the great Roman *municipium* of Verulamium, whose inhabitants, born within its walls, had the right of proudly saying, 'Civis Romanus sum,' and could claim the privileges which this right of citizenship conferred. Here Boadicea, 'bleeding from the Roman rods,' wreaked her vengeance upon the invader, for, according to Tacitus, seventy thousand inhabitants fell beneath the swords of the infuriated Britons. But the devastated city regained its former greatness; large and massive buildings were erected, and a huge wall of considerable height and over twelve feet in thickness was built round the city, with a broad and deep ditch externally.

From the Temple of Apollo, towards the end of the third century, Britain's protomartyr, Saint Alban, was led forth to die. He was taken outside the walls, across the small river Ver, and executed on the summit of a grass-crowned hill now covered by the modern city. The Roman power in Britain ended in 410 A.D., and for three hundred years the wild Saxons, and after them the Danes, swept over Verulamium, burning, sacking, and plundering.

In the eighth century, Offa, king of Mercia, founded the magnificent monastery which lasted, under forty successive abbots, to Henry VIII's time, when it was demolished, two buildings alone being spared—namely, the great gateway and the venerable abbey. These buildings had for the most part been constructed of the remains of the Roman city, which acted the part of a quarry for many centuries. A great portion of the abbey, including the massive Norman tower, is composed wholly of Roman brick; and the familiar tile-like form of the latter is recognised in many buildings of the modern city.

The extent of Verulamium may easily be traced at the present day by huge masses of masonry and a deep fosse which mark for a considerable distance the ancient boundary. The general shape of the Roman city was elliptical; the longer axis being nearly a mile in length, and formed by a portion of the old Watling Street; and the shorter axis, about half a mile in length, by the Cauley Way. The area was one hundred and ninety acres. The

shape and size of Verulamium are very much like those of the buried city of Pompeii. When the British Archæological Society met at St Albans in 1869, plans were shown of these two cities, and it was seen that not only did they resemble each other in shape and dimensions, but also in the relative positions of the temples, theatres, and the Forum. The side of Pompeii next the sea has the river Ver by it in Verulamium.

Inside the boundary walls no traces of ancient habitations are now apparent; the dark-coloured ground, covered in autumn by heavy crops of cereals, stretches in long undulations before the eye. With the exception of the massive girdling walls, all traces of the proud Roman eagles have disappeared. The great Forum, the long streets with their busy shops thronged with teeming multitudes, the courts of justice and statue-laden temples, the opulent Roman villas with their pleasant gardens and luxurious baths, all have gone; and where a proud and stately city once stood, the golden-eared corn waves gently to and fro, and the lark sings in unmolested solitude.

At one point only has the site been invaded by buildings not of Roman origin. In this part stands the church of St Michael, built upon the broad foundations of the ancient Temple of Apollo. This church, which is of venerable antiquity, is the shrine of Baconians, for in it the bones of the great Lord Verulam lie resting. It was near this church, and close to the centre of the destroyed city, that the only Roman theatre as yet discovered in England was brought to light. Some forty years since, an archæologist, while searching for Roman remains, discovered some flints embedded in mortar by the side of the road leading from the church to Gorhambury, the Elizabethan residence of Sir Nicholas Bacon, father of the great philosopher, the picturesque ruins of whose house are still standing. He commenced excavations which laid bare the foundations of a building, evidently Roman. As soon as these had been completed, he learned that fragments of walls had been struck upon in ploughing the adjoining field. On hearing this, he began digging there, and succeeded with the aid of the British Archæological Association in bringing to light the remains of a Roman theatre. In the following year a paper was read before the St Albans Architectural Society, giving an account of this discovery, which paper forms the source of what knowledge we have concerning it, since, after that time, the earth was levelled down again.

The earliest theatres were those of the Greeks, which had their outer walls containing rather more than a semicircle. There was an inner concentric circle, the diameter of which was one-third that of the theatre. The space included in this smaller circle was called the orchestra or place for dancing, and was devoted to the chorus. The width of the stage was twice the diameter of the orchestra, and its depth one-seventh of that diameter.

The Roman theatres were modelled on those of Greece; but the orchestra was much smaller, as the chorus did not occupy such an important part. The outer walls rarely exceeded a semicircle; and the orchestra, instead of being devoted to the chorus, was occupied by the seats of the spectators of highest rank in the state. The stage was more capacious than that in the Greek theatre, being

twice the diameter of the orchestra in length and one-fourth in depth, so as to afford space for the chorus on the stage. Round every ancient theatre was a corridor, forming a space between the outer wall and an inner concentric wall. Over the corridor were seats sometimes used by ladies; and the space between these seats and the orchestra was occupied by rows of seats concentric with the outer wall and rising like wide stairs, so that the spectators placed their feet on the next lower row.

The scene was at the back of the stage, and usually represented a street, or the front of a palace, or a wood, and could be changed to suit the locality of the play. Behind the scene was the *postscenium*, in which murders and other parts of the play were sometimes supposed to take place. At the sides of the stage were entrances to rooms built for the convenience of performers.

The theatre at Verulamium was one hundred and ninety feet three inches in diameter; the theatre at Pompeii one hundred and ninety-five feet. The two outer walls are on the plan of the Greek theatres, comprising 240° ; between them was a corridor nine feet wide. The stage was forty-six feet long, and eight feet nine inches deep. At the east part was a room with a coarse tessellated pavement without any pattern, composed of *tesserae* of Roman tiles about one inch square, set on a very thin layer of concrete. This was one of the rooms at the end of the stage for the use of performers. The foundations of a corresponding room on the west side have not been found.

The outer wall of the theatre at Verulamium was five feet ten inches thick, the second three feet six inches, the *scena* two feet six inches, and all the other walls two feet. An entrance at the centre opposite the stage, and another on the east side, have been partially laid open; but no trace of one has been found on the west side. The space over the corridor was twelve feet wide, including the thickness of the inner wall, and from thence to the outermost wall of the orchestra was thirty-three feet. Immediately inside this wall were found traces of an inner wall a few feet from it, which probably formed a separation for some privileged class; the space it surrounded was the orchestra for the seats of the most distinguished persons. All the walls of the theatre, except, perhaps, the exterior, were painted in fresco. The walls were first plastered with mortar; this was reduced to a perfectly even surface; on it was laid a covering of the finest mortar, perfectly white, and seldom thicker than card-paper; and on this, while both the coatings of mortar remained wet, were laid mineral water-colours, which adhered to and dried with it. The colours being native colours, and not artificially prepared, cannot be affected by time or damp; and so, as long as the mortar retains its surface, they will remain uninjured.

It is strange that no direct mention is made of this theatre in history; but it seems likely that it is referred to in the *Chronicle* of Roger of Wendover, a monk of St Albans Abbey, in a story of a vision related by him. Probably until the ninth or tenth century the building remained in good preservation; but about that time Ealdred and Eadmer, the eighth and ninth abbots respectively of St Albans, are said by Matthew Paris to have thoroughly searched the ruins of Verulamium and carried off

all the building materials they could lay their hands on. Eadmer in particular disinterred a number of ruined temples, altars, vases, statues of heathen gods, urns and ashes, all which, as heathen remains, he carefully destroyed in his religious zeal. Possibly the theatre was one of the ruined 'temples.'

It is very tantalising to the archaeologist of today to stand upon the site of this unique building and to know that but a few feet of envious earth separate him from a Roman theatre, whose very existence was not suspected until quite recently, and whose walls, built sixteen centuries since, and deftly coloured by the conquerors of the world, almost rise to the surface of the ground. Local enterprise has been lately stimulated with a view to the removal of the mould and the permanent disinterment of the building; but it yet remains to be seen whether the appeal will be effectual or not. We trust that the good people of St Albans will no longer permit this treasure of antiquity to lie hidden in the ground, but will soon add to their present long list of archaeological objects of interest that of the only Roman Theatre in Great Britain.

A WILD YARN.

'TELL us a snake-story, doctor.'

The demand for this peculiar form of mental refreshment was manifested by the fifth officer of the good ship *Chittagong*, then steaming northward up the Red Sea at a speed which evoked the tepid ghost of a breeze out of the stagnant stillness simmering over the gulf, and sent Jebel Zagar slipping from bow to quarter in the brief interval between day and darkness. Reeking little of a temperature which might have embarrassed a salamander, we crowded, seven or eight of us, like true fatuous Britons, into a cabin ten feet by eight and a half, the bedroom, sitting-room, library, study, surgery, menagerie, and general 'den' of the ship's doctor, to whom the above invocation was addressed.

'Snake-story!' ejaculated the man of medicine in a tone of cynical disgust, as he sat swinging his legs over the lee-board of his bunk. 'What do you want a snake-story for? Isn't the story of a snake enough for you—the natural life-history of any one of them? Why, you might chop out a half-inch slice from this beast anywhere you like 'twixt stem and stern, and find more wonders and marvels in it (and real ones too) than you will get in all the penny-horrible snake-yarns ever invented. But the fact is, people will swallow any amount of nonsense about snake-charming and fights with serpents forty yards long, when they wouldn't believe the extraordinary things that are simply commonplace, everyday facts about them. For instance, take the abnormal distribution of the internal organs, asymmetrical enough almost to shake one's faith in what is regarded as universally characteristic of the vertebrata, that lateral—There, don't howl! I'm not going to lecture! Don't light up till I've stowed these reptiles away, for they can't stand smoke, and then I'll tell you one of the queerest things about serpents that ever came to my knowledge—outside themselves, that is; queer enough to satisfy the fiver there, and true into the bargain.—Get off from the lid of the washstand for a moment, you

two, while I chock these boxes off with my instrument-case, all snug. Mind none of you come to me to have your teeth out after we leave the Canal; I don't want to find my snake-cages playing Isaac and Joss all over the cabin, if it comes on to blow in the Mediterranean, and she rolls!'

A silvery slender Cingalese rat-snake, which had been nervously twining its sinuous length in and out between the speaker's accustomed hands and around his arms, was allowed to slide back into its prison of mahogany-protected glass and perforated zinc; while the occasional hiss of a couple of sullen rock-pythons lying in an open box at his feet was smothered by the interposition of the shutter which secured their travelling-quarters. Possibly we all felt a little more comfortable when they were thus packed up and put to bed, in spite of our confidence in the doctor's assurances that we were in no danger of attack by his weird pets. The medical officer of the *Chittagong* was, as he himself expressed it, a confirmed ophiomaniac; afflicted with a lunacy for all reptiles and creeping things, but hopelessly 'gone' over snakes, which he caught or bought at every practicable opportunity, and fed and fondled till he reached home, where the surplus of his large private museum ashore went in the form of donations or exchanges to every zoological collection in Europe.

The serpents' cages being safely fixed between the shut-up washing-stand and the chest of drawers, and so forming an additional settee, which lightened the cover of the former apparatus of one moiety of its disproportionate burden, half-a-dozen pipes contributed their caloric to the already seething atmosphere, unrelieved by the scoop-shaped wind-shoot which angled vainly outside the open scuttle for any stray pulsation of the sultry night. Gold-laced caps were tossed aside and brass buttons loosed as the smokers relaxed their huddled-up limbs as far as the narrow accommodation and scanty human anchorage would allow, while the doctor extended himself at full length high above us on the grass mat which served him for bed-clothes. And in an endurance of heat and smoke which might have qualified for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade or earned the Victoria Cross, he spun the following:

You can't go in for out-of-the-way kind of 'critturs' like these all your life without meeting with some adventures more or less strange in connection with them. I have run across a few in my time, as you know by the fang-marks and scars on my arms and neck; but I don't think anything that has ever occurred within my experience of things snaky—and I was born and brought up amongst them and have been in pretty close companionship with them all my days—nothing, I say, that I have known of them in their casual relations with human beings has been more replete with glamour and romance and mysticism than the event I am going to relate. Though I stick to my original position for all that, remember—that the animals themselves are much more extraordinary in their structure and habits than the theatrical accessories of any drama of mere human interest wherein they have been unwilling actors or passive properties. Just think of the remarkable mechanism of their lower jaw, for example, and their facial bones, undergoing at each meal they make a spontaneous dislocation

by virtue of the loose ligamentous attachment—All right, all right; I won't, if you don't wish it! Vulgar sensationalism carries the day *versus* the magic and mystery of Nature; so here's your snake-story. I played but a very subordinate part in it, little more than that of a spectator; but, as in the scene whence all our troubles date, the leading *dramatis personæ* were a woman and a serpent.

Nearly twenty years ago there lived for a time in the neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro a certain naturalist, whose avowed specialty was ophiology, more particularly the study of venomous species, with that most futile and fascinating quest which has exercised the mind of man from prehistoric ages to the present day, and which is as vain and as engrossing now as in the beginning—the search for an antidote to the poison. He was comparatively a young man, certainly on the right side of forty, unmarried, and possessed of wherewithal to ensure the timely appearance of the daily bread independently of labour with hand or brain even in that ruinous part of the world; not a native Brazilian, but a Portuguese, who, after studying in the medical schools of Paris and Vienna, had left Europe to take up his abode in tropical lands in order to facilitate his especial pursuit. Lacerda with his permanganate of potash theory had not arisen in Rio at that time; Halfourd's experiments with ammonia on the thanatophidia of Australia, and those of Fayrer in India, were too remotely Oriental to impress a South American public; and a taste for the collection of living serpents and an investigation of their manners and customs were apt to be regarded as a curious phase of mental aberration in those days by the 'Fluminenses,' as the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro jocularly style themselves. Perhaps it was a consciousness of this which led our ophiologist to betake himself and his reptiles to a picturesque nook on the island of Paqueta, one of the largest of the three hundred and sixty-five which dot the glorious bay. Here he established his vivarium and read, wrote, analysed, and dissected; attended by his black servants, in very cool and comfortable quarters, and varying the routine of his life by snake-hunting excursions into the interior, or holiday trips to the city, fifteen miles off; for his devotion to work by no means precluded his enjoyment of social pleasures. With the *entrée* into the best native and foreign society, he would run over at frequent intervals in his little steam-launch and put up for a week or so at the *Estrangeiros* or Carson's, while he shared in the amusements of the gaily-loving town. Let me say at once that I firmly believe him to have been an honest and enthusiastic student of his subject, an earnest labourer in the vineyard of science, and one who must have left his name written in golden characters upon the history of research, but for the tragedy in which he and all that should have made his fame were lost. It was my great wish to meet him in person; for our common craze had already knit a bond of union, and had led to correspondence between us; but I never saw him, though I stood by his dishonoured grave before the earth had lain many hours upon him. Poor fellow!

He fell in love. How often those four words preface the chapter which is the beginning of the end of the tale! He fell in love, miserably, hope-

lessly, yet hopeful against hope. He met her during Carnival, whilst staying at the mountain hotel at Tijuca! They met at dinner, they met in the *sala*, they met by the Cascades; they went down in the same diligence to Boa Vista, and thence by the same tram-car to witness the saturnalia in the city far below. It's all told in a very few words. She was an English girl, just arrived with her father, an official high in the diplomatic service. Both eagerly and gratefully accepted the guidance and good offices of the courteous Portuguese, who spoke French fluently, and whose knowledge of the country made him quite an old inhabitant by comparison with themselves. With him they visited the Avenue of Palms in the Botanic Garden; with him they made the ascent of Santa Theresa and climbed the Corcovada; with him they wandered at daybreak round the gorges of the Chinese View. The steam-launch bore them over to Paqueta, where they shuddered at the snakes, and saw with marvel the tact and intrepidity with which their owner handled them. Then a month later her *fiancé*, also in the service of the Government, came out from Constantinople *viâ* Lisbon by the Royal Mail, and they were married at the Embassy. She with her husband and father went to live at Petropolis; he returned to his lonely *quinta* and vivarium on the island. Ah me! the Brazilians have a proverb about the most dangerous snakes being *cobras vestidas y pentiadas*—the serpents that wear clothes and comb their hair; and they're not far wrong!

I'm not going to indulge in any psychological speculations as to his mental and moral struggles, his battles and doubts and resolves. That such a mind as his would suffer acutely, and that it might be torn and tossed in a fearful conflict, there can be no doubt. But whether he formed any deliberate plan of action, or whether he simply allowed himself to become the prey of circumstances in what followed, none can know. All that is certain is that a short time after the wedding—a few weeks or months, I don't know how long—he set out on a snaking expedition among the Orgão Mountains, put in an appearance at Petropolis, and was greeted with effusive welcome by his late acquaintances in their new home. About this period I came round from the Pacific coast in a steamer which was a day or so overdue when we got into Rio, having been detained by a *pampero* which blew heavily north of the Plate. The *pratique* boat brought me a letter dated two days previously, beseeching me to come immediately to Petropolis to see a gentleman suffering from snake-bite; so, without waiting to ponder over a certain mystification about the summons and its details, I at once embarked in the Mississippi-river-boat sort of craft then just starting on the first stage of the journey, deferring my long-looked-for visit to Paqueta—where I could see the very house as the steamer glided by—till my return. I had furnished myself with the newspapers to while away the time; and sitting down in the saloon after a couple of hours' deep draught of the never-sating beauties of the bay, the first paragraph which caught my eye as I unfolded the *Jornal do Commercio* was a brief announcement of the death of the savant whom I so desired to meet. He had been bitten, so the account stated, by a *curucucu*, one of the worst of Brazilian

serpents, two days before, and had died in less than an hour, on the very date which the letter in my pocket bore, and at the very spot for which I was then bound.

As soon as I reached Petropolis, I was conducted without delay, by a messenger who had been sent to meet me, to the bedside of the patient, an Englishman, evidently of good position, but personally unknown to me. His friends, it seemed, had become aware that I was expected to come to Rio at the time when the accident happened, and—misled by sundry current fables as to my knowledge of miraculous cures for serpent-bites—had instantly despatched the urgent appeal which I had received on my tardy arrival. It is needless to say that the primary issue of the man's life or death was long since decided; the native physicians attached to the imperial court had done everything for him that skill and science rendered possible, and all question of specific treatment had been at an end for thirty-six hours or more. But he was still very ill, and by no means out of danger of the secondary complications—not seldom fatal in themselves—which may follow a venomous inoculation—shock, gangrene, blood-poisoning, and other disastrous consequences. The bitten hand, the whole arm, and even that side of the chest, were terribly swollen, and the constitutional symptoms severe; but there were certain appearances and phenomena in the case which I could not reconcile with any past experience of these matters, though the Brazilian doctors, not being specialists in this form of injury, had perceived nothing anomalous in them. And so it came about that on my mentioning these discrepancies to the sufferer's charming wife and his father-in-law, the obvious air of mystery and reserve which had manifested itself all through their agonised anxiety was resolved, after a brief consultation between them, by their confiding to me the secret of this hideous affair. No wonder that they were almost beside themselves with grief and horror and the conscious necessity of suppression and concealment! You have guessed, of course, who the patient was—the newly-made Benedict.

As I have intimated, the naturalist had been received by them with open arms, for no suspicion of the emotion entertained by him had crossed their minds. Unaffectedly desirous to repay the recent civilities at Tijuca, they had exerted themselves to the utmost to render his visit a pleasant and memorable one; indeed, so fervid was the warmth of their hospitality that they had even done their best to procure live serpents for him. In this endeavour, however, they had been successful only to a very limited extent, since the slaves who were sent out to scour the forest-clothed hills for *bicos* brought in but one specimen uninjured among many dead, and that one proved to be of no great scientific interest, though a pretty and harmless little creature, a bright grass-green whip-snake. Its recipient, taking it out of the glass jar in which its captors had imprisoned it, as coolly and quietly as though it had been a yard of inanimate ribbon, opened its long arrow-shaped jaws to demonstrate the absence of fangs in its mouth, and then proposed that his hostess should herself retain it as a pet, showing her how to handle it so as to avoid exciting its anger. This she accomplished—most women can manipulate a snake far better

than a man—to her half-terrified delight; and presently her husband, who had been abjectly afraid of the reptile at first, growing bolder by the contagion of her temerity, took it gingerly in his fingers—with the usual result. It bit him with a sharp plunge—only a scratch in the angle between the forefinger and thumb, just enough to draw blood; but he flung the poor whip-snake on the ground in fright and disgust, and began to nurse his hand.

'Do not be alarmed!' said the guest, with a smile; 'it is perfectly harmless. The snake's teeth cannot hurt you as much as the beak of yonder love-bird!'

Suddenly he seized the bitten hand and bent over it as though to inspect it closely; bent lower and lower, while a stifled silence fell on the group, lower and longer, till every heart throbbed audibly in the pausing moments. Then he slowly raised his head and lifted up a white ghastly face, the face of one changed by death.

'Senhor,' he gasped, with scarce articulate utterance, 'I have been deceived! The serpent is venomous, and in an hour you will have succumbed to its bite unless vigorous measures are taken. I have the antidote, a counter-poison proved by a hundred experiments upon myself. Submit yourself to me, and I will save you. Quick! there is no time to be lost. Though you feel nothing now, in a few minutes the poison will have taken possession of your system, and it will be too late. Lie down on the floor of the veranda instantly—do what I tell you—do nothing else!'

His speech cleared, and the blood flushed back to his lips again as the words poured forth in a mad torrent, and he rushed into the house where his preparations had been deposited. The victim, half incredulous, yet scared out of his senses, placed himself in a framework chair and lay back on its fold of jaguar-skin. His wife, with desperate calm, took a flask of Italia from the sideboard and poured its contents into a tall Venetian glass, for she had a dazed remembrance of having read or heard that large quantities of spirit were given to keep up the circulation of people serpent-bitten. She was just on the point of holding the vessel to her husband's lips, when their guest sped back into the veranda with two small boxes in his hand. In a perfect fury of excitement he dashed the glass aside with such violence that it was shattered in her grasp.

'Drink, and you are a dead man!' he shrieked vehemently. 'I say, do nothing but what I command, or I am powerless for your rescue. On the floor—quick, quick, on the floor, or you are lost!'

Like one possessed, he caught up the Englishman in his arms and threw him out of the chair upon the boards, while the poor girl, frozen with terror, stood by motionless as a statue, with the broken glass still in her unconscious hand, and her dress stained and splashed by the spirit. Down he knelt by the recumbent form, and drawing forth a lancet from a case of surgical instruments, he lightly scarified the skin of the hand in the neighbourhood of the scarce-visible bite. Then from the other box he took a tiny glass tubule, fine almost as a hair, but containing a glistening streak of fluid. Steadying himself by a fierce repressive effort, and evincing a quietude and deliberation as unnatural as his previous frenzy,

he gently blew the minute drop of glutinous liquid out of the tube on to the point of the knife, and rubbed it into the bleeding scratches. A moment later his patient uttered a cry of agony, and the operator glanced swiftly upwards for one moment.

In that one moment she learned all. By the lurid flash of that one swift involuntary glance she read revealed in the figure kneeling at her feet her lover and her husband's murderer. Without a word, without a thought, impelled only by a blind protective instinct, she stooped and, with a wild thrust, pushed his head away as he hung over the poisoned hand. Never heeding him further as he reeled to his feet and, clasping his throat with both hands, staggered out into the air, she caught up the rapidly discolouring limb and sucked the wound in desperation to drain the veins of the death already creeping through them. That terrible cry had brought some of the slaves into the veranda, and by this time her father had reached her side. Medical aid was summoned, and stimulants were poured down the sufferer's throat, pending the arrival of the physicians. 'Snake-bite!' resounded on every side, and was enough to account for all.

Outside in the glory of the sunshine stood the Portuguese, leaning against a clump of bamboo in the garden, dead. The splintered glass which her hand had mechanically retained had struck him in the neck as she pushed him aside from his lethal work, penetrating his carotid artery, and he had bled to death in a few moments. I suppose some influence in high places and a sufficiency of *milreis* notes arranged what little was left between him and the concerns of the world. Anyhow, he was huddled into the ground the same night, and next day the *Jornal do Commercio* informed its readers that he had been killed by a *curucucu*.

Care, skilful surgery, and a grand constitution pulled the patient out of the fire, and he ultimately recovered perfectly as far as his general health was concerned, though he never fully regained the use of his hand and arm. There could be no doubt as to what had happened; but I believe that no one but the wife, her father, and myself ever shared with the victim the true explanation. The Brazilian doctors had naturally accepted without cavil the statement that the hand, which by the time they examined it had undergone such disfiguration as to mask any original fang-wounds, had been bitten by a venomous serpent which had escaped unidentified—for the little *Philodryas viridissimus*, the lithe green whip-snake, had made good its exit in the confusion and was seen no more. The description given of it, however, was unmistakable, and could not possibly be confounded with that of any poisonous snake; it is a species which lives chiefly in trees and bushes, feeding on lizards and leaf-frogs, and is very common in that region. I may add that on more than one subsequent occasion a similar specimen was recognised without a moment's hesitation by all those who had been brought in contact with the reptile in question—a creature absolutely destitute of fangs or poison-bags, and possessing less power of inflicting injury than a mouse. It may be that the whole train of events, seemingly fortuitous, was the result of a baleful forethought and design on the part of the

unhappy man. More probably, as it appears to me, he was innocent of any purpose until struck by the diabolical idea that the harmless scratch might be converted into a death-dealing catastrophe by the means which his pursuit of scientific investigations had placed at his disposal—an idea perhaps actually engendered by the fright and unreasoning fears of his dupe. But howsoever the horrible intent may have originated, it is certain that the matter contained in the tubule was the venom of one of the great viperine serpents which abound in the tropical parts of South America, most likely a rattlesnake. His collection at Paqueta included a large number of these crotalines, which I believe to be the most virulent serpents on earth; and that he stored the poison for experimental uses was proved by the circumstance that a considerable quantity of it was found amongst his drugs and chemicals, in dried scales and on blotting-paper and sugar, as well as in glass tubes. I discovered also a peculiarly shaped spoon, and some shells covered with vegetable parchment which had been prepared to receive the bites of the enraged reptiles, teased into striking, and so to collect the fluid ejected from their glands. And with this deadly virus he was deliberately and murderously infecting the lifeblood of the man whose salt he had eaten, when the love for which his soul was stained betrayed him.

Bless me, there goes six bells! Why didn't some of you bring me up with a round turn before? We shall have the quartermaster upon us presently to order the light out.—Fiver, if you mean to keep the middle watch with your eyes open, you'd better turn in for an hour all standing, or you'll be found on the wheel-gratings aft dreaming of snake-bites.—I'm going up to sleep on the hurricane-deck skylights.—Good-night, all!

WOMEN WHO THREW AWAY CROWNS UNAWARES.

At the commencement of his career, the Great Napoleon fell in with an ardent Revolutionist, M. Paul François Barras, who took a great liking to the young Corsican, and conceived the highest opinion of his abilities and of the powers which, events proved, he possessed in so remarkable a degree. But in the opinion of Barras, Napoleon's want of means was a most serious obstacle to his chance of achieving fame, and he proposed to remedy this by selecting for him a rich wife. Now, whether it was that he did not number among his acquaintances many women with the requisite *dot*, or whether he thought that his protégé's fiery youth would be the better for the restraining influence which a wife of some experience in the ways of the world would no doubt be able to exert, Barras chose for this position a woman, who, though still undeniably handsome, was no longer young. Though she was called Mademoiselle Montansier, she was in reality a widow, who, because she had been on the stage, had never adopted the name of her husband. She was sixty years of age; but it was said that she made herself appear to be not more than forty by the intimate knowledge that she possessed of the secrets of the toilet table.

Barras made up his mind that it was imperative to the success of Napoleon's career that he should make this elderly lady his wife, and accordingly he set himself to work to bring about the match by impressing upon each of them the advantages that would result from it. To Napoleon he dilated upon the power that would follow the acquisition of the wealth which Mademoiselle Montansier could give him; to the lady he enlarged on the position that his talented young friend was bound to make for himself, and that would of course be shared by his wife.

For the purpose of introducing the couple to one another, he decided upon giving a supper, to which they were both invited; he so arranged matters that they were placed together at the table, and hoped that this precaution, added to the injunctions which he had given Napoleon to behave for once in his life with some show of civility to a lady, would have the happiest result. But in this he was fated to be disappointed. Napoleon was quite the last man to rely upon in such a respect. His manners towards the fair sex were those of a costermonger, and though he could generally hold his own in a conversation with men, he was entirely without the knack of making himself interesting or agreeable to women. He felt that his place was in the camp or the field, and he was quite out of his element among the conventionalities of a *salon*. Had he been inclined to woo, it would have been in a straightforward soldier-like fashion, and not with the dallies and compliments so dear to the Frenchwoman of his time. So, presently, Barras had the mortification of seeing Mademoiselle Montansier, her back turned to Napoleon, engaging in a lively conversation with the gentleman on her other side, while the future conqueror was making with little pellets of bread a plan of a battle on the table before him. Hardly a word passed between the two during the remainder of the meal. Barras watched with growing annoyance the indifference of Napoleon, and felt his plans melting into thin air as he saw the evident delight with which the widow turned from him to the more entertaining companion she had found elsewhere.

Supper over, Barras drew Napoleon aside and spoke forcibly to him of the foolish way in which he was throwing away his chances. 'You know,' said he, 'that money is everything to you; here are a million francs, and you will not stretch out your hand to take them; a most attractive woman, and you will not show her the smallest gallantry. Mademoiselle Montansier has come here this evening prepared to hear a declaration from you; strike while the iron is hot, and win the wealth that you cannot do without at one bold stroke.'

'The woman is old enough to be my grandmother,' said Napoleon, who was then twenty-five years old; 'but that is no matter, for to me all women are alike. Money is what I want; and if I cannot get it without a wife, I must take the two together. I am no coiner of pretty speeches; but before the evening is over I will say to her: "Mademoiselle, are you willing to accept me as your husband?" More than that I cannot do.'

'The very kind of proposal that any woman would expect from a blunt soldier,' replied Barras.

'Say that, and I desire no more. You are to be envied; for, besides her wealth, Mademoiselle is very handsome still.'

Napoleon turned away with a gesture of impatience; but half an hour later Barras noticed, to his joy, that the two were alone together in a recess. Presently, Napoleon got up and went away, and the lady beckoned to Barras with her fan. 'Take away that dreadful little man,' she said with a shudder; 'he has bored me to death, and I only prevented him from proposing by sending him for a glass of lemonade.'

'But why prevent him?' said Barras. 'He will be a great man yet.'

'Give myself and my money to such a little horror, such an ill-mannered boor as that!' replied Mademoiselle. 'Never! I would sooner take the first beggar-man out of the streets. What have I done that I should be given such a wretched evening? Don't let your'—

But at this moment she was checked by the arrival of Napoleon with the lemonade. Barras hurried away, still hoping for the best; but soon he saw at the other end of the room Bonaparte standing in the attitude in which he has so often been depicted, with his arms folded and his chin sunk upon them.

'Well, are you to be married?' he said, hastening towards his protégé.

'That old actress,' said Napoleon, 'that female Cræsus, refused me before I had opened my mouth to ask her hand. I was on the point of speaking, as I told you I should speak, when she began to inform me that her wealth was the cause of her constantly receiving offers from adventurers who cared nothing for herself; that she thanked Providence she had so far seen through such fellows; and that she was resolved to keep her independence. I was glad I had not spoken, for it gave me the opportunity of saying: "Mademoiselle, pray persevere in that praiseworthy intention; it is one which I am sure no one will ever try to persuade you to alter."—Let her keep her millions to bait the hook for some one else; I have done with her.'

And in spite of Barras' endeavours, the affair ended there.

In after-days, Mademoiselle Montansier was fond of boasting that, had she chosen, she might have been Empress of France and wife of the most famous man of the age. Could she have been gifted with the faculty of foresight, no doubt she would have regarded more leniently the young man whom M. Barras wished her to marry.

When the people of Grenoble, in 1788, were preparing for the Revolution, Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, afterwards king of Sweden and Norway, was quartered in the town. At that time he was a simple sergeant, distinguished by the attention he paid to his military duties, by his skill at cards, and by his popularity with the fair sex. On the famous 'Day of the Tiles,' when the women of Grenoble mounted on to the roofs and assailed the troops with a storm of tiles, Bernadotte was with his regiment in the Rue Pertuisière. There were cries from one housetop to another to spare the popular sergeant; but in spite of the good intentions of the assailants, he received a blow on the head which stretched him apparently lifeless on the ground. But presently he showed some signs of life, and was carried into a neigh-

bouring café, where he was laid upon a table which is shown to this day. A surgeon was called; and the wounded man showed such signs of vitality under his treatment, that it was soon evident that he was preserved for some other fate than that of Pyrrhus. As he recovered his senses, he slowly raised himself on one elbow, and looking at the faces crowded in the doorway, was attracted by one, that of a beautiful young girl, whose big blue eyes were suffused with tears of pity for him. But faintness overcame him, and when he again recovered, the sympathising face was gone.

Bernadotte was not long in getting over the effects of the blow that had prostrated him; and when he was quite recovered, he lost no time in endeavouring to find the maiden whose face he remembered like that of some pitying angel. For weeks his search was all in vain; but one day, as he was walking along and trying in vain to persuade himself of the futility of his search, he raised his eyes, and there before him was the face which had haunted him for so long! The girl walked past him without recognising the wounded sergeant of the 'Day of the Tiles.' He followed her, and entering her home, made himself known to her parents, and offered himself as a candidate for the hand of their daughter.

At first the fair Amelie was well enough pleased to receive the attentions of the smart young soldier; but after a while, a rival suitor appeared on the scene, and as he was the owner of a watchmaking establishment that yielded a comfortable income, his protestations of love sounded sweeter to her ears than those of the penniless *sous-officier*. At last the day came when Bernadotte was met on the threshold by her mother, who informed him that Amelie had the evening before betrothed herself to the watchmaker. His fury knew no bounds; and rushing from the house, he sought his rival and challenged him to a duel. The civilian was no coward, and they met the same evening; but the watchmaker was no match for Bernadotte, who was considered one of the crack swordsmen of his regiment, and after the exchange of a few passes, he fell with a severe wound in his side. The victorious soldier hoped that now Amelie would listen to his suit; but when he told her what had happened, she railed at him as the murderer of her lover, and told him never to let her see his face again. In six weeks' time she became the bride of the man who had braved death for her sake, and soon afterwards Bernadotte left Grenoble and began the career that landed him upon a throne.

When he was occupying a palace and directing the affairs of a nation, his old lover Amelie was a wrinkled, decrepit old woman, the general drudge of a wayside inn. Ill health had come upon her husband, and though she had struggled bravely to tide over the bad times by taking in washing, she had not been able to make headway against the evil fortune which pursued them. Her husband died, and she sank to the lowest level of dependence.

She was fond of relating the story of her earlier days, and used to say: 'Ah, sir, I should have done much better in marrying Monsieur Bernadotte. Why, I should have been a queen now—yes, a queen, instead of a drudge at every one's beck and call. Ah! I made a sad mistake; for

I assure you, sir, that Monsieur Bernadotte was no common man, and I always had a presentiment that he would distinguish himself. But when we are young we do not reflect, though I do not think that many can have been punished for their thoughtlessness by the loss of a kingdom.'

All remembrance of her husband's devotion seemed to have been driven from her head by brooding over the grand position she might have occupied had she refused him; though it is probable that if she had married Bernadotte instead, he would have settled down to a humdrum life, and would never have achieved greatness but for the recklessness which Amelie's refusal of him engendered. When asked if she had ever heard from him she replied: 'No, sir. I have written to him several times since he became a king, but he has never answered my letters. Perhaps he is still annoyed at my having refused him. If I had any money, I would go to Sweden and beg him, for the sake of the love that he once had for me, to give me his linen to wash! He would hardly refuse that.'

What an illustration of the workings of fate! The woman who might have shared Bernadotte's throne longing for his washing, and prevented from obtaining even this by her extreme poverty.

CHRISTMAS HOLLY.

THE round bright sun in the west hung low;
It was old-fashioned Christmas weather.
I remember the fields were white with snow
As we stood by the stile together.
In the woods the berries grew thick and red;
Yet I lingered and called it 'Folly!'
When you said with a smile: 'Let us cross the stile
And gather some Christmas holly.'

But over the fields by the frozen brook
We went where the boughs were sprinkled
With snow; and deep in a sheltered nook
The waterfall faintly tinkled.
A brave little robin sang out in the cold:
It was only young lovers' folly,
But we listened so long to the redbreast's song
That we almost forgot the holly.

Then the light died out of the golden day,
And the moon showed her silvery bow,
And we never knew if our homeward way
Lay through rose-leaves or drifted snow.
One bright star shone in the pale clear sky;
And my mother said it was folly
To listen so long to a robin's song—
But we brought home the Christmas holly.

You stir not now from our ingle nook,
And my hair is white like the snow;
For the story you told 'mid the sunset gold
Is a story of long ago.
As hand clasps hand by the winter fire,
Do you deem it an old wife's folly
That my eyes grow wet with a sweet regret
When I look at the Christmas holly?

E. MATHESON.

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THE BAHAMA FIBRE INDUSTRY.

As efforts have been made of late to bring into notice a hitherto little-known dependency of England, the Bahama Islands, with a view to the development of the Fibre Industry, for which its soil renders it especially suitable, it may perhaps interest our readers to learn some particulars of these islands from one who has long resided there.

When, some dozen years ago, we stated to our friends our intention of going to the Bahamas, it was amusing to note the various ways in which our announcement was received. The greater part in blank amazement asked, 'Where are the Bahamas? We never heard of such a place.' Others hearing mention of Nassau, the capital, immediately relegated us to Germany, and assured us it would be extremely cold for a winter residence. Others, again, confounded it with the Bermudas, and spouted Moore's song of the bulbul. One, a sea-captain, whose wanderings had led him to America, gravely shook his head, and warned us that we were going to an extremely wicked place, a community of wreckers; and so forth.

Notwithstanding all this ignorance on the part of those who must certainly have learnt in their school-days that the Bahama or Lucayos Islands are the most northerly group of the West Indies, lying off the coast of Florida, U. S. A., we found on our arrival at Nassau that the Bahamas have a history. They are of no mushroom growth, the offspring of gold-fields and diamond mines. They were discovered by Columbus, whose more than life-size statue guards the flight of steps to Government House; and these islands were to him the forerunners of the New World. One of them long enjoyed the reputation of being that on which he was saved from shipwreck, hence named by him San Salvador; but modern ideas have transferred that honour to Watling's Island. The Bahamas were discovered in 1492; and the present island of New Providence received from Columbus the name of Fernandino, in

honour of his sovereign. But in the splendour of their after-conquests the Spaniards forgot the Bahamas, and they were rediscovered nearly two hundred years later by Captain Sayle, an English navigator, on his way to Carolina in 1667. He gave the name of Providence to the island on which he was wrecked; and finally, to distinguish it from another place of that name, it was called New Providence. The Bahamas were annexed to England, and in 1672 a governor was sent out to settle the new colony.

But during the nearly two hundred years since its abandonment by the Spaniards, the Bahamas had become the headquarters of pirates, for whom its dangerous and intricate channels and endless islets and creeks rendered it a safe hiding-place; and these outlaws sorely troubled the early days of the colony, and made the lives of the governors a burden to them. At length, under the leadership of one Black Beard, they became so intolerable that an English force was sent to suppress them.

The Spaniards looked with some jealousy on the improved condition of a colony so near their own possessions, and during the American War of Independence seized upon them. The ruins of a strongly built Spanish fort are still to be seen choked up with bush at the west end of the island of New Providence; whilst two others, Fort Charlotte and Fort Montagu, are still in good condition. Spanish gold hoards, doubtless of the pirates, have been found at various times. At the close of the war, the Bahamas were retaken by the gallantry of a young English naval officer named Maynard; and for many years the colony prospered, as may be seen by the remains of country-houses in the different islands now going to ruin. On the abolition of slavery, the owners, unable to cultivate their large tracts of land, in many cases abandoned them to their slaves, and much of it has returned to bush.

No one in those days paid much attention to the Sisal plant (*Agave sisilana*)—of which more than one species grows wild—except to regard it as a troublesome weed which no amount of hard

usage could exterminate. It was only some few years ago that its value was discovered, and a few enterprising men turned it to some account for rope-making. It is especially valuable for ship cables, as it has been found to resist the action of sea-water better than most materials used for their manufacture. To convey a general idea of the appearance of the plant, one may say it is something like an aloe, but grows to a very large size, some of the leaves from which the fibre is extracted being six feet long with sharp points at the end; others have hooks all down the sides. There are seven different kinds of Sisal, some of which are valueless, but all yield a fibre. The Sisal plant has been grown for many years at Yucatan, a barren and rocky coast, with great success, and brings large profits, as, once planted, it spreads rapidly and needs little care. The soil of the Bahamas is said to be even more suitable for its growth than that of Yucatan. The plant grows wild, and all that is required for its cultivation is to clear some land—the more rocky the better—then plant young shoots in rows of about twelve feet apart, with a path between of about eighteen feet, to allow for growth and for carts to pass between. This work can be done by women at ninepence a day.

As the plant requires at least three years to reach perfection, it is necessary for all who embark in its cultivation to have something to fall back upon, either a small income or some occupation to support them until the plants have reached maturity. This might be found in growing fruit and vegetables, for which there is an opening. The market is not well supplied, the greater part coming from the out-islands. Bananas, oranges, shaddock, limes, mangoes, mammee, sappadillo, sour-sop, avocado pear, bread-fruit, guavas, melons, pine-apples, sugar-apples, and cocoa-nut are the chief fruits. Potatoes both sweet and Irish, yams, cassava, various kinds of pea and bean, okra, tomato, pumpkin, with some English vegetables—lettuce, cabbages and turnips, carrots, parsley and thyme, will all grow with care in the winter season; but in consequence of the long droughts which often prevail, some system of irrigation, such as is adopted in India, is very necessary. The black people can scarcely be considered a docile race, at least as compared with Hindu coolies, nor are they so industrious. They seem to have an idea that it is a flying in the face of Nature and of Providence to water. But, fortunately, a drought rarely prevails over all the Bahamas at once, and therefore in the winter season New Providence depends mainly on the out-islands for fodder for cattle and horses. Oats and hay are imported from America for the favoured few; but the general run of horses and mules have to learn to feed on blades—the leaf and stalk of Indian corn—on the corn itself, and on Guinea-grass; whilst in times of scarcity they have to fall back on the boughs of various kinds of trees—pride of India, mastic, Sydney-cod, and jumby; but as this last causes the hair to drop from the tail and mane, it is generally forbidden to horses.

New Providence is by no means the largest of the Bahama Islands, of which, including all the *cays* or rocky islets, there are some six hundred. Only from eighteen to twenty are inhabited,

some entirely by blacks, a few chiefly by whites. Andros, sixty miles from New Providence, is considerably larger and well wooded. Eleuthera and Abaco, long narrow strips of land, and Cat Island or San Salvador, are the chief pine-growing islands. Exuma and Inagua have wild horses, and rear most cattle. But New Providence is more conveniently situated for trade, having a good harbour. It is slightly larger than the Isle of Wight, being twenty-seven miles long by fourteen wide, lying east and west. Nassau, the capital, is the only town, and has a cathedral and a bishop's residence. There are settlements in many of the out-islands. Nassau harbour is formed by a long narrow strip of land which runs parallel with the shore for two or three miles, called Hog Island. As you cross the bar and get beyond the reach of the Atlantic billows the calm is instantaneous. The colour of the water itself changes; a lovely transparent green blue takes the place of the indigo waves outside. This lovely sea of ever-changing, ever-beautiful tints is one of the great charms of Nassau. An English sea looks leaden and colourless after these sapphire waters, which, whether lashed by storms or in dead calm, look equally beautiful.

Nassau itself is a clean little city, with a principal street running along the shore. No smells suggestive of yellow fever greet the nose on landing, as at Cuba and Jamaica; but neither are there any grand mountains suggestive of earthquake to enchant the eyes. The Bahamas are sadly flat, as befits their coral formation. Some two or three of the islands boast of hills; one has an approach to a river. New Providence contains two lakes, both brackish; but plenty of excellent water can be found almost anywhere by digging, and there are wells to almost every dwelling-house. Rain-water kept in tanks is chiefly used for drinking. The whole island is a well with a shallow layer of soil; the yearly deposit of leaves is a priceless treasure, and even weeds are rarely burnt by the thrifty, though bush-clearings are generally done by fire. It is a question whether this mode of agriculture does not impoverish the ground.

Considering the lack of soil, it is surprising that the trees in these islands attain to the size they do. There is a great variety of them, and some are very large. The roots of many spread along the ground to great distances, and these, such as the tamarind tree, are easily overturned by hurricanes; but so tenacious are they of life, that in this prostrate condition they throw out new roots and continue to thrive. Others root themselves in crevices of the rock, striking downwards till they reach water, which is never very far below. Others, again, such as the ceiba or silk-cotton tree, throw out large buttresses from their stems to make up for depth. One growing in the centre of the public buildings at Nassau could accommodate several horses with separate stalls. The chief trees are the cocoa-nut palm, tamarind, ceiba, sandbox, horseflesh (a species of mahogany), gumalamy, logwood, and three kinds of fig or banyan. The ponsiana, a very handsome tree with flaming masses of blossom of a brilliant scarlet, was introduced from Demerara, and for many months of the year brightens the island with its splendour.

In the centre of the island is a fir forest, or, as here called, 'pine barren,' the resort of wild pigeons—almost the only game, except a few water-birds—coot, and wild-duck. The birds in New Providence are not remarkable, though numerous in the winter season, when they migrate in large quantities from America—humming-birds, banana birds, and various kinds of small parakeets; ricebirds, American robin, mocking-birds and thrashers, the last resembling in note the English thrush. In the out-islands small parrots are still found.

Unfortunately, there is no botanic garden in Nassau. Gardening is a laborious work, owing to the winter droughts. The bush contains a great variety of pretty flowering shrubs, and about seven varieties of ferns, and the same of orchids. Most of the cultivated shrubs and flowering trees have been introduced from time to time from Cuba and other parts of the West Indies. Cinnamon and spice grow here, but are not turned to use. A profusion of roses, lilies of various kinds, hybiscus, plumbago, geraniums, with some English seedlings, grow luxuriantly; but hurricanes, though not frequent, are very destructive, and help to keep down a population already poor. It will be a great blessing to the Bahamas if the Sisal-planting succeeds, as it requires but little soil and is not injured by weather.

The stores in Nassau are so much improved that really for all moderate wants they suffice. It is a mistake to try to make a colony like England. Epicures and highly fashionable folk should never leave its shores, for it must be confessed that—guava jelly and West Indian preserves excepted—food in a tropical country is not luxurious, certainly not in the Bahamas; but the necessities of life are cheap and abundant. It would be a philanthropic, but, considering the nature of the black race, a difficult work to set on foot a school of cookery, and the teacher would need first to master the primitive style of pots and pans. No iron-ranges here; coal as we know it is a thing unknown, except in the *Victoria Hotel*. Charcoal goes by that name here, and wood-fires are universal—a source of perpetual heartburning between mistress and cook. It would be well for an intending visitor to have some knowledge of *cuisinier*, for the race of cooks is dying out fast, the few remaining being relics of 'old-time days.'

Amusements truly are few in Nassau. The one or two English ladies ride. As regards horses, 'handsome is as handsome does;' *ergo*, Nassau horses are very handsome; they do their duty nobly. A Nassau horse never walks; it is always at full tear, and this on hard roads cut out of solid rock. Dogs are legion; a handsome dog is a curiosity; their concerted barking on moonlight nights, together with the crowing of innumerable roosters, drive slumber far away from weary eyes. In all other respects moonlight nights in Nassau are heavenly. It would be a good work to import a little new blood in the way of dogs; the present race of curs is deplorable. Boating as an amusement is scarcely made so much of as it ought to be; and fishing is almost confined to the trade. Yet fish about the Bahamas are very abundant, various, and extremely beautiful, and form the staple diet of the poorer classes. They are of all colours and

sizes; some of a deep royal blue, some cherry coloured, some silvery spotted with red or striped with yellow, and most of them good eating. Crayfish, crabs, and turtle also abound. Picnics by land or by water are frequent in the winter season.

In closing these few remarks on the Bahamas we must not fail to extol the climate, which scarcely has its equal in any part of the world. Hitherto, this has been its one recommendation, its sole stock in trade; let us hope that Sisal may prove an additional one; but of the two, health is better than wealth, and it is not too much to say that to live is a pleasure in the Bahamas. A more charming climate does not exist, and one only regrets that its distance from England prevents its being more frequented by invalids from thence. It is delightful to wake up day after day to bright sunlight; and it is only when you return to the dear old mother country with its gray skies and tedious winters that you fully realise the charm of a climate like this; free from all epidemics which linger more or less in all the more beautiful southern isles, with a winter lasting from October to May, during which the thermometer never falls below fifty-six degrees, rarely below sixty. Our American neighbours discovered its value long ago, and for many years have made Nassau their winter resort, many hundreds coming in relays to the *Victoria Hotel* and to other boarding-houses. Their arrival is the signal for such festivities as the island affords; and to their cheerful and genial disposition the Nassovians are not a little indebted for the brightening of their somewhat monotonous life. In fact the great want of these islands is a little more intercourse with the outer world, a little more public opinion, a little shaking out of old grooves, and a little of the large-mindedness which comes from rubbing up amongst our fellow-creatures and from a knowledge of other countries. If they have not all the luxuries of other lands, they have a climate which is a luxury in itself, and which renders many others unnecessary.

Let us hope that the Sisal plant may fill its empty coffers (we have heard that a ton of fibre which was lately sent to England from the Bahamas realised fifty-two pounds), and that it may be found after all that the despised weed is better than Spanish gold; and that a bountiful Providence leaves no spot destitute of resources if diligently sought for and improved.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JULES PICOT had been carefully searched before being locked up in his cell, and it was an utter puzzle to the jail officials how he had contrived to conceal about him even so insignificant an article as the tiny phial of poison so as to evade detection. One of the warders, however, of a more inquiring turn of mind than his fellows succeeded, a day or two later, in solving the mystery. The mountebank wore very high-heeled shoes, as many of his countrymen make a practice of doing. The heel of one of his shoes had been so made that it could be unscrewed at will, while inside it was a cavity just large enough

to hold the phial. Picot had evidently prepared himself beforehand for a contingency the like of that which had at length befallen him. The letter written a few hours before his death was in French, and was addressed to 'Madame Brouke.' The following is a translation of it:

MADAME—When these lines reach you, the hand that writes them will be cold in death. I am tired of life, and life is tired of me: this night we part company for ever. I take the liberty of addressing you because of your kindness to my little Henri (whom *le bon Dieu* has seen fit to take from me for my sins), and because you were so much in his thoughts when he was dying. I also address you for another reason, which I will explain presently.

It was in the first week of the new year that Henri met with the accident which proved fatal to him. He lingered for two weeks, and then died. He had but little pain; life faded out of him like a lamp that slowly expires for want of oil. As I said before, he often talked about his *belle madame*. He could not remember his mother, and it was your face that shone on him in his dreams, as it were the face of an angel.

After he was gone and I was alone in the world, I, too, began to have dreams such as I had never had before. Every night Henri came and stood by my bed, but it was always with an averted face; never would he turn and look at me. I used to try to cry out, to seize his hand; but I was dumb and motionless as a corpse. Then, after a minute or two, he would slowly vanish, with bowed head and hands pressed to his face, as though he were weeping silently. Night after night it was ever the same. Then a great restlessness took possession of me. I seemed to be urged onward from place to place by some invisible power and without any will of my own. When I rose in a morning I knew not where I should sleep at night; onward, ever onward, I was compelled to go. Last night I reached this place, and this morning I rose thinking to resume my wanderings; but a conversation I chanced to overhear led me to seek the court of justice. You, madame, know what took place there.

Even before I had spoken a word, I knew why my footsteps had been directed to this place, and that my wanderings were at an end. This afternoon, after all was over, I lay down on my pallet and fell asleep, and while I slumbered, Henri came to me; but this time his face was no longer averted; his eyes gazed into mine, and he smiled as he used to smile at me out of his mother's arms. Ah, how shining and beautiful he looked! Then a soft cool hand was laid on my brow, that had burned and burned for months, and all the pain went, and I knew nothing more till I awoke.

A word more and I have done. Madame, pray believe me when I say that never could a man be more surprised and astounded than I, Jules Picot, was to-day when I found that it was your good husband who was accused of the death of the Baron von Rosenberg. When I made my way into the court after hearing that some one had been arrested for the murder, I thought to see only a stranger, one whom I had never

seen before. But even in that case I should have done as I did to-day, and have confessed that it was by my hand and mine alone that Von Rosenberg met his death. Conceive, then, my astonishment when in the accused I recognised M. Brouke, whom I had known in London under the name of 'M. Stewart!' I knew that when in London he was in trouble—in hiding—but never did I dream of the crime that was laid to his charge. Had I but known it, you and he would long ago have been made happy by the confession of him who now signs his name for the last time.

JULES PICOT.

With what a host of conflicting emotions this document was read by her to whom it was addressed may be more readily imagined than described.

George Crofton sat alone in his cell, devouring his heart in a bitterness too deep for words. All was over; all the bright prospects of his youth and early manhood had ended in this; his home for years to come would be a felon's cell, his only companions the lowest of the low, the vilest of the vile. '*Facilis est descensus Averno,*' he muttered with a sneer. 'Yes, in my case the descent has been swift and easy enough in all conscience.' One gleam of lurid joy, and one only, illumined the black cavernous depths in which his thoughts, like fallen spirits, winged their way aimlessly to and fro, finding no spot whereon to rest. Gerald Brooke, the man he hated with an intensity of hatred bred only in natures such as his, was a prisoner even as he was, and it was his, Crofton's, hand that had brought him there! He had but spoken the truth when he said that the hour of his revenge would come at last. It was here now, although it had come after a fashion altogether different from what he had expected. Thanks to his folly, his own outlook was a dreary one enough; but what was it in comparison with the grim prospect that stared his hated cousin so closely in the face! When he thought of this it was as the one sweet drop in the bitter cup which Fate had pressed with such unrelenting fingers to his lips.

While he sat brooding over these and other matters, just as daylight was deepening into dusk, a warder unlocked the door of his cell. 'You're wanted in the waiting-room,' said the man. 'Your uncle, Colonel Crofton, has called to see you. It's past the hour for visitors; but as he's brought a magistrate's order, and as he says he's obliged to go back to London to-night, the governor has agreed to relax the rules for once.'

Crofton stared at the man in stupefaction. To the best of his belief he had no such relative in the world as the one just named. 'Ah, you didn't expect to see him, I daresay,' continued the warder. 'A nice affable gent as ever I see; but I wouldn't keep him waiting if I was you.'

Crofton followed the man without a word; and after being conducted through a couple of corridors, was ushered into a sparsely furnished white-washed room, where a middle-aged, well-built man of military carriage, who had been perusing through his eyeglass the printed rules and regulations framed over the mantel-piece, turned to greet him. He had close-cut grizzled hair and a thick

drooping grizzled moustache. He wore a lightly buttoned frockcoat, gray trousers and straps, and military boots highly polished. He carried his hat and a tasselled malacca in his hand, and one corner of a bandana handkerchief protruded from his pocket behind.

'My dear nephew—my dear George!' he exclaimed with much effusion as he advanced a step or two and held out his hand. 'This is indeed a dreadful predicament in which to find you. What, oh, what can you have been about that I should have to seek you in a place like this! Your poor aunt will be heart-broken when she hears of it. I must break the terrible news as gently as possible; but really, really, in her delicate state of health I dread the effect such a disclosure may have upon her.' His voice trembled with emotion; he brushed away a tear, or seemed to do so.

George Crofton had undergone many surprises in his time, but never one that left him more dumfounded than this, for in his *soi-disant* uncle his quick eyes recognised at a glance no less a personage than Lardy Bill. If at the moment his eyes fell on him he had been in the least doubt of the fact, that doubt would have been dispelled by the expressive wink with which his friend favoured him an instant later. The man's audacity fairly took Crofton's breath away.

'The first question, my dear boy,' resumed the sham colonel, so as to give the other time to recover himself, 'of course is whether anything can be done for you, and if so, what. I need not say that my purse is at your service; for, shocked as I am to find you in this place, I cannot forget that you are my brother's son. I leave for London by the first train, and immediately on my arrival I will take the advice of my own lawyers in the matter, which will, I think, be the best thing that can be done under the painful circumstances of the case.'

'I suppose that's about the only thing that can be done,' answered Crofton, who was still utterly at a loss to divine the motive of the other's visit.

The warder who had conducted Crofton from his cell was present at the interview, ostensibly for the purpose of seeing that none of the jail regulations were infringed either by the prisoner or his visitor; but a sovereign having been pressed into his unreluctant palm at the moment he ushered the latter into the waiting-room, he now discreetly turned his back on the pair and stared persistently out of the window.

A little further conversation passed between uncle and nephew, the chief part of it falling to the lot of the former, then the colonel looked at his watch and rose to take his leave. The warder turned at the same instant.

'As I remarked before, my dear George,' said the uncle as he clasped both the nephew's hands in his, 'however pained—most deeply pained—I may be, everything shall be done for you that can be done. I refrain from all reproaches—at present I can only grieve. But your poor aunt, George—your poor aunt! You are her godson and favourite nephew. Ah me—ah me!'

He walked out of the room with both hands outspread and slowly shaking his head, like a man whose feelings were more than he could control.

The jail officials at an early hour next morning, in addition to making the discovery that in the course of the night their French prisoner had taken leave of them after an altogether illegal and unjustifiable fashion, were further astounded by finding that the inmate of cell No. 5 had also relieved them of his presence, but in a mode altogether different from that which had found favour with the mountebank.

Crofton, unheard by any one, had contrived to file through the middle bar of his cell window and then to squeeze himself through the aperture thus made, after which there was nothing but a high wall between himself and liberty. Beyond this wall were some market gardens, the jail being situated in the outskirts of the town, and then the open fields. Outside the wall, a coil of rope with a strong steel hook at each end was found; and the footsteps of two if not of three men were plainly traceable for some distance in the soft mould of the garden. As to how Crofton had become possessed of the file, and by whose connivance and help he had been able to climb the wall and descend safely on the other side, there was no evidence forthcoming. The only fact the jail officials could affirm with certainty was that their prisoner was nowhere to be found.

At as early an hour as possible on the morning following his capture, Crofton had obtained permission to send a telegram to his wife, and before noon Stephanie was speeding northward by the express in response to his summons. When she reached Cummerhays, it was too late for her to visit her husband that night; so, carrying her little handbag, she walked from the station to the inn nearest to it and asked to be accommodated with supper and a bed. She had ascertained from a constable in the street that the earliest hour at which visitors were admitted to the jail was ten o'clock.

Next morning, which was that of Saturday, Stephanie rose betimes. While she was eating her breakfast the landlady bustled in, carrying an open newspaper. 'Here's the weekly paper, ma'am,' she said. 'The boy has just brought it; and as it contains a long account of the doings at the justice-room yesterday, about which you may have heard, I thought that perhaps you would like to read it over your breakfast.'

'Thank you very much; I shall be glad to do so,' said Stephanie quietly. She had given no name at the inn, and the landlady had not the slightest suspicion that her guest had any reason for being more interested than any stranger might be supposed to be in the news contained in the paper. Nor, in fact, had Stephanie any knowledge of what had happened. Her husband's telegram had been of the briefest; it had merely said: 'I am in trouble. Come at once. Bring money. Inquire for me at the jail.' But from what she knew already, she guessed, and rightly, that the enterprise on which Crofton was bent when he left home had failed, and that by some mischance he himself had come to grief.

The moment she was left alone Stephanie opened the paper with eager fingers. Her quick eyes were not long in finding the particular news of which they were in search. She read the story of the attempted robbery, as detailed in the evidence, with ever-growing wonder—a wonder that was intensified twenty-fold when she read how

Gerald Brooke had been arrested at the same time as her husband, and by what strange chance the two cousins had once more been brought face to face. But when, a few lines lower down, her eyes caught sight of another well-known name, all the colour ebbed from her face, leaving it as white as the face of a dead woman. She read to the end, to the last word of Picot's strange confession before the magistrates, and then the paper dropped from her hands.

'My father the murderer of Von Rosenberg, and I—I the cause of it!' she murmured in horror-stricken accents. For a little while she sat like a woman stunned, stupefied, her eyes staring into vacancy, her mind a whirling chaos in which thoughts and fancies the most bizarre and incongruous came and went, mixing and mingling with each other in a sort of mad Brocken dance, all the elements of which were lurid, vague, and elusive.

How long she sat thus she never knew; but she was roused by the entrance of the landlady, who had come to reclaim the newspaper, there being three or four people in the taproom who were anxious to obtain a glimpse of it. Fortunately, the good woman was somewhat short-sighted, and perceived nothing out of the ordinary in her guest's appearance or demeanour. But her entrance broke the spell and served to recall Stephanie to the realities of her position.

For a little while all thought of her husband had vanished from her mind. This second blow had smitten her so much more sharply than the first that the pain caused by the former seemed deadened thereby. But now that her waking trance was broken, the double nature of her calamity forced itself on her mind. 'My father and my husband shut up in one prison!' she said to herself; and it was all she could do to refrain from bursting into laughter. For are there not some kinds of laughter the sources of which lie deeper than the deepest fountains of tears?

Suddenly she started to her feet and pressed both hands to her forehead. 'But why—why should my father have gone to Von Rosenberg to demand from him tidings of me, when I wrote to him from London telling him all that had happened to me and where I was? Can it be possible that my letter never reached him? Had he received it, there would have been no need for him to seek Von Rosenberg. Even after so long a time I could almost repeat my letter word for word. In it I told my father how I had left home with Von Rosenberg, but only after he had given me his solemn promise to make me his wife the moment we set foot in England. I told how, within an hour after our arrival in London, I had claimed the fulfilment of his promise, and how he had laughed me to scorn, thinking that he had now got me completely in his power. I told how I flung all Von Rosenberg's presents at his feet and left him there and then, and going out into the rainy streets of the great city, fled as for my life. I told how I hid for weeks in a garret, living on little more than bread and milk; and how at last, when my money was all gone, I found my way to the nearest cirque, and there obtained an engagement. All this I told my father in my letter, and then I prayed him to forgive me, and told him how I longed to go back to him and my mother. Weeks and months I

waited with an aching heart for the answer which never came. Then I said to myself: "My father will not forgive me. I shall never see him or my mother again." But the letter never reached him. Had it done so he would not be where he is to-day.' Tearless sobs shook her from head to foot.

At this juncture in burst the landlady with an air of much importance. 'As you have read the paper, I thought that maybe you would like to hear the news that one of the warders just off duty has brought us from the jail. Such times as we live in, to be sure!'

'News—what news?' asked Stephanie faintly.

'John Myles has brought word—and he ought to know, if anybody does—that one of the prisoners—Crifton or Crofton by name—managed to break out of his cell in the night, and has got clear away. But that's not all by any means. The foreigner—him as accused himself in open court of the murder—was found dead this morning, poisoned by his own hand. The news will be all over England before nightfall.—Gracious me, ma'am, whatever is the matter!—Mary, Eliza—quick, quick!'

THE TOURACOS AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

At the present moment the Menagerie of the Zoological Society, Regent's Park, has an unusually large number of Touracos, a species of birds which has not before been exhibited in this country. Touraco is the native name of a beautiful group of birds peculiar to Africa, and sometimes called, from their food, Plantain Eaters. They are generally supposed to be allied to the Cuckoos, and they are not altogether unlike some of them in their external characters. An African traveller observed so long ago as 1818 that the Plantain Eaters during heavy showers hide themselves in the thickest foliage, as if they had a special dread of getting wet. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this; in fact, many birds show a dislike to getting wet feathers; but the Touracos have a much better reason for this dislike than most other birds. M. Verreaux, the traveller referred to, discovered the reason when he attempted to catch a Touraco which was sheltering itself during a storm of rain: he found that, when he grasped the feathers, the brilliant crimson colouring-matter stained his hands; and later, he discovered that the feathers could be washed almost white. To find colours that 'run' in the feathers of a bird is most unexpected, and it is not surprising to hear that one naturalist who purchased some skins thought himself to have been deceived with artificially painted birds. The colour comes out so readily that when a Touraco is shot and falls into a pool it stains the surrounding water not so much with its blood as with the red dye from its wing feathers. Touracos are not, however, entirely coloured by this peculiar substance; they have a great deal of green about them, and this green is due to the presence of a green pigment which appears to be convertible into the red substance by prolonged boiling. The green pigment, unlike the red, is a 'fast' colour.

Most birds that are coloured green owe this colour, at least partly, to fine markings upon the

feathers; and all 'metallic' colours, such as the brilliant greens, blues, and reds of the humming-birds, are due to optical effects caused by the structure of the feathers, and have nothing to do with any pigment of the same colour within the substance of the feathers. There are thus two sources of colour among birds, and it is a remarkable fact that in many cases where the male birds have a brilliant coloration and the females are soberly clad, the colour is a 'mechanically' caused colour; for instance, in the humming-birds. The Touracos do not show this difference between the sexes; the female resembles her mate, and there is no superiority on either side, but an absolute equality.

What, then, in the first place, can be the advantage to the Touraco of having this brilliant and diverse coloration; and in the second place, why is the red colour so easily destroyed? It is no use nowadays to fall back upon the convenient statement that tropical birds are generally brightly coloured; this in the eyes of most naturalists would be as bad as to tell a physicist that mercury rises in an airless tube because 'Nature abhors a vacuum.' Everything has to be explained, and, moreover, the locks which guard the secrets of Nature have to be opened by keys of a particular pattern, either by skill or by force. In fact, there is a tendency to make one brilliant theory, applicable possibly to the instance which it was advanced to solve, do for all the phenomena which have any visible relation to it. But there is now to some extent a reaction against all this, and some naturalists think that we cannot and need not find a utilitarian explanation for every observed fact. It has been suggested that the red coloration of the Touraco is destroyed by the wet when the bird creeps into shelter, so that its enemies, which are driven by stress of weather into the same shelter, may not see it so easily. This is perhaps a little far-fetched, though ingenious. Another possible explanation is that the Touraco was originally an inhabitant of rainless or comparatively rain-free districts; but then, why should it migrate into districts where its colour was liable to be destroyed? This objection might of course be met by supposing that it is only comparatively recently that this migration has taken place, so that the bird has not had time to adapt itself to its new conditions. But all this assumes that the crimson colour has some definite bearing upon the mode of life of the Touraco. Colour cannot always have a relation of this sort, or else why should so many animals which inhabit the bottom of the ocean, where the darkness must be almost such as can be felt, be often brightly, nay, brilliantly coloured? It is the rule and not the exception for this brilliant coloration to occur in deep-sea animals; if any one doubts it, let him read Moseley's *Naturalist on the Challenger*. 'Bright scarlet shrimps, deep purple holothurians,' blue crustaceans, starfish, and sponges have been dredged up from abysmal darkness.

Now, it is a very remarkable fact about the Touracos that the red colouring-matter contains a large amount of copper. The existence of copper is not remarkable, for we know that this metal in minute quantities is most widely distributed in animals and vegetables: it occurs in cereals, eggs, and even in human blood; it is probably absorbed from the soil by plants and transferred to the

bodies of animals which feed upon these plants. But copper is so abundant in the feathers of the Touraco that the characteristic green flame is given when the feather is burnt. It is only in the red feathers that the metal is found. It seems, therefore, as if at least the greater part of the copper taken in with the food ultimately found its way to the red feathers. Perhaps, therefore, the solubility of the red pigment in water is a way of getting rid of the copper, which would otherwise accumulate in other parts of the body to a dangerous extent.

CHARLIE RANSOM.

A STORY OF THE OIL COUNTRY.

CHAPTER III.

ONE afternoon, about the 1st of March, Charlie Ransom's place at the little schoolhouse was vacant, and it soon became known that he was ill. The next day he was so much worse that Steve Smiley was despatched with his buck-board for Doctor Leslie, whose headquarters were at Mesopotamia Cross Roads. The physician pronounced Ransom's sickness a case of brain-fever; and although the lad had gone no further in his studies than the average boy of twelve in a London Board School, there was little doubt that close application to his books and an earnest desire to excel had engendered the fever. Perhaps there was something else which had worried Charlie; but that is a matter of doubt; and even if it were so, not a man or woman in Pan Handle City would have bracketed an affair of the heart with brain-fever in one and the same breath.

Charlie's winter-quarters were in the house of the owner and commander of the *Petroleum Gem*, who in winter took back, for board and lodging, part of the wages which he paid his first-mate during the summer season. Old Captain Jones and his wife were good enough in their way. Jerry Jones thought there were few boys like the Doll, and would have been very much grieved to lose him. Mrs Jones, too, was rather fond of Ransom, and waited upon his every want—when she knew just what he wanted. But their care and attention were, after all, of a very rough-and-ready character. The old lady regularly administered the medicine left by the doctor, and three times a day tendered the sick man such homely food as formed their own meals. But there was something lacking, a something that could only be supplied by tender, delicate, and loving hands, a something which even Charlie—who had known nothing of a home since he was eleven years old—sadly missed, and the more so as he passed the crisis of the fever and convalescence set in. For, although Ransom was very ill indeed, he did get better, and everybody in Pan Handle City was glad of it. All through the days of prostration and delirium inquiries from his friends had been frequent, and not a few of them had called daily at Jerry Jones's house for bulletins from Charlie's doctor and nurse. Among these was Marie Reese, who missed her favourite pupil more than a little. The first day that Ransom was pronounced out of danger, and while he was very, very weak, Miss Reese begged to be admitted for a moment to the sick-room.

When the school teacher stood in the tiny bed-chamber she was very much shocked and grieved. The whitewashed walls were quite bare, and there was no carpet, or even a mat, upon the floor. All that the room contained was a rough table, one chair decidedly the worse for wear, Ransom's large trunk, and the narrow cot-bed upon which lay the listless form of the Doll—so changed, that had she not been certain it was he, Marie Reese could hardly have recognised him. The curly hair was dank and tangled, the full ruddy cheeks had become pale and thin, while the bright eyes were sunken and covered by heavily drooping eyelids. Outside the coverlet rested two bony hands, one of which the school-mistress took in her own, that were so plump and warm. But Ransom never moved, and gave no sign that he was conscious of his visitor's presence. Marie thought that he slept; and as a tear of pity started from her eyes, she bent over the sick lad while her lips pressed upon his cheek a sisterly kiss of sympathy and compassion. It was a pure and innocent caress—a caress prompted by the peculiarly forlorn condition of poor Ransom in his unlovely room. She did not pretend to give any deeper meaning to the kiss, because she felt nothing deeper than friendship for the lad, and would not upon any consideration have had him think so. Her attachment for the Doll was the warm friendship, perhaps patronising friendship, of an elder sister for a younger brother. Marie Reese meant all that she felt; but she meant not one whit more than she felt, for Charlie Ransom. And she knew nothing of the delicious thrill which that simple kiss sent through the pulses of the weary and worn invalid; she knew nought of the effect which it produced upon the poor fellow, who slowly opened his eyes and watched her, with a curious smile of satisfaction upon his face, as she quietly flitted from his room to Mrs Jones's kitchen.

How should *she* know that her token of kindly sympathy had seemed to the lonely lad, whose heart ached and yearned for more than sympathy, a direct answer to the question which had racked his mind all through the winter? And why should Charlie Ransom—the homeless untrained lad, whose life had been spent amid scenes where education and refinement were chiefly conspicuous by their absence—why should this unsophisticated deck-hand of a little river steamer be different from other men? Why should he be better able coolly to calculate and calmly to judge where men with greater advantages act entirely without judgment and calculation?

Certainly, Marie Reese was at least three years older than the Doll, while the intellectual and social gulf which yawned between them was so wide and deep that a generation of years could not bridge it. But when love's fervid heat sets young blood a-boiling, such discrepancies and inconsistencies become questions scarcely worthy of consideration—nay, they vanish altogether. It was so with Charlie Ransom.

The next day, Marie Reese was again a visitor to the sick lad's room, and this time she did not go empty-handed. Deftly she fastened to the window a muslin curtain which she had begged of Mrs Lamson, and 'without sound of hammer' hung upon the poverty-stricken walls a couple of little steel engravings of which she had robbed

her own room. Upon the table she set a tiny glass vase, in which she placed a bright crocus, the only flower that she could find in the window-boxes of Captain Peter's parlour. But these slight additions made a wonderful change for the better in the 'eight-by-ten' bedroom, and greatly aided the Doll toward a rapid recovery. Then, with kindly skilful hands, that were so different from Mrs Jones's, the schoolmarm arranged Ransom's pillows, talking to him cheerily the while.

'Now, Ransom,' she said, as she prepared to go, 'is there anything I can do for you—anything?'

'Yes, Miss Reese; there *is* something I should like. I should like you to give me, or lend me if you can't spare it, your picture. Will you, marm—and set it right by the table yonder?'

'I will see what I can do for you,' said Marie. 'Is that all?'

'No, miss; there is something else. I have never heard you sing; but I somehow fancy that you can if you try. Will you sing me something the next time you come? I like music—had a notion once to learn it myself, and there's a bit of a banjo in my trunk.'

'Well, well! You have Mrs Jones get the banjo out, and I will see if I can manipulate it. Good-bye until to-morrow.'

To-morrow came; and after school, Marie went over to see her patient, as she now called the Doll. She entered the room very noiselessly; but Ransom was wide awake, and eagerly watched her as she deposited upon the table a small Oxford frame containing a portrait of herself. By the side of the trunk lay a cheap banjo, which Marie took up, picking over the strings with the fingers of an expert. She played the instrument as easily and as naturally as a New Orleans darkey, and charmed her listener with a long repertoire of songs that included *Annie Laurie* and *The Siranee River*. She was about to lay down the banjo, when Ransom brought forth from under his pillow a small sheet of music and some printed verses. It was a hymn-tune arranged for the banjo, and the words were those of an old-fashioned Methodist revival hymn. To Marie it seemed a curious enough melody for a banjo; but Ransom begged her to play it.

'It's the only tune as I ever learned to sing, Miss Reese, and it's the only tune I ever tried to play, though I never quite managed *that*. I kinder like it, 'cause they sung it the only time mother ever took me to church in the old days at Pittsburg.'

When Marie read over the accompaniment as printed, there seemed to her very little music in the tune; but she rendered it in a setting of her own, and sang in her sweet soprano voice:

My heav'nly home is bright and fair;
Nor pain nor death can enter there;
Its glittering towers the sun outshine;
That heav'nly mansion shall be mine.

She went through all the verses; and to Charlie Ransom the singing of that simple old hymn seemed the most divine music he had ever heard. Always after that, when Marie Reese called to see him—which she did every day until he was well enough to get about a little—he coaxed her to sing for him the 'heavenly mansion piece.'

But if those days of convalescence were as a sweet and happy dream to Charlie, he experienced a very rough and sudden awakening upon the very first day that he was able to leave the house.

During the last week of March, Pan Handle City began to awaken from its state of winter lethargy. The ice was slowly disappearing from the Tomhicken Creek, and the first downpour of rain would create a flood, more or less severe, that would soon wash the last vestige of ice and snow from the lowlands of the Valley. Even now, Captain Jerry Jones was busy each day, oiling, greasing, tarring, and washing each nook, corner, and working part of the *Petroleum Gem*, in anticipation of a rushing spring business. All the owners of wells were getting ready innumerable barrels of oil for shipment down the river; and those who had failed to secure legitimate vessels for transporting their output were engaged in constructing rafts of sundry designs and dimensions. Even the women were busy, preparing for that annual phenomenon known as 'spring cleaning,' which not even the primitive homes of Pan Handle City could escape. Down at the school Marie Reese had her hands full; for before the end of April the school-year would close, and while the schoolmistress did not purpose to return to the settlement in the autumn, she wanted to complete all the work she had mapped out for herself when she undertook the task which she had, thus far, so faithfully performed.

With these many signs of activity about him, Charlie Ransom felt like a drone in a hive as he strolled out in the feeble sunshine of a March afternoon. Partly from inclination and partly from force of habit, Ransom wended his steps toward the schoolhouse, where his arrival was not the only surprise to which the scholars were to be treated that day. The schoolmistress insisted upon the Doll occupying her chair, which was the only comfortable seat in the room. Of course Ransom disliked to deprive the teacher of her seat, and made some protest; but he yielded at last. As he sat by the side of the little desk, he felt more than pleased at so signal and public a mark of personal kindness from the woman for whom he would have cheerfully drained each drop of his life's blood.

It was well-nigh time for the dismissal of the scholars, when a horse was stopped at the door of the schoolhouse, where its rider dismounted. A moment later, a fine handsome man of thirty-five in coat and riding-breeches strode up the little aisle of the schoolroom. He displayed not the slightest sign of bashfulness in his manly bearded face, and he walked with a quick firm step, which seemed to indicate that his only immediate object was to reach as speedily as possible the pretty blushing woman whose hand rested upon the unpretentious desk, with sensations which were not—and never could have been—understood by the amazed pupils, both big and little. Totally oblivious to the half-hundred spectators, the stranger grasped both the schoolmarm's hands in his own, and actually bent his head down until he almost touched the beautiful face with his moustache. Indeed, it was afterwards distinctly alleged by all who witnessed the performance that the gentleman undoubtedly intended to kiss Miss

Reese, and would have done so had she not prevented him.

'Why, John Burlington, I am ashamed of you, sir! Have you no respect for the dignity of my position in this place? Can you not wait half an hour?'

'Well,' said the handsome stranger as he slowly drew back and released one of the little hands—'well, yes; I can wait as much as half an hour, but not a minute longer. Having discovered you in your hiding-place, I assure you that I intend to demand a speedy reward.—Introduce me to your scholars, Marie.'

To Marie Reese the appearance of Mr Burlington was as much a surprise as it was to the scholars, and as she felt quite unable instantly to collect her scattered thoughts and plans, she was glad of the respite which a compliance with the gentleman's request afforded. So she tapped upon her little bell and, rather confusedly for her, said: 'This is my friend, Mr John Burlington of Philadelphia. I believe he has a few words to say to you.'

'Yes,' said Mr Burlington, closely following the teacher's words; 'and as you—no doubt all of you—consider Miss Reese your friend, you must count me in on the same footing. Because, you see, Miss Reese is my very best friend, and—I don't know whether I am telling an old story?—I have come down here expressly to hurry her away from you, as she has promised before long to become Mrs Burlington. Now, I am greatly interested in this school; and if your teacher will let me, I am going to give a few prizes. See! Here are two twenty-dollar gold-pieces and two ten-dollar gold-pieces. I shall give these to Miss Reese, and she must award them as prizes.—Now I shall take upon myself to dismiss the school for to-day.'

The fifty up-turned faces brightened with happy smiles or expanded with broad grins as John Burlington clinked the large gold coins, and there was a loud buzz of chuckling and chattering as the pupils slowly dispersed.

But there was one face in that room which had not brightened much during the few minutes that had elapsed since John Burlington's sudden entrance. In the teacher's chair sat Ransom, all his golden hopes shattered and dispelled by the public assertion of the stranger—a bold and unmistakable statement which had passed uncontradicted by Marie Reese. Yes, the fool's paradise into which Charlie had so lately wandered had now become transformed into a dismal swamp of cruel and bitter disappointment. He gazed and listened like one in a trance or, rather, a dreadful nightmare. He wanted to leave the horrible place that seemed so close and stifling, and yet, when the opportunity came for him to go with the rest of the scholars, Ransom remained in his seat. He never knew why he did so, but at the last he was still there, while close beside him stood the woman whom he madly and insanely loved—her hand clasped in that of the man of her choice.

But, as Marie had never dreamed of the Doll's unspoken hopes and anticipations, and had been utterly unconscious of the effects of her compassionate kiss, so she was now quite ignorant of the misery which had taken up its abode in the mind and heart of Charlie Ransom.

'John,' said Marie, who had recovered somewhat from her surprise, 'this is Ransom, whom I have mentioned so frequently in my letters. You know he has been very ill, yet I think he will secure one of your prizes—one of the large prizes, too.' Then, turning to the Doll, she added: 'Ransom, Mr Burlington has introduced himself so well that there is nothing left for me to say.'

Very warmly, honest and happy John Burlington grasped the young fellow by his thin hand. 'Mr Ransom,' he said, 'you don't look very strong: I fear you have had a hard siege of sickness; but I hope you will soon pick up. I have to thank you, I am sure, for looking so well after Miss Reese. I have heard all about your kindness shown to her in many ways. You will have to come down to Philadelphia next winter and pay us a visit; but as I am soon going to rob all you Pan Handle City folks of Miss Reese, I should like to give you, right here, a little bit of a keepsake from both of us.' Mr Burlington unfastened from his waistcoat an elegant gold watch—his own—which he handed to Ransom. 'No; take it,' he said, as Ransom hesitated; 'don't imagine you are robbing me at all.'

'Yes, take it, by all means,' added Marie, who knew that Burlington would feel hurt if the gift should be refused. 'You know, you wouldn't have liked me to say "No" when you were so good as to give me the skates.'

So Ransom took the watch and mechanically thanked the giver. But as he walked away, his heart became hardened with disappointment and wounded pride and jealousy and all the wretched feelings that follow in their train. He hated the man who had secured the love of Marie Reese, and he would have liked to hurl back his gift. He longed to smash the watch into a hundred pieces; but he carried it to his room and put it clear down in the bottom of his trunk, where he vowed it should lie buried until the schoolmarm's departure from Pan Handle City, when he would drop it into one of the deep pools of the Tomhicken Creek.

Well, Charlie Ransom was only a lad, and the few years which he had lived had been passed in a corner of this world where human nature is *very* human. As he reviewed the events of the winter, and then thought upon his present wretched position, he failed to understand why disappointment should be for him and happiness for John Burlington. Charlie Ransom was no philosopher.

The reader will have understood ere this that the main portion of Pan Handle City was on the north side of the Tomhicken Creek, across which there was no bridge of any kind. But along the south bank there were three or four wells, none of which were very profitable either on account of the quantity or quality of the oil extracted from them. Captain Peter Lamson owned one of these unproductive wells on the south side of the creek, and as soon as spring opened he resolved to have it 'shot.' 'Shooting' a well is a process peculiar to the Oil Country. There are in the oil regions several distinct strata of 'oil-sand,' and between these strata of sand there are layers of rock. These sands are saturated

with petroleum, and are *pressed* by the layers of limestone rock, which the oil cannot penetrate. When the oil-well drill passes through the first limestone stratum, the immense weight of the rock upon the oil-sands causes the petroleum to rush upwards through the hole or well made by the drill. When a well is drilled into the first layer of sand, it is only a question of time—sometimes days and sometimes years—when the oil in that vicinity 'gives out,' and the quantity which can be pumped perceptibly diminishes. But a torpedo of nitro-glycerine or dynamite 'shot' to the bottom of the well and there exploded will generally shatter the next layer of limestone, and so cause a fresh flow of oil from a lower stratum of sand. There are men—reckless fellows, usually, who carry their lives in their hands—who make a business of 'shooting' wells. It may be readily imagined what a frightful risk the 'shooter' runs in filling the nitro-glycerine shells and lowering them into the wells. Upon the upper end of the last shell is fastened an ordinary gun cap; and then an iron cylinder weighing about six pounds is 'shot' at a fearful rate down the well—often fifteen hundred feet deep—and the deed is done. The noise of the explosion is seldom heard; but the success or failure of the 'shot' is soon determined, for a successful shooting results in a terrific flow of oil, which for the first few minutes scatters about the debris of the explosion, consisting of shattered cartridge shells and pieces of rock and sand.

Two or three days after John Burlington's advent to Pan Handle City, when he had taken up his quarters for an indefinite period in Tommy Van Horn's house, Captain Peter's well on the south side was 'shot' with wonderful success, and the oil flowed out in a huge stream to a height of twenty-five feet. The 'shooting-fiend'—as the operator of the torpedoes was generally termed—had come over specially from Bradford in his light wagon, purposely constructed for the transportation of himself and his dangerous materials and tools. No one accompanied him; but the Captain and the oilmen were on the south side, where they stood at a respectful distance from the well until the 'shot' had been fired. Then the 'fiend' returned to his wagon, leaving the revived well to the care of its owner and friends.

Now, it so happened that a few minutes after the torpedo operator had landed and driven off in his wagon, two men sauntered down to the river-side. One of these was John Burlington, and the other was the Doll. Both had intended visiting the scene of the excitement across the creek; but when Ransom guessed the other's intention, he drew back, as he had no desire to be the companion of a man whom he hated.

This was Burlington's first visit to the oil regions. Everything about him was strange; and with true American instinct he endeavoured to learn all that could be learned and to see all that could be seen. There had been a severe drain upon the small floating craft that morning, and the boat which the torpedo-man had just vacated was the only one then available on the north side of the creek. As the boats were to a certain extent common property, Burlington entered this one. As he seated himself and adjusted the oars in the rowlocks, he noticed a very ordinary—

looking tin can, painted red, but he gave it no second thought. It did not belong to him, and as it was not in his way, it might remain in the bottom of the boat.

Ransom, who was standing perhaps twenty yards away, also saw the red can; but, unlike Burlington, he knew full well that it contained some of the deadly nitro-glycerine—knew that it was a can which the 'shooting-fiend' had, in his hurry to get away, forgotten. He knew, too, that the creek was full of huge masses of ice which the spring thaw had loosened. Ransom was perfectly aware of all the dangers which Burlington hazarded in crossing the swollen creek, and was quite conscious of the awful possibility of a collision, in which case the boat and its occupant must meet with total annihilation. All this Ransom knew, yet uttered never a word of caution. What was it to him? He did not place the can in the boat; the dynamite was not his, nor the boat either, neither was he responsible for John Burlington's safety. Why should he seek to prevent an accident to the man who had robbed him of his peace of mind, of his pleasant airy castle, of that which had been paradise to him, even though but a fool's paradise? On the other hand, why should he not let this handsome and refined City man—this peculiarly favoured son of fortune—go right on into the very jaws of death? If Burlington were dying, drowning beneath his eyes at that moment, it is doubtful if the Doll would have stretched forth a hand to save him. Why should he? Why should he? Over and over in the course of twenty seconds Ransom asked himself these and similar questions, and all the time Burlington was slowly rowing out into the dangers of the swollen stream. No; he would *not* interfere. If Burlington should die, so much the better: wildly he thought that such a catastrophe might give him one more chance to win the love of Marie Reese; and if he failed, she certainly would not then be for John Burlington.

Suddenly there was a peculiar noise and a strong concussion, which severely shook Ransom. He knew what it was, for he saw before him the foam upon the seething, bubbling water, where an instant before the little boat had been. But the boat and the man who was rowing it had disappeared.

A BIDDING WEDDING.

AN OLD WELSH CUSTOM.

THERE are few districts in the United Kingdom in which there are not some customs peculiar to the locality, many of which have come down from 'fable-shaded eras,' some of them betokening by their rudeness and simplicity that they have altered little since the 'merrie days of old,' when men carried out in their sports and pastimes something of the warlike spirit of the age. Some of these customs are traced by tradition to a more or less authentic origin, while others go so far into the misty regions of the past that no legend remains to tell us of their source. It must be allowed that some of these practices were rude and objectionable; but some, again, are so attractive in their quaintness and sim-

plicity, bringing up reminiscences of all that was most admirable in primitive times, that it is with something like regret that we see them falling into disuse in this era of social progress. In no part of Great Britain have greater changes taken place during the reign of Queen Victoria than in Wales, the great development of mineral wealth having caused large towns to spring up where formerly a few scattered farmhouses and shepherds' huts dotted the green mountain sides. There are still, however, many sequestered valleys where the sound of the steam-engine has never been heard; where the rustic natives hold the even tenor of their way much as their fathers did of yore, careless of the noise and bustle of the world that lies beyond their native vale.

In certain parts of Pembroke and Carmarthen, one of the quaintest of marriage customs used to be prevalent, and it is said still to linger to a certain extent in some of the more remote valleys, but now curtailed and shorn of its pristine surroundings. This was known as a 'Bidding Wedding,' and was so redolent of patriarchal times, that it may be interesting to describe what is destined soon to become a mere memory of the past. Tradition is silent as to the origin of this custom of Cambria, so we may presume that it goes a long way back indeed. The conditions necessary to carry it out could only be possible in a district where the inhabitants were rooted to the soil, where the farms and holdings descended in unbroken succession from father to son; and where no interlopers were allowed to usurp the rights of the native population. To illustrate this, we will endeavour to describe a Bidding Wedding as carried out forty years ago, when the institution was maintained with all its original characteristics. The details were given us by an intelligent native of the district where it prevailed, so that they may be relied on as correct in every respect.

In the first place, all who received invitations were expected to show their respect to the bride and bridegroom by bestowing such presents as befitted their station and means. We may remark that these weddings were generally restricted to the farmers and others of the more respectable class, so that to have a Bidding implied a certain social status, and that the young couple were both come of respectable families.

When two of this class made up their minds to get married, the first thing considered was who were to be invited to the festivities, a list being made out, varying according to the number of their friends and neighbours, from forty or fifty to upwards of two hundred. Invitations were written or printed, and sent round to all those whose presence was desired. After these had been despatched, the next thing was to send round the 'Bidder,' there being one person who filled this important post in every district. The duty of this worthy was to go to all places where invitations had preceded him, there to advocate the claims of his clients to the best of his ability. The Bidder, as may be supposed, was generally a noted character, the local wit and orator, as no one could hope to fill the responsible position who had not 'the gift of the gab.' In some instances females held office, for which they were doubtless as well qualified as their male rivals. These functionaries were generally cordially received,

and were in the habit of specifying any particular articles that they thought desirable, generally fixing their requests high, on the principle that they who asked for a sheep were likely to get a lamb at least. On completing the round of calls, the Bidder gave in his report to his employers. The presents were sent before the wedding to the house of the bride, when a large company assembled to view them and discuss their value. From the fact that intended presents were all entered on the Bidder's book, there were seldom too many articles of one sort; a business-like proceeding which the fashionable world of to-day might copy, as an advance list might save them from having so many 'repeats' in their marriage presents. The articles sent on those occasions were of the most varied description: a cow or a fat pig from some of the more wealthy; sheep and fowls; articles of furniture; bedding and crockery; so that the young folks had little occasion for expenditure in furnishing their house.

In addition to the presents, there was another source which went to enrich the young couple, and served to give them a good start in matrimonial life. This was known as the *pwysys*, or payments, which consisted of a certain amount of money previously received by the payer on his or her marriage from relations of the bride or bridegroom. These payments were looked upon as debts of honour to be repaid when called upon; and when any were due, they were sometimes reminded of them in the letter of invitation. On the night of the wedding these amounts were received, when some one was appointed as clerk to make a list of all the payments. This list was carefully preserved, that the married pair might know to whom they were indebted, so that they might repay the amount when called on in turn on a similar occasion.

The procession to church was highly striking and picturesque in character; and even in the marriage ceremony there were peculiar forms suggestive and original. One in particular was always watched by the company with great interest, as it was in some measure indicative of the social status of the bridegroom. When the clergyman was engaged reading the marriage service, the bridegroom took from his pocket a sum of money and deposited it along with the wedding-ring on the Prayer-book. From this sum the clergyman deducted his own fee and the clerk's, and then handed over the remainder to the bride. It is said that one clergyman, probably an Englishman, pocketed the whole amount, till the clerk told him what the custom was, when he was forced to 'fork out' again and tender an apology to the fair bride.

After the marriage ceremony, the party wended their way back to the residence of the bride's parents. As most of the company were generally on horseback, a race ensued, somewhat in Eastern fashion, in which some of the party were almost sure to come to grief; but such disasters were never suffered to interfere with the hilarity of the company. A tradition of a tragedy in connection with this custom tells how the bride, reputed the fairest maid in all the district, was killed by being thrown from her horse on the way back from church. It is said that the event is recorded in a country churchyard in Carmarthen-shire, the stone bearing the date of 1765.

In this and some of the adjoining districts of Pembrokeshire the Welsh language is almost unknown, the inhabitants consisting mostly of the descendants of a colony of Flemings who settled here early in the sixteenth century. The Bidding, however, seems to be of native Welsh origin; and it is said that very similar customs prevail in Brittany, where the inhabitants both in manners and language bear a much closer resemblance to the Welsh than any of the other branches of the Celtic race in the British Islands.

On returning from church, dinner was placed on the table, after which the 'best-man,' who was there termed the 'tailor,' took the management of affairs, and exerted himself to bring in money from the guests, to swell the fund for the benefit of the wedded pair. For this end beer was provided, which he retailed to the company in defiance of the excise. Large quantities of buns or wedding-cakes were also vended, the young men treating their sweethearts liberally with these. When trade seemed to be falling off, the 'tailor' would propose having a 'scot,' which consisted in himself putting down a shilling on the table, when most of the men would follow his example, some of the more liberal going as high as half-a-crown. These 'scots' would be repeated several times in the course of the night, in proportion as the mirth and glee grew fast and furious, so that what with these and the *pwysys* and presents, there was generally a good sum raised, if the young couple were at all popular with their neighbours. It is said that upwards of one hundred pounds has been known to be raised on one of these occasions, certainly a good help for a young farmer or tradesman to begin married life with.

Such was a Bidding Wedding as it was carried out in some of the romantic valleys of ancient Cambria in the days of lang syne. Though they may still be occasionally met with, they are now shorn of most of their ancient glory, and destined soon to become a memory of the past. The changed conditions of modern life render them impracticable, and the fact that they have been so long kept up is an illustration of the tenacity with which the Welsh people cling to old customs. These Biddings were certainly calculated to keep up a feeling of sympathy and true neighbourliness, and to engender peace and good-will in the district where they flourished.

WITTY FOLKS: A DULL MAN'S PROTEST.

I AM a dull man, naturally slow and dense in my mental grain, my friends tell me, yet not without my uses in the world; one of which, I sometimes suspect, is that of serving as a butt for the witty sallies of the more brilliant members of our small community. Ours is a quiet little town, embosomed in wooded hills, which rise with gentle swell from out a wide expanse of rich undulating well-cultivated country. A simple, homely, monotonous place it is, with few except commonplace interests, with no special charm to boast of, except what lavish Nature drops from her full hand as the seasons pass over us. Each May-tide she touches with subtle beauty the blushing blossoms of the apple-trees, and wreathes

the hedgerows with fragrant hawthorn. She brightens with vivid emerald the woods and fields; and paints with tints of varied loveliness even the little patches of lichen that cling to the time-worn walls of our antiquated comfortable dwellings. These dwellings offend against every rule of architectural taste, and yet serve their purpose as well as if the best architect in the world had designed them. Even in winter they look cheerful and inviting, fenced in as they are from the cold winds with tall clumps of evergreen, laurels and hollies, and here and there a closely clipped hedge of yew, beneath whose sheltering screen a sunny border spreads. There the first-born flowers of the year, the early snowdrops, peep through the frost-bound earth like rows of pearls, and crocuses unfold their golden cups in the feeble sunshine, and fragrant violets scent the rough March gales. There, in summer, bloom sweet old-fashioned roses and clove carnations, filling the air with delicious old-world scents; and in autumn, tall dahlias wave over vivid patches of scarlet geranium and gay calceolarias.

Naturally, our wit partakes of the bonhomie of our simple unsophisticated life; it has a ring of Sleepy Hollow about it; it is racy of our green hill slopes, of our showers of apple-blossom, of the resinous breath of our fragrant pine-woods. I doubt much if even Major Macnab, whose special victim I am, could have the heart to say to me what Voltaire once said, when introducing to a large company a certain individual of no great parts whose name was Adam: 'Monsieur Adam, gentlemen; but by no means the first of men.'

No; even the Major, free-lance as he is, is seldom out and out ill-natured, unless when a fit of gout is impending. Then he once said to me, at Mrs Coupelle's too, to make the matter worse: 'My dear Slocum, I never saw you looking better, or any other man looking worse.'

Every morning, as I saunter along slowly under the tall lime-trees which shade the road leading to the station, which is the favourite promenade of our notabilities, I meet the Major. A man he is of grand bearing, tall, erect, with a thin proud saturnine face, a large aquiline nose, and a grizzled moustache. Of a morning he is always to be seen tightly buttoned up in a long surtout, with an old-fashioned black stock round his neck, which gives him a peculiarly stiff uncompromising look. As he marches along, I can see by the puckering of the crow's-feet at the corners of his eyes and the twitching of his thin lips that he is meditating some half-dozen jests all more or less bitter. 'How are you, Slocum?' he cries out, in such a frank, genial, open-hearted way, that, well as I know him, it almost puts me off my guard, and I have desperate thoughts of throwing myself on his mercy, knowing as I do that I am to meet him to-night at the house of a mutual friend, and that two other witty members of our small world are also to be there. I know full well what I must go through, before, buffeted and bewildered by the nimble strife of tongues around, I shall have leave to subside at last with a couple of comfortable dowagers, and a battered old foggy like myself, into the safe but by no means always serene refuge of the whist-table; for I am—well, I don't mind admitting, that as a whist-player many may be better than I am, but few can be worse.

A few steps farther on, where the passing sunbeam glistens on the ivy-covered gable of that handsome Elizabethan house, our lawyer steps briskly out into the street, a prosperous, pushing, self-satisfied man, who so much affects the society of wits that among us he passes for one; although, as the Major sometimes says savagely, 'He is not only dull himself, but is a cause of dullness in others.' His wit is second-hand; it has a legal and forensic cast; and as I seldom come to grief by it, I have an amazing relish for his old oftentold stories. If Mr Monypelas has a weakness, it is for great folks; and he often introduces us of an evening to very fine company indeed. His good things are the smart sayings of Lord Chancellor, Judges, Attorney-generals, and suchlike.

As I saunter indolently on under the spreading lime-trees I wonder what he will give us to-night. Will he tell us of the Welsh judge who was famous alike for his neglect of personal cleanliness and his insatiable desire for place, and who once upon a time was addressed by a friend in the following flattering terms: 'My dear sir, as you have asked the Prime Minister for everything else, why have you never asked him for a piece of soap and a nail-brush?' Or how Lord Ellenborough during a severe winter was so annoyed by the continuous coughing in court, that after a good deal of fidgeting about in his seat, he availed himself of the first lull in the bronchial storm to say severely: 'Some slight interruption one might tolerate; but there seems to be an industry of coughing here.' Or when a young barrister, making his first appearance in Westminster Hall, began: 'My lord, the unfortunate client for whom I appear' (hesitation and long pause)—'My lord, I say the unfortunate client'—another prolonged pause, broken by his lordship observing in an encouraging tone: 'Go on, sir—go on; so far the Court is with you.'

Mr Monypelas bubbles over, indeed, with Lord Ellenborough, and has a whole treasury of his smart sayings. Preston, a great conveyancer, was a very uninteresting speaker, and having inflicted upon the Court a speech of portentous length and inconceivable dreariness, he asked when it would be their lordships' pleasure to hear the remainder of his argument. Lord Ellenborough, with a sigh of resignation, answered: 'We are bound to hear you; but as for pleasure, that has long been out of the question.'

The same learned judge, when he heard that Lord Kenyon, whose miserly proclivities were well known, was about to leave a world in which his chief enjoyment had been the acquisition of money, exclaimed in a tone of surprise: 'Kenyon die! Why should he die? What will he get by that?'

Lord Camden comes next, and we hear how, being on a visit to his friend Lord Dacre, they while out walking passed the parish stocks. 'I wonder if the punishment is physically painful?' quoth Lord Camden. 'You had better try it,' said his friend. Whereupon the Lord Chief-justice sat down, put his feet in the holes, and observed complacently: 'Now, Dacre, fasten the bolts and leave me for ten minutes.' Lord Dacre at once complied, and sauntered off; but being a very absent man, he forgot to return, and Lord Camden was left in the stocks not for ten minutes

but for ten hours. He became faint and giddy ; he was devoured by a raging thirst ; as the long day went on, the pains in his cramped, confined limbs grew agonising. In vain he besought mercy from the passers-by, and informed them that he was no common convicted culprit, but Lord Camden, the Chief-justice of England. They laughed in his face. 'You are mad with liquor,' said one clerical Levite who passed by on the other side. 'I hope thy punishment will prove for the good of thy soul,' said one good Samaritan, a farmer's wife, and to that end, and that he might not die of thirst, she presented him with a juicy apple. He was more dead than alive when he was at last released and carried to Lord Dacre's house.

Then we hear with much interest, for we are a prudent and frugal race, of the thrift of Lord Chancellors and their ladies. Lord Hardwicke was so famous for his overweening frugality that it won for him the sobriquet of 'Judge Gripus.' His lady had the same tastes as himself, and refused to allow her husband to accept an earldom until his daughters were married ; for, said she, 'although ten thousand pounds may be thought a very fair fortune for Miss Yorke and her sister, not less than twenty thousand will be expected with Lady Margaret and Lady Betty.'

Our third wit is Mrs Coupelle, a handsome, buxom, Juno-like dame, who is—as even the other ladies, who detest her, are compelled to own—a very fine woman indeed—fine in person, fine in dress, fine in all her surroundings ; for she is a well-dowered widow, and is in the matter of expenditure a law unto herself. She does not affect simplicity or go in for economies of any kind. Rich sumptuous surroundings become her, and she knows it ; so do somewhat theatrical attitudes, and she uses them. I know exactly how I shall find her to-night, superb in black velvet and diamonds, with her beautiful fair hair gathered into a mass of light fluffy curls above her brow, the whole coiffure finished artfully off with a plait which has the appearance of a coronet. Her large lustrous eyes, as innocent-looking as the blue forget-me-nots in the meadow, will meet mine with a soft pensive expression, which I have learned too well to interpret. A rustic romance, you say, an idyll of country life full of chivalry and tenderness—the old, old story, with poor foolish Tom Slocum for hero. Bah ! the lady has not one vulnerable spot about her ; she is armed at all points. There is no joint in her harness of mail. Even Major Macnab is afraid of her, and has never once ventured so much as to attempt to take her off.

Is she clever ? I do not know. She is quick of eye and ear, and talks sometimes as if she were indolently conscious that life has high ideals, and even common-place duties ; but, unfortunately, all things in the world seem to turn towards her their ridiculous side. When she speaks gravely, as she sometimes does, a mocking banter seems to lurk in her tones, and she is, according to her varying moods, by turns unfeelingly mischievous, and passably good-natured ; one moment full of the most delightful oddity and fun, the next uttering a sarcasm so bitter that even the Major is appalled ; his scalping-knife is never so utterly pitiless even in his worst fits of gout. Shrewd she is and penetrating, yet easy and pleasure-loving withal, shy of friendship, careless of love, yet

strangely charming, brightening everything she touches with her flashing gleams of wit, as the sunbeam gilds for a moment the brown furrows in the muddy fields.

I have been just to her ; for I am impartial, as slow men often are ; and yet, of all my tyrants, she is the worst. I know that she laughs at me outrageously and unmercifully, even to my face ; and yet I can in no way help myself. I cannot even avoid her. In her presence, a curious spell, which I am powerless to resist, is upon me. From the farthest corner of the room, a single glance of those bright laughter-loving eyes is sufficient to sweep me to her side, a helpless, unresisting victim. She greets me with a sunny smile, and holds out a soft warm hand, and my martyrdom begins, and I wriggle and writhe in my shame-faced anguish till the whist-table is set agoing, when I subside with a stifled sigh of thankfulness into a chair opposite Lady Rorison, a dear stout motherly woman, who knows that, after a dose of Mrs Coupelle, the patient requires rest. As the widow of a distinguished officer who was knighted for his services to his country, her ladyship of course fares better at Mrs Coupelle's hands than I do, who am only plain Thomas Slocum, of no place, and nothing in particular ; still, there is that in her ladyship's configuration, mental and physical, so provocative of the lively widow's mirth, that she could never quite escape her Parthian arrows, even were she Queen of Sheba. As it is, she also has suffered ; and she glances at me over her spectacles with a compassionate fellow-feeling, and is patient with my mistakes.

I wonder, in my slow way, between the pauses of the game, what sort of time of it the late Mr Coupelle had with his superb partner. I never saw him ; he had died before my aunt left me the comfortable house and comfortable income which procured for me admission into the somewhat exclusive circle of which Mrs Coupelle is the bright peculiar star ; but I have heard of people being tickled to death. Is it possible, I wonder, for people to be laughed to death ?—to have all strength and spirit crushed out of them by the unceasing flow and sparkle of their companion's wit ?—much as the sun drinks up the dew, which is like lifeblood to the thirsty earth.

The wind rustles as I walk through the sere leafless branches of the limes. I watch the wan winter sunshine as it flickers over our peaceful churchyard and warms into quiet beauty the lovely grayish-green lichens that cluster over the old stones of its wall. For him who was once Mrs Coupelle's husband, the supreme tragedy of life is over, the problem of existence is solved. We speculate and doubt ; he knows. No earthly care or disquietude has power to ruffle his ineffable calm ; yet I cannot help wondering, as I walk, with that lack of all attention to logical sequences which is natural to me, if it does not seem hard to him that he should be lying there in that wintry corner, with the chill radiance of the December sunlight coldly gilding the splintered peaks of his costly granite monument, while she sits warm and bright in the glow of the firelight, and her gay laugh rings out clear above the nimble encounter of wits, and her quick thoughts find for themselves winged words of fire that fascinate even while they sting. Life has no sad burden for her ; she dwells amid its flowers ; her days are as

bright now as ever they could have been in the golden light of the years that are gone. It is all as it should be, no doubt, and yet the contrast strikes me with an odd sort of vicarious indignation. I am gradually, in my slow way, warming up to be angry, when there she is before me as if she had dropped from the wintry clouds. Sure no blush of spring was ever so sweet as the exquisite peach-like glow that mantles in her cheeks; her hair glitters in the sunshine with a sheen as of gold; her red lips curve with a smile of joyous welcome; she holds out a kind hand to me, and I am happy. Life has its exquisite moments even for me. To-night, no doubt, I shall repent and do penance for my folly. I am a fool, I admit it; but then folly can be so sweet—so much sweeter, sometimes, than wisdom.

CONCERNING THE GOOSE.

THE goose figures largely in the history, the legends, and the proverbial lore of our own and other lands. In ancient Egypt it was an object of adoration in the temple and an article of diet on the table. The Egyptians mainly took beef and goose flesh as their animal food, and it has been suggested that they expected to obtain physical power from the beef and mental vigour from the goose. To support this theory, it has been shown that other nations have eaten the flesh of wolves and drunk the blood of lions, hoping thereby to become fierce and courageous. Some other nations have refused to partake of the hare and the deer on account of the timidity of these animals, fearing lest by eating their flesh they should also partake of their characteristic fearfulness and timidity.

Pliny thought very highly of the goose, saying 'that one might almost be tempted to think these creatures have an appreciation of wisdom, for it is said that one of them was a constant companion of the peripatetic philosopher Lacydes, and would never leave him, either in public or when at the bath, by night or by day.'

The cackling of the goose saved Rome. According to a very old story, the guards of the city were asleep, and the enemy taking advantage of this, were making their way through a weak part of the fortifications, expecting to take the city by surprise. The wakeful geese hearing them, at once commenced cackling, and their noise awoke the Romans, who soon made short work of their foes. This circumstance greatly increased the gratitude of the Roman citizens for the goose.

We gather from the quaint words of an old chronicler a probable solution of the familiar phrase, 'To cook one's goose.' 'The kyng of Swedland'—so runs the ancient record—'coming to a towne of his enemyes with very little company, his enemyes, to slyghte his forces, did hang out a goose for him to shoote; but perceiving before nyghte that these few soldiers had invaded and sette their chiefe houlds on fire, they demanded of him what his intent was, to whom he replied, "To cook your goose."'

In the days when the bow and arrow were the chief weapons of warfare, it was customary for the sheriffs of the counties where geese were reared to gather sufficient quantities of feathers to wing the arrows of the English army. Some

of the old ballads contain references to winging the arrow with goose feathers. A familiar instance is the following:

'Bend all your bows,' said Robin Hood;
'And with the gray goose wing,
Such sport now show as you would do
In the presence of the king.'

To check the exportation of feathers, a heavy export duty was put upon them.

The goose frequently figures in English tenures. In a poem by Gascoigne, published in 1575, there is an allusion to rent-day gifts, which appear to have been general in the olden time:

And when the tenants come to pay their quarter's rent,
They bring some fowle at Midsummer, a dish of fish
in Lent,
At Christmasse a capon, and at Michaelmasse a goose.

A strange manorial custom was kept up at Hilton in the days of Charles II. An image of brass, known as Jack of Hilton, was kept there. 'In the mouth,' we are told, 'was a little hole just large enough to admit the head of a pin; water was poured in by a hole in the back, which was afterwards stopped up.' The figure was then set on the fire; and during the time it was blowing off steam, the lord of the manor of Essington was obliged to bring a goose to Hilton and drive it three times round the hall-fire. He next delivered the goose to the cook; and when dressed, he carried it to the table and received in return a dish of meat for his own mess.

In bygone times, Lincolnshire was a great place for breeding geese; and its extensive bogs, marshes, and swamps were well adapted for the purpose. The drainage and cultivation of the land have done away with the haunts suitable for the goose; but in a great measure Lincolnshire has lost its reputation for its geese. Frequently in the time when geese were largely bred, one farmer would have a thousand breeding-geese, and they would multiply some sevenfold every year, so that he would have under his care annually some eight thousand geese. He had to be careful that they did not wander from the particular district where he had a right to allow them to feed, for they were regarded as trespassers, and the owner could not get stray geese back unless he paid a fine of twopence for each offender.

Within the last fifty years it was a common occurrence to see on sale in the market-place at Nottingham at the Goose Fair from fifteen to twenty thousand geese, which had been brought from the fens of Lincolnshire. A street on the Lincolnshire side of the town is called Goosegate.

The origin of the custom of eating a goose at Michaelmas is lost in the shadows of the dim historic past. According to one legend, Saint Martin was tormented with a goose, which he killed and ate. He died after eating it; and ever since, Christians have, as a matter of duty, on the saint's day sacrificed the goose. We have seen from the preceding quotation from Gascoigne that the goose formed a popular Michaelmas dish from an early period.

It is a common saying, 'The older the goose the harder to pluck,' when old men are unwilling to

part with their money. The barbarous practice of plucking live geese for the sake of their quills gave rise to the saying. It was usual to pluck live geese about five times a year. Quills for pens were much in request before the introduction of steel pens. One London house, it is stated, sold annually six million quill pens. A professional pen-cutter could turn out about twelve hundred daily.

Considerable economy was exercised in the use of quill pens. Leo Allaticus, after writing forty years with one pen, lost it, and it is said he mourned for it as for a friend. William Hutton wrote the History of his family with one pen, which he wore down to the stump. He put it aside, accompanied by the following lines :

THIS PEN.

As a choice relic I'll keep thee,
Who saved my ancestors and me.
For seven long weeks you daily wrought
Till into light our lives you brought,
And every falsehood you avoided
While by the hand of Hutton guided.

June 3, 1779.

In conclusion, it may be stated that Philemon Holland, the celebrated translator, wrote one of his books with a single pen, and recorded in rhyme the feat as follows :

With one sole pen I wrote this book,
Made of a gray goose quill;
A pen it was when I it took,
A pen I leave it still.

SHEEP-SHEARING BY MACHINERY.

THE ever-increasing substitution of machinery in place of hand-labour in all branches of industry is too often witnessed to need either comment or enforcement. Our readers, indeed—so accustomed are the public to novel adaptations of mechanical power—may hardly evince surprise in learning that the labours of the inventor have been successfully applied to furnishing means for shearing sheep by machinery, and that possibly ere long the well-known hand-shears used for this purpose will have given place to a patent shears actuated by steam-power, which will perform its work in a cheaper, speedier, and more effectual manner.

The sheep-shearing machine recently placed before the public is due to Mr Frederick York Wolseley, of Euroca Station, New South Wales—a brother of the distinguished soldier of that name—who has devoted many years of patient ingenuity to perfecting his invention. The machine itself may be briefly described as follows: A toothcomb upon which works a three-bladed knife, in the same manner as a patent horse-clipper, is pushed by the operator into the fleece of the animal to be sheared, the cutter being actuated by a cord of round gut, working inside a flexible tube six feet six inches in length. The flexible tube leaves the operator free to work the comb and cutters backwards and forwards.

Shafting of ordinary description is erected in the shearing-house, carrying wheels two feet in diameter and five feet apart, the motion being communicated from the main shafting to a series of leather bevel-wheels situated below, each of

which in its turn imparts a rotary movement to the gut core inside the flexible tube, and so to the small rods working the crank inside the casing of the machine. The pressure of the cutter on the comb is regulated by a tension-screw on the back of the shears. All the working parts are covered, with the exception of the comb and cutter.

Hand-labour, horse-power, water-power, or a steam-engine (portable, if desired) with a boiler to burn either wood or coal, can be employed to furnish motive-power to the main shafting, as the facilities of each locality or the number of sheep to be dealt with may demand.

One man, it may be added, can furnish power sufficient for three machines; a horse can drive from ten to twenty of them; whilst an eight horse-power steam-engine will actuate one hundred shears. The time occupied in shearing one sheep with the new patent is from three and a half to five minutes.

Many advantages are claimed for the novelty now under consideration. The work is performed more thoroughly than by hand, it being calculated that on an average some ten additional ounces of wool per merino sheep are obtained by its employment. The operation, moreover, is carried out more humanely, the cuts and stabs often inflicted in hand-shearing, more especially when executed as 'piece-work,' being entirely avoided, together with the consequent damage and deterioration to the pelts. It has been estimated that no less than one per cent. of the animals perish from injuries due principally to hand-shearing. The labour entailed on the operator is also considerably reduced; and aching hands, swollen wrists, and cuts or stabs to the worker himself, should be things of the past.

A series of exhaustive trials in Australia abundantly testify to the high esteem in which the new machine, the cost of which is very moderate, is held. When it is added in conclusion that Australia alone is computed to hold upwards of one hundred millions of sheep, it is evident how wide a field, if only in that one quarter of the globe, exists for the new sheep-shearing machine.

LIFE IN DEATH.

ALL life must fade. The scented damask rose;
The hawthorn buds that burgeon on the spray;
The dews that dry before the sun away—
All these, to man, a tale of Death disclose.
Yet Life stands smiling o'er these transient woes:
'Tis true, he says, the crimson rose must fade;
Sweet hawthorn buds lie scattered on the plain;
The dews no longer pearl the grassy lawn;
Yet flowers of May spring forth to deck the shade,
Dewdrops dissolving fall in summer rain,
Roses in odorous sweetness live again,
And silver starlight melts in golden dawn.
Then shrink not, man, nor faint and fear to die;
Life crowns *thy* death with Immortality.

M. C. R.

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REMARKABLE CHARITIES.

A FESTIVE season is once more upon us, and benevolent and kind-hearted people will be turning their thoughts to acts of charity, as our ancestors did in bygone days. Our old English charities were very varied and numerous, and in many instances extremely curious, particularly those connected with Christmas. Some account of these gives us an insight into the old-fashioned methods of providing festivities for the poor, all of which methods, however, do not compare favourably with those of the present day.

A kind-hearted man at Burnham left sufficient to provide the inmates of the poorhouse of the parish with a Christmas dinner, with a proper supply of ale, tobacco, and snuff for ever. To the poor of Wokingham town and parish, George Staverton left a sum of money in May 1661, with which was to be purchased a bull. The animal was to be baited, the hide and the offal to be sold, and the proceeds expended in stockings and shoes to be given to poor children. Until the year 1823 the baiting of the animal took place on December 21 in the market-place of Wokingham. In that year the corporation resolved to discontinue the proceeding, which has since therefore been omitted. Attempts have been made on several occasions to restore the savage old custom, noticeably in 1835, when a mob broke open a place during the night where a bull was kept and baited it. A singular usage was formerly in vogue at Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, up to about 1813. A bull, a boar, a sack of wheat, and a sack of malt were given to the poor by the lord of the manor about six o'clock every Christmas morning. For a time this was discontinued, and about five or six years later beef and mutton were distributed instead. The origin of this seems lost in obscurity, and the practice whilst it lasted seems to have been productive of much intoxication and riot; the poor paraded the streets during the whole night preceding the distribution with an incessant clamour. In the morning they marched in crowds to the donor's house, and when

the doors were opened, rushed in pell-mell to the feast prepared for them, often inflicting wounds on one another with their knives in their struggle for priority. The custom was finally discontinued on the report of the Commissioners to the effect that they had received no sufficient evidence that it should be maintained as a charitable donation. In the same county, at Drayton Beauchamp was a singular usage known as 'Stephening.' On St Stephen's Day the inhabitants of the village used to repair to the rectory, where they partook of as much bread and cheese as they chose, and drank as much ale as they thought proper, at the expense of the rector! So much rioting was the outcome of this, that the practice was discontinued, and an annual sum of money distributed instead. The payments were stopped, however, in 1827. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the venerable vicar of Lidney left the sum of five shillings per annum to remunerate the bell-ringers of Ruardean, Gloucestershire, for ringing a peal on Christmas Eve, about midnight, for a couple of hours, in commemoration of the Nativity.

There is an old charity at Stafford for providing poor people with plums for their Christmas pudding. The rector of Great Barr, in Staffordshire, formerly used to give every person calling at his house on Christmas Day as much beef, bread, mustard, and vinegar as they could eat. A money payment is now given in lieu of the eatables.

An ancient custom exists at Piddle Hinton, Dorsetshire, for the rector to give away on old Christmas Day annually a pound of bread, a pint of ale, and a mince-pie to every poor person in the parish. This distribution is regularly made to upwards of three hundred persons.

In a paper called *The News*, of December 23, 1821, the following announcement is to be seen: 'This morning at eight o'clock, according to the annual custom, a quantity of bread and cheese will be thrown from the belfry of Paddington Church among the populace.' As might be expected, the assemblage on these occasions was immense, and a great scramble took place. This practice, which has long been observed on the

Sunday before Christmas Day, had its origin in the will of two sisters, who, travelling to London to claim an estate, were sorely distressed, and obtained relief in Paddington. On being successful in their claim, they made the above bequest to Paddington. The charity is now distributed in bread and coals by the clergyman and parish officers to the poor of the district.

In 1611 a provision was made by Leonard Dare for the poor of South Poole to receive a supply of bread. He directed that the wardens of the parish of South Poole should on Christmas Day, Lady Day, St John's Day, and Michaelmas Day, buy, bring, and lay on his tombstone threescore penny loaves of good and wholesome bread, made with wheat, which should then be distributed to the poor of the parish.

A worthy man who had filled the office of sheriff of Hull, by name William Robinson, died in 1708, bequeathing twelve loaves of bread to as many poor widows, to be delivered to them at the side of his grave in Holy Trinity churchyard, Hull, every Christmas Day.

At Bulkely, in Cheshire, the sum of nineteen shillings and twopence was the proportion of certain consolidated charities to which this township was entitled. The mode of distributing it was somewhat peculiar. The overseer had the money changed into pennies and halfpence, and placed in a peck measure, inviting all the poor to take a handful, which was done; but those who came last were very badly off, for they got none.

A man of the name of Henry Greene displayed a whimsical predilection for colours in a bequest he made. In his will, dated December 22, 1769, he left to his sister, Catherine Greene, during her lifetime, all his lands in Melbourne and Newton, in Derbyshire, and after her death in trust, upon condition that there should be given annually to four poor women four green waistcoats, to be lined with green galloon lace, and to be delivered to the women on or before December 21, so that they might be worn on Christmas Day.

The inhabitants of North Clifton were formerly ferry-free. On Christmas Day the ferryman and his dog were indulged with a dinner each at the vicar's; as a little return, the inhabitants presented the ferryman with a prime loaf of bread.

Connected with the parish of Cunnor, in Berkshire, a pleasant custom is recorded. On Christmas Day, after evening service at the parish church, the parishioners who are liable to pay any tithes repair to the vicarage and are there entertained with bread, cheese, and ale. This entertainment is claimed as a right on the part of the parishioners, and is no benefaction on the part of the vicar. Even the quality of the good things which the vicar brings forward is specified. There must be four bushels of malt brewed into ale and small-beer, two bushels of wheat made into bread, and a half-hundredweight of cheese. Whatever remains unconsumed is distributed next day after morning prayers among the poor. The inhabitants of Cunnor seem to have a particular taste for beer, and it enters into another of their old rites. It is not in connection with Christmas-tide, but with the perambulation performed during Rogation Week. The procession on arriving at Swinford Ferry goes across and lays hold of the twigs on the opposite shore, to mark that they claim the breadth of the river (Thames) as within

the bounds of their parish. The ferryman then presents the vicar with a noble (six shillings and eightpence) in a bowl of river-water, together with a clean napkin. The vicar takes out the money, wipes his fingers, and distributes the water among the people in commemoration of the custom. The vicarage dues which are collected on this occasion are for the most part diffused in ale amongst the parishioners.

A romantic story concerning doles gained circulation in the Midlands. One of the Leakes, Sir Nicholas, a doughty knight, became, as was the fashion of the day in his time, a crusader, and as a pledge broke a ring with his dame. This simple act formed a quaintly pretty incident, and was the means of the knight's happy reunion with his wife. Whilst away, he happened to be taken prisoner by the Turks and kept in close confinement. His capture was thought to be valuable amongst the enemy as a means to extort ransom, for they believed him to be of noble birth. For several years he remained in prison without the least hope of being released. He fervently prayed to the Almighty to grant him the favour of seeing Sutton once more, and made a vow that if the favour were granted, he would leave a bequest to the poor for ever. Tradition goes on to say that the knight, unknown to himself, found himself within the porch of Sutton Church. He recognised the place as his memory returned, and at once asked the retainers if the lady of the house were yet living. They told him that she was, and that at that moment she was engaged in conferring a dole, as an affectionate remembrance of her lost lord. He wished, naturally, to speak to her; but his garb and general condition were so miserable that she declined to grant his request, and ordered him to be relieved at the gate. He then sent her the broken ring, which she compared with her own half, and the parts fitting exactly, she knew it must be no other than her long-lost lord. To commemorate the event, they agreed that eight bushels of wheat should be for ever baked into loaves on St Nicholas Day and given to the poor of Sutton, Normanton, and Duckmanton.

Many more charities evincing considerable eccentricity and generosity might be cited, such as those for preservation in imminent danger; for divine protection; to promote peace and goodwill; to encourage justice, mercy, and goodness; to inculcate a knowledge of God and our duties to man; to encourage matrimony and provident habits; for early rising, &c. But the above sufficiently indicate the spirit and character of these old charities.

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XIX.—CONCLUSION.

SIX weeks had elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter. It was the evening of the return of Gerald Brooke and his wife to the home which they left under such tragic circumstances nearly a year before. Gerald's wound had proved a troublesome one; and after his release from custody, which was merely a matter of a couple of days, he had hurried up to London for the sake of obtaining the best medical advice, and there he had since remained; a few friends had met to welcome the home-comers; there was to

be a grand reception by the tenants and others on the morrow.

First and foremost there was our dear Miss Primby, not looking a day older than when we first made her acquaintance. She had been filling the post of mistress *pro tem.* at the Towers for the past month. She was of an anxious mind, and small responsibilities assumed a magnitude in her eyes they did not really possess, and thereby worried her not a little. She will be thankful when Clara resumes the reins of power, and she herself is allowed to subside into that life of tranquil obscurity in which she finds her only true happiness. There, too, deep in conversation, were Lady Fanny Dwyer and Mr Tom Starkie. Her ladyship was husbandless as usual, but seemed in nowise put about thereby. She and Tom struck fire frequently in the arguments and disputations they were so fond of holding with each other; they agreed to differ and differed to agree, and perhaps were none the less good friends on that account.

Flitting in and out and round about was Margery, spick and span in a new gown and gay ribbons, and a tiny apron all pockets and embroidery. For the first time in her life she had on a pair of French kid shoes, and she could not help stealing a glance at her feet now and again when no one was looking. She scarcely knew them for her own property, so changed an appearance did they present. This evening she was to enter on her new duties as 'own maid' to her beloved mistress. Who so happy as Margery!

The turret clock struck seven, but Mr and Mrs Brooke had not yet arrived. They were to drive down from London, and ought to have been here nearly an hour ago. Every minute Miss Primby grew more fidgety. Some accident must have happened, she felt sure. Perhaps the horses had run away; perhaps a wheel had come off the carriage; perhaps any of twenty possible mishaps had befallen the travellers. Fidgets are infectious, and before long Tom Starkie began to consult his watch every minute or two and to answer her ladyship at random. So many strange things had happened to Gerald during the last twelve months that anxiety on the part of his friends might be readily excused. The suspense was brought to an end by the sudden inroad of Margery, who had been down to the lodge, and now brought word that a carriage and pair had just turned the corner of the high-road half a mile away. This news sent every one trooping to the main entrance to the Towers. Not long had they to wait.

Gerald still carried his arm in a sling, but his other hand was clasped tightly by his wife. Neither of them could speak as the carriage wheeled into the avenue and the old home they had at one time thought never to see again came into view. Nor was there much said for the first few moments after they alighted. A kiss, an embrace, a hand-grip, told more than words: of tears the ladies shed not a few, but they were tears which had their source in the daysprings of happiness.

Dinner was over and the company had returned to the drawing-room. The lamps had been lighted; but so soft and balmy was the evening that the long windows had been left wide open. Outside, terrace and garden and the miles of woodland

stretching far beyond were bathed in a tender sheen of moonlight. Lady Fan was at the piano turning over some music. Mr Tom Starkie was stooping over the canterbury, trying to find a certain piece of Schubert's he was desirous her ladyship should play. Clara and her aunt were talking together in a low voice on the sofa at the opposite side of the room. On the hearthrug, his back to the empty fireplace, stood Gerald. As he gazed on the pretty domestic scene before him, he could scarcely realise that all the strange events of the past year were anything more than the dream of a disordered brain. Could it be possible that only a few short weeks ago he who now stood there, so rich in all that makes life beautiful, had been a hunted felon on whose head a price had been set? Incredible as it seemed, it was yet but too true. If proof positive were needed there was his arm still in a sling to furnish it. His eyes turned fondly to the sweet face of his wife, to which the sunshine and roses of other days were already beginning to come back. How brave, how loyal, how devoted she had been through all the dark days of his trouble! The care and love of a lifetime could scarcely repay her for all she had gone through for his sake. She had indeed been 'that crown of glory to her husband' of which the sage made mention in days long ago.

Clara, who while talking with her aunt had been absently gazing through the open window on to the terrace, suddenly gave utterance to a shriek, and springing to her feet, flung herself upon her husband's breast and clasped him round the neck with both arms. An instant later a pistol-shot rang through the dusk, and the bullet, passing within an inch or two of Gerald's head, crashed into the pier-glass behind. At the open window stood George Crofton, hatless and haggard, his white drawn features distorted by a scowl of fiendish malignity, the light of mingled hate and madness blazing in his eyes. Tom Starkie sprang forward as Crofton, with an imprecation on his lips, raised his revolver to fire again. But quicker even than Tom was a dark-cloaked figure which sprang suddenly into the range of vision framed by the window and dashed the uplifted weapon from Crofton's hand. For a second there was a cold gleam of steel in the moonlight and then the cloaked figure vanished as quickly as it had come. With a loud cry Crofton flung both arms above his head and staggered forward a pace or two into the room. 'Gerald Brooke, you have won the game!' he exclaimed in hoarse accents; then making a clutch at his heart, he gave a great gasp and fell forward on his face. Gerald and Tom raised him. A tiny stream of blood trickled from his lips: he was stone-dead.

The *portière* was drawn aside, and all eyes turned on him who stepped into the room. It was the Russian, looking as cold, pale, and impassive as he always looked.

'Karovsky, have you had any hand in this?' demanded Gerald sternly, as he pointed to the dead man.

'I, my friend! what should I have to do with such *canaille*?' demanded the other with a shrug.

Not more than half a minute had elapsed from the beginning to the end of the tragedy. Under

the direction of Starkie, two or three of the servants who had hurried in now proceeded to remove the body to another room. While this was taking place the Russian drew Gerald aside. 'Look here, Brooke,' he said. 'It is never wise to inquire too curiously into matters when no good end can be served thereby. This man had made up his mind to murder you. It was your life against his. It may be—mind you, I only say it may be—that that fact had come within the cognisance of the Brotherhood to which you and I have the honour to belong. If such were the case, they were bound by their laws to take his life rather than allow him to take yours. But this is nothing more than guesswork. In any case the scoundrel is dead and your life is safe; but it was touch-and-go with you, my friend—touch-and-go.'

The unexpected appearance of Karovsky following so closely on the grim scene just enacted before his eyes revived in Gerald's mind certain apprehensions that had slumbered almost undisturbed for many months. All his fears took flame at once as his memory travelled back to that April evening when Karovsky's ill-omened presence first crossed the threshold of Beechley Towers. What if, at some future day, when all the world seemed full of sunshine, he should suddenly appear again with a message of the same dire import!

Gerald's heart seemed compressed as in a vice as this thought with all its dread significance forced itself on his mind. 'Karovsky,' he said in a dry hard voice, 'now that you are here, there is one question I would fain ask you.'

'I think I can guess the purport of it,' answered the Russian with his imperturbable smile. 'You need be under no fear, *mon ami*, that I or any other emissary of the Brotherhood will ever come to you again with evil tidings. The man who was condemned to die is dead, and although he did not meet his fate at your hands, that matters nothing. The sentence has been carried into effect, and such being the case, by the rules of the Supreme Tribunal you, Gerald Brooke, are absolved in full from ever being called upon again.'

THE END.

THE AMERICAN FIELD FOR EMIGRATION.

MUCH attention has recently been directed in America to what is called 'the Oklahoma boom.' A section of considerable area belonging to the United States in the territory hitherto reserved for the Indians was, after much agitation, thrown open to settlers by order of the Federal Government. In anticipation of the President's action, thousands of people had gathered upon the border of the coveted district; and when his proclamation was published, they swarmed over the dividing-line as fast as railway trains could carry them. Within forty-eight hours, rival 'cities' were putting forward their claims to be the capital of the new territory. There was necessarily some lawlessness. In one or two instances life was sacrificed in quarrels between persons who claimed

the right of first possession to particular spots; but an orderly government of a crude sort was soon established. Meanwhile, the eyes of the settlers were being opened to the real character of the country. The land proved for the most part to be not of very good quality; the water was undrinkable and the dust unbearable. Thousands of the settlers turned their faces homewards, and for a time the exodus was as rapid as the entry had been. On the whole, however, the district was found to be not unadapted for settlement, and a permanent population will before long have established itself in every desirable locality.

This incident has set serious people in the United States thinking, for it is a striking demonstration of a fact that even those whose business it is to be informed upon such matters have been unwilling to admit—that the *arable public domain of the United States is nearly exhausted*.

The arable area in the United States—that is, the area suited by nature for farming—is usually estimated at 1,500,000 square miles, or 960,000,000 acres. In 1880 the area in farms was 536,081,835 acres. If the rate of increase since that year has not been less than during the previous decade—and there is reason to think it has been greater—the area in farms must now (1889) be over 700,000,000 acres, leaving unoccupied 260,000,000 arable acres, a large part of which is in the hands of railway corporations. In 1885 there were in the hands of the Government 561,623,981 acres of land of all kinds; including the non-arable land as well as the arable. On this point the Rev. Josiah Strong, D.D., General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, says: 'Not only is the area annually disposed of enormous, but it is very rapidly increasing. Even if the increase should cease, the demand for 1884, steadily continued, would exhaust the supply in twenty years. It must not be forgotten that these 561,000,000 acres include the great mountain ranges and all the barren lands. Only a small portion is arable. *The farming lands of the West will all be taken up before the close of the present century.*'

The present population of the United States is estimated at 64,000,000. By the time it reaches 75,000,000, the arable area will all be absorbed in farms. This will give a population of fifty to the square mile of arable land—not a case of overcrowding, certainly, the population of England and Wales being twelve times as dense; but it will bring the people of the United States face to face with a new problem. It is not too much to say that the success of that great nation, the facility with which it has adapted itself to every social and political problem, has been in a large measure due to the possession of an apparently boundless area of virgin soil, free, or practically so, to the settler; and in a still larger measure to the public faith in the limitless capacity of the country for expansion. Questions which vex the minds of statesmen in crowded communities, solve themselves on the vast prairie; and a spirit of harmony and mutual helpfulness is developed in the founding of new territories. When private ownership has locked up all the arable land, the real difficulties of the nation will have begun. We believe the people will prove equal to the new condition of things; our point is, that the conditions will be new, and

in their novelty Canada and, through Canada, Great Britain are concerned.

It is not incorrect, perhaps, to say that the progress of the United States, which has challenged the admiration of the world, has been based upon the development of its great wheat-growing area. Of the forty-eight States and Territories, fifteen may be classed as wheat-growing; and sixty per cent. of the total increase of population in the United States between 1870 and 1880 was in these fifteen. One may well hesitate at attempting to set a limit to the capacity of a country like the United States to absorb and sustain population. Yet it is manifest that expansion in the future will be governed by different laws, now that the arable public domain is approaching exhaustion, from those that obtained when a seemingly boundless area invited all the world to share its rich bounty.

In view of these considerations, the existence in Canada of a vast area suited to the successful cultivation of wheat becomes of great interest and importance. Undoubtedly, the Southern States offer many inducements, as well as a vast scope for the enterprise of settlers; but emigration from north temperate latitudes will for the most part seek a home along the same isothermal lines. Moreover, the greatest possible advantage that a country can offer to settlers is its adaptability for wheat-growing and stock-raising. This the Southern States cannot offer; hence emigration to America may be expected to seek the wheat-growing and stock-raising area of Canada, if they are sufficiently extensive to absorb it and have no serious disadvantages.

It may be premised that Canada has a larger territory than the United States, and fully as great an area of arable land. Such a statement as this would have been promptly rejected a few years ago; and even now it may not be generally accepted without demonstration in some detail. For this purpose the Dominion may be considered in four sections: the Maritime Provinces, the St Lawrence Valley, the Prairie region, and the Pacific Slope.

The area of the Maritime Provinces—namely, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island—is 32,136,960 acres, of which 18,000,000 acres may be classed as arable. Quebec and Ontario make up the second division—that is, the St Lawrence Valley section, including the region along the great lakes, and as far west as the eastern boundary of Manitoba, having an area of 246,840,320 acres. How much of this ought to be classed as arable cannot be stated definitely; but it is perhaps reasonable to place it, when speaking of the ultimate capacity of Canadian agriculture, at 130,000,000 acres. Much of it will not, however, be occupied until after the Prairie section has been fully taken up. The arable and pastoral area in the Prairie section may be estimated at upwards of 700,000,000 acres.

A Committee of the Canadian Senate was charged with the duty of examining into the resources and capabilities of the Great Mackenzie Basin and the country eastward to Hudson Bay, an area of 1,260,000 square miles, lying to the north of the Saskatchewan watershed. In other words, its observations were not directed to what is ordinarily referred to when the Prairie region

of Canada is spoken of, but to the vast and little-known country to the north. The Committee says: 'That within the scope of the Committee's inquiry there is a possible area of 656,000 square miles fitted for the growth of potatoes, 407,000 square miles suitable for barley, and 316,000 square miles suitable for wheat. That there is a pastoral area of 860,000 square miles, 26,000 miles of which are open prairie with occasional groves, the remainder being more or less wooded; 274,000 square miles, including the prairie, may be considered as arable land. That throughout this arable and pastoral area, latitude bears no direct relation to summer isotherms, the spring flowers and the buds of deciduous trees appearing as early north of Great Slave Lake as at Winnipeg, St Paul, and Minneapolis, Kingston, and Ottawa, and earlier along the Peace, Liard, and some minor western affluents of the Great Mackenzie River, where the climate resembles that of Western Ontario.'

To a European, it will not seem at all remarkable that a country lying north of latitude fifty-four degrees north has been found to be favourable to agriculture. Half the area of the British Isles, all of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, a large part of Prussia, and much more than half of Russia, lie north of that parallel. The ideas heretofore received of the climate of British North America have been based upon the condition of things existing on the eastern coast of the continent, where the great Polar Current flowing down through Davis Strait brings ice and cold weather to comparatively low latitudes.

Even in regard to this part of the continent the prevailing opinion in Europe is very erroneous. Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia are far from possessing an inhospitable climate. Undoubtedly there has been a change in this respect since the first settlement of the country, to whatever cause it may be due. The average length of the winters appears to be somewhat shorter, due to a slight prolongation of autumn. It is not easy to give a general characterisation to the winters of the eastern provinces which would not be in a certain degree misleading. For instance, the difference between southern New Brunswick and Nova Scotia on the one hand and northern New Brunswick and Quebec on the other is very considerable: also between Quebec and Ontario there are many points of difference. Proximity to the open ocean or to great lakes that do not freeze, the clearing away of forests, and the consequent more rapid evaporation of moisture and earlier melting of the snow, have an ameliorating influence on the climate; while the presence of large forest areas, the proximity of great ice-fields, and the prevalence of north winds, have a contrary tendency. Therefore it is that statements which hold good of one part of Canada do not apply with accuracy to other parts. But speaking generally, it may be said that the winters on the Atlantic coast of Canada are very much more severe than those in corresponding latitudes on the Atlantic coast of Europe; but not so severe, except in the extreme northern parts of the settled districts, as to interfere with the successful prosecution of agriculture.

Mr James Anderson, of Winnipeg, whose father was a prominent Hudson Bay Company officer,

and who himself was born in the Canadian North-west, was examined before the Canadian Senate Committee in 1888. Mr Anderson, senior, was sent by the Imperial Government to search for Sir John Franklin down the Mackenzie Valley, and his son had access to his diary and other observations made by him, extending over a number of years. Speaking of the North-west of Canada, he said: 'There is no doubt that the climate is changing. We have evidence in this country [Quebec] that the climate is changing, and we have evidence of it in the prairies of the North-west.' This observation undoubtedly applies to the whole of North America. As settlement progresses there is less tendency to extremes of temperature; but whether this is due to any other cause than the cutting down of forests and the cultivation of the soil, or whether it is in part due to the same cause as leads to the movement of the Magnetic Pole (as some contend), must remain a matter of doubt.

Many things besides high latitude have to be considered in determining the adaptability of a country for settlement, and of no part of the world is this more true than of Canada. The parallel of latitude which passes along the northern point of Labrador, and south of which lies, on the Atlantic coast, as dreary and uninhabitable a land as is to be found below the domain of perennial winter, when it reaches the valley of the Great Mackenzie passes through a land where strawberries and gooseberries grow wild, and where wheat, barley, and potatoes are successfully cultivated.

Western Europe owes its favourable climate to the Gulf Stream, flowing north-easterly across the Atlantic. A similar current pours in a mighty flood northward along the east of Asia; and its passage to the Arctic Ocean being barred by the near approach of the continents, it swings eastward and, with its accompanying warm winds, impinges upon the western shore of Canada. The great mountain ranges rob it of some of its surplus moisture, and it sweeps through defiles, and passes out on to the plains of the North-west, warm and comparatively dry.

America consists of a great central plain, flanked by two mountain ranges. This plain has a gradual descent to the north over the greater part of its area. Where the Union Pacific Railway leaves the plain to enter the Rocky Mountains, it has for a distance of fifty miles an average altitude of five thousand feet. The corresponding portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway is not more than three thousand feet above the sea-level, and the decrease continues until at the valley of the Peace River—that is, in latitude fifty-six degrees—the altitude is not more than one thousand feet.

Another effective cause of favourable summer temperature is to be found in the length of the days. Long-continued sunshine seems to be especially propitious for farming. Vegetation is much more rapid in latitudes where the days are long—that is, of course, where the other conditions are favourable—than in places where the days are shorter. At Fort Simpson, which, it is alleged, is within the limit of wheat-culture, there is scarcely any difference between night and day in mid-summer.

Concerning the winter temperature of this part

of Canada, there appears to be a necessity for a radical revision of popular belief. We refer now not to Manitoba and the territories along the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is well known that in the portion of the Dominion last referred to the winters, though not so long as those in Quebec and parts of New Brunswick, are more severe, especially in the duration of 'cold spells'; from which fact the conclusion has been drawn, not unnaturally, that in regions farther to the north the cold must be too intense and prolonged for the country ever to become thickly peopled—that, in short, even if the land is fertile and the summer temperature favourable for farming, the lowness of the temperature and the frequency of great storms during a period of six months every year practically close it to any class of emigration except that from high latitudes. The evidence taken by the Senate Committee above referred to presents the case in a new and favourable light. 'The winter temperature at Fort Simpson'—which is about as far north as any claim is made for successful farming—'is about the same as at St Petersburg,' says one witness. 'The winter is about the same as in Ontario,' says another, referring to the Peace River and the Liard Valley. Such testimony could be multiplied; and while it is premature to say that the adaptability of the district for settlement by emigrants from the north temperate sections of Europe has been placed beyond a doubt, the importance of the bearing of the question upon the development of the Dominion will be conceded. If, upon investigation, it shall be made clear that the whole region between Fort Simpson and the United States boundary is adapted to wheat-culture, and possesses much the same winter climate in all its parts, our views as to the food-producing capacity of Canada, and its resulting capacity to support population, will be greatly enlarged.

Doubtless, in common with every other land, the country has its drawbacks, some of which will be overcome in time, while others are insurmountable; but on a fair balance being struck between advantages and disadvantages, it will hold its own in comparison with any part of the continent. One of these drawbacks is the occurrence of summer frosts. Apart altogether from the probability of the cessation of these as the country becomes settled, there seems to be no doubt that the extensive experiments being carried on by the Dominion government will lead to the introduction of a wheat which will come to maturity in a period short enough practically to remove all danger of loss from 'frosted' grain.

Concerning that part of British Columbia which lies west of the Rocky Mountains, much has yet to be learned. No one can presume to speak definitely of its capacity, from an agricultural stand-point. Apparently, the greater part of its area is mountainous, and not adapted to farming; but there are extensive areas which are highly fertile, and others yet more extensive which furnish grazing-lands of special value.

The existence of this immense domain in Canada adapted to agriculture and stock-raising, and as yet for the most part in the hands of either the Federal or the Provincial Governments, taken in connection with the rapid exhaustion of the

arable public domain in the United States, must have a potent influence upon the development of the North American Continent during the next quarter of a century.

CHARLIE RANSOM.

A STORY OF THE OIL COUNTRY.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

JOHN BURLINGTON was not killed, for the nitro-glycerine can which had lain in the bottom of the boat was an empty one. Had it been full, there would have been enough of the explosive to destroy an ironclad steamer. As it was, there was quite sufficient of the greasy substance adhering to the sides of the can to kill a hundred men; and yet John Burlington cheated death. But he was terribly battered and bruised, and his legs were fearfully lacerated. Had it not been for the prompt assistance rendered by Captain Jerry Jones, who boldly plunged into the icy water, the poor fellow must have been drowned, for he was completely helpless. Kind hands carried the wounded man to his room in Tommy Van Horn's house, while Ted Robinson mounted Burlington's own horse and galloped all the way to Mesopotamia for Doctor Leslie. It was a 'close call' for John Burlington; but surgical skill and tender nursing speedily placed him on the road toward recovery.

And while anxious hearts stood about Burlington's bedside, the wretched fellow who might have prevented by a word all this sorrow and pain and trouble kept himself locked up in the little room where so recently he had experienced the supreme happiness of his life. The pretty curtain, fastened by the dainty bows of red ribbon, still spanned the window, and the steel engravings hung upon the whitewashed walls precisely as Marie had placed them. Even the little glass vase was upon the table, and beside it stood the Oxford frame containing the school teacher's photograph. But Charlie Ransom was ashamed to look upon even that lifeless portrait of the woman he had so deeply wronged—the woman whose more than kindness to him he had repaid by permitting the man who was almost her husband to rush unhindered to his death. For on that first day, when Ransom hurried home and locked himself in his room, he did not know that Burlington was still alive. He had seen his victim—for such he now deemed Burlington—taken from the water and carried to his room; but he had not waited to learn the exact effect of the explosion. So, alone with himself and his sternly accusing conscience, Ransom felt that the brand of Cain was upon him, that he was a murderer of the deepest dye. For, now that his revenge had reached its fearful climax, he was overtaken by remorse—a passion that operates more keenly, and is harder to bear than jealousy and a desire for revenge. He now viewed his action, or inaction, upon the river-side very differently from what he did when he failed to warn Burlington of his danger. He saw, when it was too late, that it is quite possible for passive indifference to be as guiltily fatal as active wrongdoing.

In the evening Mrs Jones called Ransom to supper, but he gave her no answer. Later on she tapped at his door, but he said that he was not hungry. Then, as a thought struck him, he opened the door a few inches and asked: 'What do they say about Mr Burlington?'

'Jerry's just been over. The doctor's come; and the poor dear man's alive, and that's all. Jerry'll go down to Van Horn's again in the morning.'

Alive! Then there was some hope, and he might not be an actual murderer, after all. But he *was* a murderer; for if John Burlington did not die, that made no difference to the murderous desires that had so lately dwelt in his heart. Besides, Burlington might die yet: he was only just alive, and the doctor might not be able to save him.

All through the night Charlie alternately paced the floor or threw himself into the wood-seated chair that Marie had so often occupied when she played to him on the banjo. When the gray light of the chilly morning dawned, he listened intently as Captain Jerry left the house. When the Captain returned to his breakfast, Ransom opened his door and inquired: 'How is he?'

'Very low,' was the ominous reply.

Again he closed the door; and all through the long hours of that day Ransom stayed in his room, declining food and refusing to see any one. The long hours dragged wearily and painfully, and the wretched fellow suffered the most excruciating agony of mental torture.

At noon, the doctor's bulletin was much the same as in the morning; but at supper-time Mrs Jones did not wait for Ransom's eager inquiry. She had seen that Charlie was taking the accident sadly to heart, though she wondered why, so she hurried to the door of the little room. 'Charlie!'

'What is it? What news?'

'He is better; he will pull through.'

'Better?' he asked in a tone of voice which would have risen to a shout had it not been for his bated breath. 'Better? You are sure there is no mistake—it is what the doctor says?'

'There is no mistake; the doctor has every hope.'

'O my God, my God!' sobbed the poor fellow, suddenly relieved from the crushing weight of responsibility for the loss of a valuable human life. 'O God, forgive me!' he prayed, while tears coursed down his cheeks. Wistfully he gazed, though dimly, at the picture in the Oxford frame. 'Marie,' he sobbed, 'I must tell you all about it—perhaps you will forgive me—perhaps, perhaps!' Then, with the photograph still in his hand, he flung himself upon his hard bed and, like a tired child, cried himself to sleep.

When the Doll awoke it was almost noon of the next day. But he felt much refreshed, and he was firmly resolved upon making a full confession to Marie Reese. He washed himself and swallowed a cup of tea which Mrs Jones prepared for him, and then he started out. He knew where he could find Marie, for he rightly expected that she would not neglect her school duties now that the chances for Burlington's recovery were fairly good.

At twelve o'clock, when the scholars were dismissed for dinner, Ransom entered the school-

room. Miss Reese was herself pale and weary; but she was positively shocked by the Doll's miserable appearance. His haggard face bore distinct traces of mental anguish and of recent tears. 'Why, Ransom,' she said kindly, 'what is the matter? You have not been ill again surely? Sit down.'

The schoolmistress was the only person left in the room when Ransom entered, and she was putting on her hat to go. But she laid it aside as she spoke, and gently pushed her chair toward her visitor.

'No, marm; I will stand. Please sit down yourself; and—and—for God's sake, Miss Reese, don't talk kind to me or—or I shan't be able to tell you what's on my mind.' And as he spoke, Ransom gulped down a sob that almost got the better of him. 'The Lord knows, Miss Reese, I want your good opinion, for it's the sweetest thing as ever I've known. But I don't want it if I don't deserve it; that is to say, I know I don't deserve it; but I don't want to get it by no false pretences. I'm bad and wicked—oh yes, marm; wait and judge for yourself—and I want to tell you all about it. And then, why, if you'll forgive me *then*, I shall go away from this place happy, marm; and I shall bless you, and pray God to bless you, day in and night out.—Now, if you'll be so good as to listen for five minutes, I'll tell you the whole story.

'When I first see you, marm'—Ransom relapsed into his old careless river-style of talking—'I thought you might be an angel; I did indeed. I knew as I was only a poor no-account river roustabout what couldn't hardly read or write, and scarce talk straight; but I judged there was no harm in sort of admiring and worshipping a angel. And so in a quiet way, at a respectful distance like, I worshipped you, marm. And then you 'lowed me to come to the school, and you took a fancy to help me along, and was kind and patient with me. As also, you liked to have me drop in once in a while at Captain Peter's and talk to you 'bout the river and sech. Then we took them skating trips down the creek, and you let me give you some skates and taught me all the fancy figures on the ice. And 'long about that time I forgot that I was only a poor dunderhead of a river-lad, and that you was my good angel. Instead of just keeping on a-worshipping you, Miss Reese, I made a fool of myself and—no; don't be angry at *that*, for I couldn't help that part of it—I loved you like—like—well, like Mr Burlington loves you. And then, when I couldn't make up my mind what to do about it, I fell sick, and you came to see me. You was very kind—you've allus been kind to me—and brought me things and played for me and sang to me, and, yes, you kissed me. I know, I understand now, marm; it was just pity and friendship; but I didn't know then—perhaps I didn't want to know. But after that, I thought for *sure* that you really did care for me—the same as you care for Mr Burlington. So I was happy. But then Mr Burlington came, and he was kind and generous, just like you, marm. But the kinder he was and the pleasanter he was the more I hated him, because he had what I could never get. Yes'm, I hated him, and wished him dreadful things; and that day—last Monday—I seen him get into the boat, and I seen the tin can, and I

knew well enough it was glycerine, marm. But I never says a word—just let him go on, and— Well, marm, you know the rest.'

When Ransom paused, Marie was trembling like a leaf, while upon her face those who knew her well could have read signs of indignation, grief, and disappointment.

'This is true, I suppose?' she said in a voice that was none the less hard and cold because of a tremulous quiver.

'Yes; it's all true, every word.—But oh, Miss Reese, forgive me! Please, please forgive me! I am sorry, truly sorry. I have already suffered more than you will ever know, and my punishment will never quite leave me. I would do anything, give anything, to undo that day's work.'

'Ah,' she said, in the same cold tones, 'the more I think of it and recollect what might have been the result, the more horrible it seems. And *you*, above all people! Your love for me must have been of a very curious quality;' and she laughed a hollow little laugh.

'Don't, please don't, Miss Reese. I know I have deeply wronged you; I know I deserve your hatred and your curses, and yet—I ask your forgiveness. In two days the *Gem* goes down to Oil City, and I shall go with her, but I shall never come back to the Valley. I will try never to cross your path any more, only please forgive me.' The Doll, cap in hand, knelt with bowed head before the schoolmistress as he pleaded for her merciful judgment.

'No, Ransom,' she said; 'you ask too much. God may forgive you: perhaps I may some day—but I cannot now. Please leave me.'

So unforgiven, the Doll left his old friend and teacher; but that night, when Marie Reese laid her head to rest upon her pillow, she resolved to send for Ransom the following afternoon.

The success of the 'shooting' at Captain Peter Lamson's well had given an impetus to the dynamite man's business. All the owners of unsatisfactory wells had them immediately 'shot;' and within two days after the accident to John Burlington, seven or eight wells were throwing huge fountains of oil which it was impossible for a time to control. This oil, which was nearly all wasted, flowed in every direction about Pan Handle City, finally finding its way to the Tomhicken Creek. Meanwhile, locomotion was difficult, and where practicable, exceedingly disagreeable; for some of the streams of crude oil were as much as ten feet wide and several inches deep.

On the night that Marie Reese went to sleep regretting her harshness toward the Doll, Mrs Lamson was relieving her friend, Mrs Van Horn, in the care of John Burlington; and toward midnight Captain Peter was called out by one of his workmen from the South Side Well on account of an accident having happened to the derrick. This left Marie quite alone in the Lamsons' house, which was rather isolated from the other residences, none of them being built very closely together in Pan Handle City. The nearest house to Captain Peter's was Jerry Jones's, perhaps two hundred yards distant. That evening Marie had been carried home in Peter Lamson's strong arms, for the house was completely encircled by a little torrent of petroleum on its way from a 'gusher'

to the river. The house stood upon a small and slight elevation, which, being directly in the course of an overflow of waste petroleum, divided the stream into two currents, each of them six or seven feet wide. These joined their forces once more just below the house, thus temporarily transforming the hillock into a little island.

In the dead of the night, from some unaccountable cause—in the oil regions the origin of a fire is never discovered—a fire broke out near the very well from which the stream flowed around Peter Lamson's house, and in less than one minute a mighty river—or wall—of fire, ten feet wide and ten feet high, was rolling onward toward the Tomhicken.

It had come to Pan Handle City at last—one of those fearful fire-scourges, immunity from which is guaranteed to none of the oil towns and villages; and it had come, as they usually do, when the men were least prepared to combat it. Except one or two watchmen about the wells which needed especial care, and Captain Peter, who was across the river, all the people were sleeping, unconscious as yet of the awful danger that more than threatened them. No, not quite all. Stretched upon his sleepless bed in Jerry Jones's house was the Doll. Through the curtained window he perceived the lurid glare of the terrible roaring fire, and as quickly as he noticed it he saw that it was rushing on in its relentless fury toward the house where Marie Reese lay sleeping. He sprang quickly up, and, shouting 'Fire!' as he rushed through the house, ran as fast as he could over the distance which intervened between him and Peter Lamson's. This did not take much more than a minute; but the fire was ahead of him, and was roaring around the doomed house like a whirlwind. The heat was terrific, and the temperature inside the house must have been equal to that of an oven. But Ransom cared nothing for that. He had often thought he would like to prove his love for Marie Reese by laying down his life for her. He had always meant as much as that—he meant it yet.

So he darted through the wall of fire whose cruel flames peeled the skin from his face and hands, while it made his hair singe and curl. With a blow he battered down the light door and rushed up the narrow stairway, at the head of which stood Marie, trembling from fright and almost fainting with the heat. She had hastily enveloped herself in a dressing-gown. The heat was stifling, and Ransom knew that he must hurry or both of them should be burned to death. He pulled a large handkerchief from his pocket and tightly tied it about Marie's ankles, outside her wrapper; then he took off his own thick coat and threw it over the girl's head and shoulders, buttoning every button. 'Keep quite still,' he said, in tones which forbade all demur or argument. With something of his old-time vigour, he took Marie in his arms as if she had been a baby, and carried her down the steep staircase out into—yes, *through* the sea of fire, and laid her beyond the reach of the flames, unhurt except for her scorched hands.

And Ransom? Ah, for poor Ransom the double trip through the flames had been too much, especially the return journey, for he wore no hat, and his coat he had wrapped about Marie.

When he laid his precious burden down, his hair and eyelashes were singed to a crisp and his shirt-sleeves had disappeared. He was burned fearfully, and what the men carried in a blanket up to the little bedroom was more like a cinder than a human being.

It was the evening after the fire that had destroyed Captain Peter Lamson's house, and sad hearts lingered about Jerry Jones's shanty; for in the little side bedroom Charlie Ransom lay dying.

There was not the slightest hope for the poor fellow, and perhaps it was better so, because, had he possessed sufficient vitality, he must have passed through days and weeks of terrible pain before he could possibly have recovered. His poor scorched and bruised body was blackened by smoke, while the baked skin had peeled off his face, arms, and hands, leaving them raw and sore. The curly flaxen locks were gone, and the large blue eyes were now bandaged with lint and petroleum grease. His mind was wandering, and once or twice the cracked lips parted to murmur of the red can, of Mr Burlington, and of the schoolmarm.

Late in the evening, Ransom became rational, and he lay quite still. Not a single complaint or word of reproach escaped him; but about ten o'clock those who watched and listened heard him feebly ask for 'Miss Reese.' So they called Marie, who was in the adjoining room, to step to the bedside.

The girl was miserable enough at the thought of her harsh words spoken to the Doll when he so earnestly pleaded for her forgiveness, and her tears flowed fast at the sad sight which her plucky deliverer now presented. Her own hands were bandaged, so she could not well touch Ransom's if she had dared to, but—as she had done only a few short weeks before—she bent over and lightly kissed the poor burned forehead.

Charlie knew quite well who it was, for painfully and slowly he whispered: 'You will forgive me?'

'My poor boy, yes, oh yes!'

There was a pause of some moments, during which the silence was intense. Again it was broken by the Doll: 'Miss Reese.'

'What is it, Charlie?'

'For—the—last—time—you—you will sing—for me?'

'I will try,' she said with a sob. 'What shall I sing?'

'The—heavenly—mansion—piece.'

The banjo stood in its old corner, and Marie sorrowfully took it up. Her feelings well-nigh overcame her, but for the dying lad's sake she restrained them, and as she picked—awkwardly enough with her bandaged hand—the simple prelude to the old hymn, Ransom's scorched lips parted with a sad smile of satisfaction. And then she sang:

My heav'nly home is bright and fair;
Nor pain nor death can enter there;
Its glittering towers the sun outshine;
That heav'nly mansion shall be mine.

Let others seek a home below,
Which flames devour, or waves o'erflow;

Be mine a happier lot—to own
A heav'nly mansion near the throne.

The next morning, when the sun rose over the Alleghanies and shone down upon the Tom-hicken Valley, Charles Ransom had for ever left Pan Handle City.

EXPERIMENTS ON MODELS OF SHIPS.

IN a recent number of this *Journal* we gave an account of a method of experimenting on models of estuaries, by means of which harbour engineers may get some indication as to the probability of the success of intended harbour works. In the present article it is proposed to show how experiments on models of ships may afford guidance to naval architects in designing real ships. The problem is often presented to shipbuilders, how to build a vessel capable of running at a certain high speed; and when there are, as is usually the case, other conditions to be accomplished—shallow draught, large carrying capacity, and a strict limit of price and time—the problem becomes by no means an easy one to solve. No doubt, shipbuilders who have had large experience in building somewhat similar vessels can often hit off very tolerably what is required by imitation with moderate variation; but there is always considerable risk of failure. Disappointments often occur entailing loss to the ship-builder or ship-owner, sometimes to both.

The late Mr William Froude introduced a method for experimenting by means of models accurately made to scale, in order to find out what speed can be advantageously got in the real ships. He used a simple rule founded on hydraulic principles for determining at what speed a model ought to be driven in order to get the same 'stream-lines' as in the real ship, and in order that the waves caused by its motion through the water may be proportionally the same in size and shape. This rule when tested by actual experiment was found to give true results. According to this rule—which is often called Froude's Rule—the speed of the model ought to be to the speed of the real ship in the proportion of the square root of the length. Thus, for instance, if the model is ten feet long, and the real ship forty feet, the speed of the model ought to be half the speed of the ship. The resistance in the model is to the resistance of the real ship in the proportion of the cube of the dimensions. In the case supposed, the model being a quarter the length of the real ship, the resistance of the model will be $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{64}$ of the resistance of the real ship.

In the year 1868, Mr Froude proposed to the Admiralty that they should construct a large tank fitted up with apparatus for the purpose of conducting accurate experiments on models of war-ships and other government vessels; and a tank was accordingly constructed soon after at Torquay, where Mr Froude personally superintended the experiments. The models were made of paraffin wax, and were generally twelve feet

long, it being found that models of that size yielded very reliable information as to what would be the behaviour of the real ships; while smaller ones could not be depended on to give exactly corresponding results. The models were cast in moulds made of clay, and were then carved down to the exact shape, this being accomplished by the aid of an ingenious mechanical contrivance. The tank was two hundred and seventy-eight feet long, thirty-six feet broad at the top, and ten feet deep. A light railway supported from the roof ran along the whole length of the tank over the water at a height of twenty inches above the surface. On this railway a small truck could be drawn from end to end by a steam-engine. The models were towed through the water by this truck.

In order to get a record of the exact speed of the model during the experiment, and the force required to tow it at that speed, a small paper-covered cylinder and a pen were fitted up in such a way that the line traced by the pen indicated both the speed and the force. This indicator was mounted on the truck, and the cylinder was turned by a band from a pulley on one of the axles of the truck; while the pen, being attached to a sort of spring-balance in what may be regarded as the tow-rope, was moved backwards and forwards along the cylinder according to the force applied, so that the distance traversed by the model and the force applied in towing it were thus recorded. Time was indicated by another line drawn on the same cylinder by a pen which received a jerk from a clock every half-second. The diagram, then, drawn by this indicator showed exactly what force was required to tow a particular model at a certain speed; and by comparing the diagrams got by towing the model at different speeds, and also by comparing the diagrams produced by models of various shapes, valuable practical results were obtained.

It was found that the resistance as indicated by the force required to tow the model varied greatly with slight modifications in the form of the vessel. As the models were constructed of paraffin wax, the form could, without much difficulty, be modified until a satisfactory result was attained. Sometimes a model which at first sight appeared well designed proved unsatisfactory when tried, on account of the character of the waves which it produced in moving through the water; and a slight alteration of the form was found to give much better results. Besides the exact information as to speed and resistance obtained from the diagrams of the indicator, the experimenter could also learn much that was interesting and useful about the comparative merits of various forms by watching the waves produced in each case as the model moved through the water, the truck being made sufficiently large and strong to carry the observer. The importance of thus observing the position and shape of the waves is most essential in designing a quick paddle-steamer, because a form of vessel otherwise quite satisfactory for speed may happen to produce the hollow of a wave just at the place where the paddle-wheel is intended to act on the water; and this may interfere very seriously with the action of the paddle-wheel. By experimenting on a model, the form of the vessel may be modified a

little so as to shift the hollow of the wave to some other position along the side of the ship, thus allowing the paddle to work advantageously.

Much valuable light has already been thrown on difficult problems in naval architecture by means of such experiments on models; and further discoveries and inventions may be expected to follow.

The Admiralty tank experiments are still carried on. After the death of Mr Froude it was considered that a tank at Gosport would be more convenient for naval officials than the original one at Torquay, and a new one was accordingly constructed there instead, to which the experimental apparatus was removed. Here Mr William Froude's son, Mr R. E. Froude, conducts the experiments with the aid of a staff of officials. Only one private firm of ship-builders has as yet been enterprising enough to construct an experimental tank, namely, Messrs William Denny & Brothers of Dumbarton. There are, in fact, as yet only these two in our country—the one at Gosport and the other at Dumbarton. The Italian Government has just started a similar tank at Spezia.

It would be very desirable that more of these experimental tanks should be constructed, our Admiralty one not being available for ship-designers among the general public. If tanks were constructed in various important shipbuilding centres throughout the country, and if arrangements were made whereby naval architects could get their new ideas experimentally tested, great advances might be expected to ensue in the science of shipbuilding.

'BUS DRIVERS.

If, as Shelley hath it, poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world, the driver of the 'bus is the acknowledged monarch of London's world on wheels. Mounted on his box, with 'regulars' to right of him and 'regulars' to left of him, he is in his element, and fears neither friend nor foe. Especially in the bright summer days is he in his glory, as in brand-new suit—including the tall white hat—he skilfully drives his lumbering vehicle through the mighty maze of traffic. It is like a ship in full sail, with the parasol and the popular *en tout cas* for the canvas. You have the surging motion, too, to strengthen the illusion. This is particularly observable when, in passing the 'bus of a rival company, your topheavy conveyance almost topples over as, skidding on the tram-lines, it struggles to right itself.

'Bus drivers pay special attention to their pipe and their horses; and their language is not over select if when the change in the latter is made they happen to get a duffer either on the on or off side. They vent their spleen during the rest of the journey, casting contemptuous looks at the poor beast, which is perhaps now making almost its last run. But most of the horses engaged in the traffic reflect credit on the owners, seeing what heavy work falls to their lot; and in the

main they are exceedingly well used by the drivers. The whip is more for ornament than use, and when made use of it is in the gentlest manner.

Although the conductor figures in many respects as the leading man of the twain, the functions of the driver are more varied, interesting, and important. Generally speaking, he looks on the man at the back with a sort of contempt, and woe to the conductor who offends his 'whip.' The driver can cause the conductor's takings to reach a very respectable figure, or be the means of reducing them to the lowest on record. A good driver will always be on the *'qui vive'* for customers, and in his prominent position, sees them long before the conductor is cognisant that clients are in waiting. A touch with the whip notifies the conductor; and from the side on which play is made therewith, so it is known where business is to be looked for. But for the driver, too, many of those who patronise the box-seat would be able to slip off without paying, for at certain points *en route* the conductor is so busy behind that he cannot observe all that goes on in the 'front of the house.' The whip is again the vehicle of communication, and the conductor is on the alert. Again, the whistle or bell which is the means of asking the driver to stop or proceed may be attended to with alacrity or the driver may work awkward. For instance, he is asked to stop; but the driver goes heedlessly on, and has proceeded so far before he can be induced to pull up that the conductor loses a fare. Or a driver may cause much inconvenience and annoyance by starting before the signal is given. And so on *ad infinitum*. Another point in this connection is that a driver usually drives the same 'bus for years, and comes, therefore, to look upon the vehicle much as a captain does on his ship. The conductor is in a sense an interloper, and must pay for the privilege of working with him.

If the driver of a 'bus is not a man of intellect, he is at anyrate an interesting personality, and you may gain both pleasure and profit by sometimes riding by his side and listening to his terse remarks. He is generally brief, sometimes witty, and often original. In a general way, long hours notwithstanding, he is content. An old driver will lament the halcyon days—the days of the past, when high charges were the fashion. 'We don't make what we did then,' he says; 'nor do we get such a good class of people,' he adds. He evidently hardly relishes the plebeian penny, although himself a 'pleb.' But he is pleased with the patronage of the ladies who ride outside. Occasionally, one rides by his side, and if she is of genial temperament, he lays himself out, if not to mash, at least to please. He is full of information, and his rubicund countenance beams with delight. He will point this out and that, and if the lady is interested in horses, will tell her the names of those he is driving. If his fair companion is a stranger to London he will act as guide, so far as he is able, by directing her attention to buildings or localities of interest which lie in the way. In many instances, he will relate with gusto incidents connected with the subject of his remarks. It may not be all according to Cocker; but what of that?

From the nature of the employment and the

very long hours, it follows that a driver sees little of his home or family. Seven days a week find him on his 'bus. But it should not be thought that the driver takes no interest in his domestic life. On the contrary, he is usually a married man, with a comfortable home and a respectable wife and family. In some cases, drivers own the houses in which they live, and there are men in London engaged in this work who own several houses. One way and another, a driver does very well. Very pleasing, too, is it to see one of the better class of drivers accompanied by his wife on a Saturday night—his wife, that is, visiting her better-half at his own, almost, one might say, residence—his 'bus. She is on the knifeboard, and they are settling that very important question, what shall be had for the Sunday dinner.

But with the departure of the summer, this very pleasant aspect of a 'bus-driver's life ceases to obtain. No ladies outside to brave the frost and snow, and the box-seat as often empty as not. Cold, despairing fog, and gloomy mist now reign triumphant. But the driver is still strapped above, and, as of yore, skilfully guides his four-footed co-workers through the busy streets. He is now closely muffled up, and sundry nips of brandy and whisky are the order of the day and night. Yet he budes not, but bravely, in face of the driving sleet, the keen cutting wind, or the blinding snow, holds on to his reins. It is very hard work now, for the horses may fall at any moment, and at times require all the driver's strength to keep them on all-fours. This is the weather to discover the weaklings, and you cannot help asking at such a time whether it is absolutely right to employ men for so many hours a day.

A monarch above, when he reaches the flags below the driver is a very ordinary man indeed. In his proper element he loomed large in your eyes; but on the flat he seems a veritable *reductio ad absurdum*. He is like a constable out of uniform, or a sailor on shore. Above, all his movements indicated a master of the craft; but below, he is a minnow among the tritons. But our friend always gets down for a purpose, and on this occasion it is for dinner. He has a whole twenty minutes to spare! Let us therefore leave him in the full enjoyment of the gastronomic function, only remarking that 'bus drivers seem possessed of marvellous digestive powers and iron constitutions.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE authorities at South Kensington Museum have recently adopted a new system of water-supply under pressure in order to protect from fire the priceless treasures of which they are the guardians. The ordinary pressure upon the water-mains is not sufficient to force a jet to the higher portion of these extensive buildings, and it was at first contemplated to build a tower crowned with a water-tank, in order to obviate the difficulty. But as the erection of such a tower is a work of considerable time, the new method to which we refer has been adopted as a tem-

porary expedient. This is the high-pressure system invented by Mr M. Vinning of London, and consists of a vessel of compressed air which acts upon a closed tank of water with a capacity of two thousand gallons. The pressure upon the water amounts to about one hundred pounds on the square inch, and it is estimated that in the event of fire the quantity of water held by the tank would be sufficient to serve two powerful jets for about ten minutes, by which time the ordinary fire-engines would presumably come into play. Every one knows that the best way to cope with a fire is to battle with it immediately on its outbreak, and this new apparatus seems effectively to meet that requirement.

The cruelty to horses of using a bearing-rein, which is irritating to this highly nervous animal, and prevents him regaining his footing should he slip—and slipping is frequent on the now common asphalt roads—has been again and again demonstrated, but nothing is done to check the evil. A correspondent of the *Times* suggests that some well-known leader of fashion should take up the question, and by his or her example endeavour to destroy a cruel custom, which means much torture to horses, and seems to have no compensating advantage of any kind whatever.

An American paper suggests that plates and dishes used on board ship should be fitted with iron bottoms, so that by means of electro-magnets placed beneath the table they might be held firmly in place during the rolling of the vessel. As our readers know, the slipping of the table utensils is at present guarded against by the use of wooden rails, and perhaps, all things considered, this simple device is better than the one now proposed, in the carrying out of which many difficulties would present themselves. The new expedient seems to have been suggested by the alleged malpractice of certain transatlantic gamblers, who have cleverly taken advantage of the resources of science to help them in their nefarious doings. These men, it is said, use dice so loaded with iron upon one face that they will always fall in one direction upon a table furnished with concealed magnets in the manner described.

Photographers, both professional and amateur, are discussing the merits of a new developing substance for gelatine plates which has recently been discovered by Dr Andresen of Berlin. The new substance is a grayish powder called Eikonogen, and it is claimed for it that it will bring more detail out of a plate which has been exposed instantaneously than any developer previously known. It remains to be proved whether this be true or not; but it is certain that some prominent workers believe that there is a future before this new agent. It has certainly the merit of being extremely clean in working, for it leaves no stain on the hands, and it has the further advantage of being of a non-poisonous nature.

The 'Temple of Heaven' at Peking, recently destroyed by fire, was held so sacred by the Chinese that no European, however influential he might be, was ever known to have obtained permission to enter its precincts. But in spite of all restrictions, an adventurous Englishman in the person of Mr George Forbes once managed by sheer insistence not only to enter the building, but actually to take photographs of its interior;

and he has recently published an interesting account of the manner in which he, in company with a Danish gentleman, undertook this risky work. The temple was surrounded by three walls with moats, and after climbing over the first of these, the two friends actually had the audacity to command the guards to let them into the building, and to open certain windows so that sufficient light could be obtained for their photographic operations. The guards were so horrified at the presumption of the strangers that they yielded to the besiegers, and did their bidding. The travellers were rewarded with photographs which are probably unique.

Professor Von Bergmann of Berlin is said to have lately conceived and carried out an operation which must be considered a marvellous tribute to the progress of modern surgery. Two patients were brought to him, one of whom was suffering under an injury which necessitated amputation of the thigh, and the other from a disease of the humerus which called for excision of a part of that bone. The Professor proceeded to operate upon the first of these patients, and he then removed the diseased portion of the bone from the arm of the second one, leaving necessarily a gap. This he actually filled with a portion of the healthy bone from the amputated leg, and a successful union was made. The second patient was by this clever operation endowed with a serviceable arm, instead of one which would probably have been useless.

A new use for the electric light has been proposed as a help towards street traffic in the fog season. It is suggested that an incandescent light, fed from a battery in the vehicle behind the animal, should be placed on the forehead of a horse, so that a brilliant ray should be cast in front, as a protection to pedestrians. We fear that the suggestion if carried out would lead to disappointment, for experiments have shown that even the brilliant arc light will not so readily penetrate a foggy atmosphere as will a light of apparently far feeble power, such as that obtainable from oil or gas. An incandescent light of the kind proposed could be of but two or three candle-power, unless a very cumbersome form of battery were carried in the vehicle to furnish it with the necessary electrical energy.

At many places on our coasts sea-water is now used both for flushing the sewers and for watering the roads, and in the latter work it is found to have a binding action upon the dust particles which reduces their tendency to rise in the wind after the water has evaporated. In a seaside resort at New Jersey they are using this system with the addition of a simple apparatus which is self-acting, and which raises the water from the sea to a storage tank. This apparatus is worked by the motion of the waves, and consists of a kind of swinging-door which is hung between two of the piles of the pier. As this door oscillates by the action of the waves, it communicates its motion to the pistons of a pump, and the water is thus raised to the level required.

Mr James Fairlie of Glasgow, who tells us that he has had twenty years' experience of sea-life, sends us an account of an improved port which he has patented, and which is designed for use in sailing-ships and well-deck steamers. It can be fitted to any ship which has ports of

the ordinary pattern, and presents advantages which we should think will lead to its extensive adoption. The ordinary ports of a vessel, through which water shipped in heavy weather makes its escape from the deck, are flush with the bulwarks; but in this improved model the port protrudes through the bulwarks at an angle, and is therefore furnished with side-pieces and a bottom. This bottom or floor is so balanced by an adjustable weight that it remains in its normal state closed, so that no water can enter from the outside. But when water rushes into it from inside the ship, the action of the counter-weight is overcome, and the bottom opens to let it out into the sea. The inner side of the apparatus is furnished with an iron grill, so that small articles such as ropes and the like cannot escape with the outrushing water. The contrivance can further be drawn in so that it is flush with the bulwarks when the vessel is in harbour and the ports are no longer required.

The seventh Report of the Board of Trade on the working of the Boiler Explosions Act of 1882 furnishes some interesting particulars concerning the accidents which have taken place from this cause during the twelve months ending in June last. We learn from this Report that in the period indicated thirty-three persons have been killed and seventy-nine injured by these disasters, many of which are undoubtedly due to avoidable causes. More than one-third of the recorded explosions took place on shipboard; but it is to be remembered that these accidents at sea are all reported to headquarters, while those on land, unless accompanied by loss of life, will often escape official notice. We are told that there is good reason to suppose that a great many explosions take place on land which are thus in a sense hushed up, to save trouble and inquiry. It is lamentable to see that one-half of the explosions were due to the use of defective or worn-out boilers, defective construction and undue pressure being responsible for nearly one-third, while the remainder of the disasters must be credited to ignorance and recklessness. It is noteworthy that no fewer than seven explosions were those of tramway boilers, and seem to have been due to one cause—namely, 'the wasting of the brass tubes from the action of gases from coke-fuel, and the scouring effect of ashes and cinders.' The Report calls special attention to this circumstance, and advises that those having such boilers at work should be alive to the necessity of frequently drawing a few of these tubes for examination.

The American Screw Company have recently perfected a machine by which the ordinary screws used by carpenters can be produced with much greater facility than by older methods; and a demonstration of the working of the new machine has recently taken place in London, while at the same time its advantages were proved by first of all producing some screws by the usual system. The old-fashioned machine was shown to cut the screws at the rate of seven per minute, while the new contrivance showered them forth at the rate of fifty-four in the same time. In the new method the blanks are made by feeding steel wire into a machine which turns them out rapidly, and furnishes them with a head, a slot for the screw-driver, and a point. They are now provided with a screw-thread, not by cutting in a lathe as

at present, but by being passed between two fluted rollers. By this new method there is no waste of metal and no weakness caused by cutting, besides which the screws produced by the process possess several structural advantages. A new screw called a 'Drive Screw' was also shown on the same occasion. This has a very quick thread, and can be driven in with a hammer, at each blow of which it makes a partial revolution. Such a screw can be withdrawn by an ordinary screw-driver, when it is seen that it is quite uninjured; the wood, too, when examined in section is seen to exhibit a perfect mould of the screw-thread. Further particulars of this invention can be obtained at 100c Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.

Railway travelling, at anyrate on our great trunk lines, is so easy and comfortable that we forget that this modern mode of rapid transit means a vast amount of wear and tear both to the vehicles and the rails upon which they glide so smoothly. There is no apparent waste of metal, and nothing else to indicate at a glance that any wear and tear are going on; and yet it is estimated that on the North-Western system alone no less than eighteen tons of steel disappear daily! Part of this is by wear, and part by rust.

The 'Tower Company' (Limited), which has been called into existence by the financial success of the Eiffel Tower at Paris, are offering two prizes of five hundred guineas and two hundred and fifty guineas respectively for the best and second best design for a similar erection for the benefit of Londoners. The proposed tower is to be twelve hundred feet in height, which, by the way, is just three times the height of St Paul's Cathedral, and is to be furnished with lifts, like its prototype at Paris. The estimates sent in with the designs must show cost of all materials besides the cost of lifts and general building expenses. In case any of our readers should desire to enter into this competition, we may state that specifications can be obtained from the company at St Stephen's Chambers, Broadway, Westminster. It is to be presumed that the promoters of this enterprise must be aware that even on the finest day in London—except perhaps in the early morning, or under exceptional atmospheric conditions—the view from any high point in London is limited by the ever-present smoke. From the top of St Paul's, for instance, owing to this constant veil, the Houses of Parliament, which cannot be distant as the crow flies more than one mile, seem to be on the horizon, instead of comparatively close to the observer. In Paris, of course, the conditions are very different, and the fact of the Eiffel Tower being successful there is no argument in favour of the success of a similar scheme in London.

It is worthy of notice that the two steamships, or rather palaces, the *Teutonic* and the *City of New York*, have recently beaten previous records in the time taken in crossing the Atlantic. This voyage is now completed in less than six days. The two vessels on the occasion referred to started within a few minutes of one another, and arrived at their journey's end almost at the same moment.

The name of James Prescott Joule was not a

familiar one to the general public, and the announcement of his recent death as that of one who was second only to the great Isaac Newton was apt to take many by surprise. Dr Joule had indeed long retired from public life, but his name was honoured by every student of science as one of our foremost discoverers. To explain in detail what gave him such a forward place in the world of science would occupy many of our pages. But his life's work is well described in brief form in the reasons given by the Society of Arts for conferring upon him in 1880 the Albert medal. It was awarded to him 'for having established, after most laborious research, the true relation between heat, electricity, and mechanical work, thus affording to the engineer a sure guide in the application of science and industrial pursuits.'

The method of sterilising milk, known as the Dahl process, after the name of its inventor, the late Mr K. G. Dahl of Norway, was recently demonstrated and explained in London. The treatment consists in storing fresh milk in hermetically sealed metal cans, which are then heated and cooled alternately until all organisms are destroyed. Milk which had been thus treated three years ago, and had since been kept sealed up in one of these tins, was opened and shown to be in every respect as good as fresh milk. The preserved milk can be readily turned into butter and cream, and it has the advantage of being unsweetened. For use on shipboard it will be valued; but perhaps its greatest benefits will be felt in the nursery, for it is certain that it can contain no source of infection. We understand that there is a project on foot for bringing this useful invention into prominent employment in this country.

T A C T.

It is generally understood that to most women tact, like patience, is inborn, and that to few men is it even possible to acquire this valuable possession. Much may be said for and against this supposition. By some it is considered to be against the nature of even the best men to possess tact, so we are perhaps assured by such that many a worried woman would become placid and many a home free from unpleasantness if only the head of the house could be gifted with a little more of that useful quality which has been called a 'divine possession.'

To be able to say the right thing at the right moment is a great art, and said only to be acquired by those who have a natural talent that way. When a careless talker, who was criticising a young lady's father severely, paused a moment to say, 'I hope he is no relation of yours, Miss B——?' quick as thought she replied, with the utmost nonchalance: 'Only a connection of mother's by marriage.'

Few could hope to show such clever readiness of speech in a dilemma of the kind. Yet in a more curious and amusing way this was almost matched by a cautious old woman, who, when asked what she thought of one of her neighbours of the name of Jones, with a knowing look replied: 'Why, I don't like to say anything

about my neighbours ; but as to Mr Jones, sometimes I think, and then again I don't know ; but after all, I rather guess he'll turn out to be a good deal such a sort of man as I take him to be !'

In a little episode of village life we had lately another interesting instance of feminine tact. Upon the conclusion of a marriage in a village church, the bridegroom signed his register with his \times mark. The pretty young bride did the same ; and then turning to a young lady who had known her as the best scholar in the school, whispered to her, while love and admiration shone in her eyes : ' He is a dear fellow, miss, but he cannot write. He is going to learn from me, and I would not shame him for the world.'

But it is not always so apparent that in the affairs of life women are more adroit, or show more discernment or better perception than men. Who has not noticed how often mothers and nurses, by continually uttering vague threats, which their little charges soon learn are never fulfilled, lose all authority—while one word from Paterfamilias acts like magic in restoring order and obedience amongst the young rebels ? It is undeniable that concerning the love affairs of others women usually show much more perspicacity than men, and know how to act accordingly ; yet often in their own cases the tact evinced by them in skilfully managing a lover would seem to be lost when that lover becomes a husband.

'Tact,' we are told, 'often thwarts strength,' and certainly may be made a wonderful instrument of conciliation and pacification. To be able readily and without premeditation to do or say the right thing is an enviable gift, one that has not unfrequently brought substantial rewards to its possessor. To ask a favour gracefully, or to compose a well-worded or delicately expressed missive in matters of diplomacy, would probably tax the mental resources of most of us.

To many men the art of at least putting things in a kind and complimentary way is not uncommon—an art that was well cultivated by the courtiers of days gone by. The painter who drew the terrible one-eyed Tamerlane in the attitude of a warrior taking aim with his bow, and consequently having one eye closed, is an illustration in point. Nor was the Spanish nobleman who sent Queen Elizabeth a looking-glass when asked by her majesty for the portrait of the lady who possessed so accomplished a cavalier's heart, a whit behind Raleigh himself in readiness and delicacy of tact.

A gentleman was heard to remark at a fashionable French gathering : ' At that time, Marchioness, I was in love ;' then suddenly interrupting himself : ' But no doubt you are astonished that any one should fall in love before knowing you !' This, we admit, was rather an instance of excessive gallantry than of readiness such as was displayed by another Frenchman in the following : An old nobleman was lately accosted by an elderly lady with white hair at a party given by a Baroness. ' Don't you recognise me, Monsieur d'Aureville ?' The gentleman was silent. ' It is many years,' she continued, ' since we met ; I think in 1848.'—' Ah, madame,' exclaimed the nobleman, ' I have greatly changed since that time !' Could any one but a Frenchman have shaped such an answer ?

It must have been a countryman of his who said : ' If you wish to pay a pretty compliment to a plain and ignorant woman, and at the same time do not wish to be guilty of a falsehood, tell her that she is as beautiful as she is accomplished. She will think you are a charming man, and your conscience will be guiltless of an untruth.' Such an adviser must be one of the very diplomatists of society.

In our part of the world Irishmen are credited with saying prettier things than the rest of us can. They have a certain assurance which enables them to blurt out the first thought that occurs to them, which is, of course, why they make bulls ; but they score more happy conversational hits than more cautious people. Two young ladies and an Irish gentleman were conversing on age, when one of them put the home question : ' Which of us do you think is the elder, Mr G——?' ' Sure,' replied the gallant Irishman, ' you both look younger than each other.'

It is characteristic of some good-natured men always to agree with those with whom they converse. It is with them a point of politeness never to differ, which sort of politeness is certainly a very amiable kind of tact. We have a capital instance of the value of this policy in the sensible speech of the man who, during one of the Belfast riots, was asked by a mob what his religion was. He didn't know whether his interrogators were Catholics or Protestants ; but he looked at their weapons, their bludgeons, and their firearms, surveyed all carefully, and answered : ' Gentlemen, I am of the same opinion as that gentleman there with the big axe.'

True courtesy, which has been called ' the beauty of the heart,' sometimes suggests, even to the uneducated, graceful ways of putting their words that excite wonder and admiration. ' Are you not very cold, my poor boy ?' said a sympathetic young lady to a shivering shoeblack. ' I was till you smiled, miss,' was the clever and flattering reply.

In conversation, true courtesy is often forgotten in the general anxiety of people to speak rather than to listen ; they may seem to be attentive, but the absent look in the eyes betrays the reverse. Good listeners, especially if youthful, are thought worlds of by garrulous old people. We should not reply to a recital of the troubles of others by a long list of grievances of our own ; nor when shown anything in which the owner takes pride, spoil the effect by ungraciously referring to something superior in the same line which one has seen or may possibly possess. A constant endeavour to be easily pleased is essential to politeness, and when annoyances arise, then is the value of tact seen at its best in preventing general discomfort. Especially is this valuable acquisition or attribute useful when we have to find fault—always a difficult thing to do well—when the effect is lost, or, worse still, may be really injurious because of the way in which it is done.

The habit of thought before speech is not easy to acquire ; and in conclusion we may add that tact, though partly a natural gift, is a good deal indebted to education and early habits. The superiority of one sex over the other in this respect will after all often be found to depend on art quite as much as upon nature.

THE STORY OF A YEAR.

A LITTLE Child in raiment white
Was sent to me one day
With message from the King of Light :
'Thy care I will repay,
If thou wilt keep her garment bright
Along the narrow way.'

We wandered forth, the Child and I ;
But soon, all careless grown,
I heeded not her plaintive sigh,
As, hurt by thorn and stone,
Or chilled by snowdrifts piled on high,
She uttered weary moan.

We wandered on ; more fair the land,
Sweeter the fragrance round.
I clasped again her little hand,
And sped o'er dewy ground,
Heedless of clouds the sky that spanned,
Or wild beasts lurking round.

Still on we went, through gorgeous ways,
O'er sunny vale and hill,
While all too swiftly passed my days
By gleaming brook and rill,
And I forgot in noontide's blaze
To guard the Child from ill.

Still on we went. Cold blew the blast
In autumn's morning gray ;
My longing gaze behind was cast
Where flowery meadows lay,
And brooding o'er the vanished past,
I took my careless way.

'Farewell, farewell ; I e'en must go,'
A voice said in my ear ;
'The distant hills are white with snow ;
My last dawn draweth near.
With garments torn and brow of woe
I go—a wasted Year.'

Startled, I turned, and looked around :
No Child's form met my gaze ;
But one, low bending to the ground,
Weary with weight of days,
Whose lips could utter forth no sound
Of thankfulness or praise.

Ah me ! how could I meet the King
Who gave her to my care ?
Lost were the gifts she came to bring,
And soiled her raiment fair.
Here, with the Old Year vanishing,
I could but kneel in prayer.

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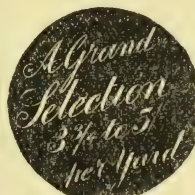
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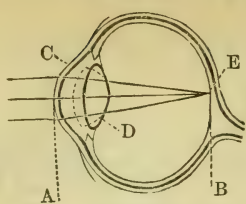
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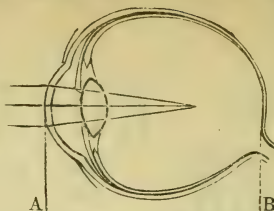
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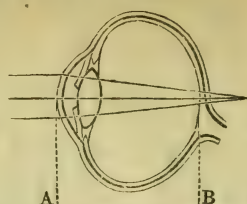
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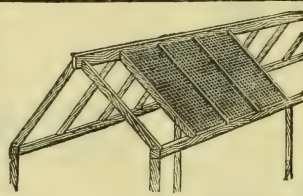
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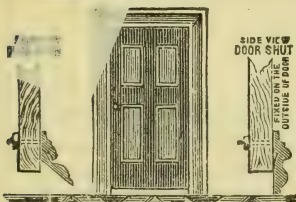
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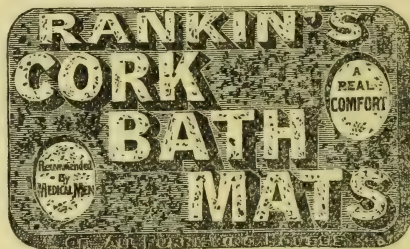
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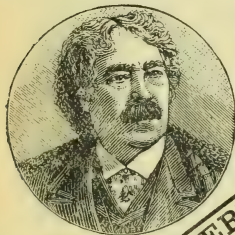
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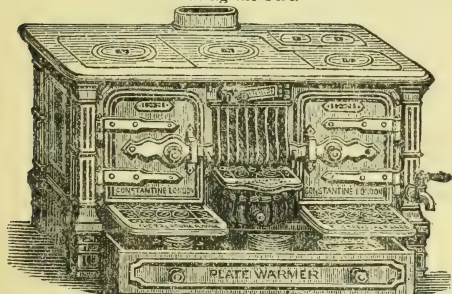
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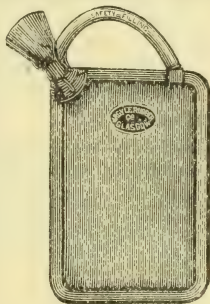
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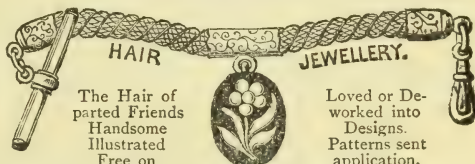
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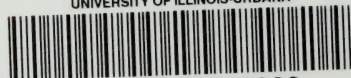
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